

Matthew

Introduction to Matthew

Author

■ Although the first Gospel is anonymous, the early church fathers were unanimous in holding that Matthew, one of the 12 apostles, was its author. However, the results of modern critical studies—in particular those that stress Matthew's alleged dependence on Mark for a substantial part of his Gospel—have caused some Biblical scholars to abandon Matthean authorship. Why, they ask, would Matthew, an eyewitness to the events of our Lord's life, depend so heavily on Mark's account? The best answer seems to be that he agreed with it and wanted to show that the apostolic testimony to Christ was not divided.

Matthew, whose name means “gift of the LORD,” was a tax collector who left his work to follow Jesus (ch. 9:9-13). In Mark and Luke he is called by his other name, Levi.

Date and Place of Writing

Some have argued on the basis of its Jewish characteristics that Matthew's Gospel was written in the early church period, possibly the early part of A.D. 50, when the church was largely Jewish and the gospel was preached to Jews only (Ac 11:19). However, those who have concluded that both Matthew and Luke drew extensively from Mark's Gospel date it later—after the Gospel of Mark had been in circulation for a period of time. See essay and chart, *The Synoptic Gospels*. Accordingly, some feel that Matthew would have been written in the late 50s or in the 60s. Others, who assume that Mark was written between 65 and 70, place Matthew in the 70s or even later. However, there is insufficient evidence to be dogmatic about either view.

The Jewish nature of Matthew's Gospel may suggest that it was written in the Holy Land, though many think it may have originated in Syrian Antioch.

Recipients

Since his Gospel was written in Greek, Matthew's readers were obviously Greek-speaking. They also seem to have been Jews. Many elements point to Jewish readership: Matthew's concern with

fulfillment of the OT (he has more quotations from and allusions to the OT than any other NT author); his tracing of Jesus' descent from Abraham (ch. 1:1-17); his lack of explanation of Jewish customs (especially in contrast to Mark); his use of Jewish terminology (e.g., “kingdom of heaven,” where “heaven” reveals the Jewish reverential reluctance to use the name of God; see note on 3:2); his emphasis on Jesus' role as “Son of David” (1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9,15; 22:41-45). This does not mean, however, that Matthew restricts his Gospel to Jews. He records the coming of the Magi (non-Jews) to worship the infant Jesus (ch. 2:1-12), as well as Jesus' statement that the “field is the world” (13:38). He also gives a full statement of the Great Commission (ch. 28:18-20). These passages show that, although Matthew's Gospel is Jewish, it has a universal outlook.

Purpose

Matthew's main purpose is to confirm for his Jewish Christian readers that Jesus is their Messiah. Although all the Gospel writers quote the OT, Matthew includes many proof texts (1:22-23; 2:15,17-18,23; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:17-21; 13:35; 27:9-10) to drive home his basic theme: Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT predictions of the Messiah. Matthew even finds the history of God's people in the OT recapitulated in some aspects of Jesus' life (see, e.g., his quotation of Ho 11:1 in 2:15). To accomplish his purpose Matthew also emphasizes Jesus' Davidic lineage (see Recipients above).

Structure

The way the material is arranged reveals an artistic touch. The whole Gospel is woven around five great discourses: (1) chs. 5-7; (2) ch. 10; (3) ch. 13; (4) ch. 18; (5) chs. 24-25. That this is deliberate is clear from the refrain that concludes each discourse: “When Jesus had finished saying these things,” or similar words (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The narrative sections, in each case, appropriately lead up to the discourses. The Gospel has a fitting prologue (ch. 1-2) and a challenging epilogue (ch. 28:16-20).

The fivefold division may suggest that Matthew has modeled his book on the structure of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the OT). He may also be presenting the gospel as a new Torah and Jesus as a new and greater Moses.

Outline

- I. The Birth and Early Years of Jesus (chs. 1-2)
 - A. His Genealogy (1:1-17)
 - B. His Birth (1:18-2:12)
 - C. His Sojourn in Egypt (ch. 2:13-23)
- II. The Beginnings of Jesus' Ministry (3:1-4:11)
 - A. His Forerunner (ch. 3:1-12)
 - B. His Baptism (ch. 3:13-17)
 - C. His Temptation (ch. 4:1-11)
- III. Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (4:12-14:12)
 - A. The Beginning of the Galilean Campaign (ch. 4:12-25)
 - B. The Sermon on the Mount (ch. 5-7)
 - C. A Collection of Miracles (ch. 8-9)
 - D. The Commissioning of the 12 Apostles (ch. 10)
 - E. Ministry throughout Galilee (ch. 11-12)
 - F. The Parables of the Kingdom (ch. 13)
 - G. Herod's Reaction to Jesus' Ministry (ch. 14:1-12)
- IV. Jesus' Withdrawals from Galilee (14:13-17:20 [21])
 - A. To the Eastern Shore of the Sea of Galilee (14:13-15:20)
 - B. To Phoenicia (ch. 15:21-28)
 - C. To the Decapolis (15:29-16:12)
 - D. To Caesarea Philippi (16:13-17:20 [21])
- V. Jesus' Last Ministry in Galilee (17:22-18:35)
 - A. Prediction of Jesus' Death (ch. 17:22-23)
 - B. Temple Tax (ch. 17:24-27)
 - C. Discourse on Life in the Kingdom (ch. 18)
- VI. Jesus' Ministry in Judea and Perea (ch. 19-20)
 - A. Teaching concerning Divorce (ch. 19:1-12)
 - B. Teaching concerning Little Children (ch. 19:13-15)
 - C. The Rich Young Man (ch. 19:16-30)
 - D. The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (ch. 20:1-16)
 - E. Prediction of Jesus' Death (ch. 20:17-19)
 - F. A Mother's Request (ch. 20:20-28)
 - G. Restoration of Sight at Jericho (ch. 20:29-34)
- VII. Passion Week (ch. 21-27)
 - A. The Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as King (ch. 21:1-11)
 - B. The Clearing of the Temple (ch. 21:12-17)
 - C. The Last Controversies with the Jewish Leaders (21:18-23:39)
 - D. The Olivet Discourse (ch. 24-25)
 - E. The Anointing of Jesus' Feet (ch. 26:1-13)
 - F. The Arrest, Trials and Death of Jesus (26:14-27:66)
- VIII. The Resurrection (ch. 28)
 - A. The Earthquake and the Angel's Announcement (ch. 28:1-7)

- B. Jesus' Encounter with the Women (ch. 28:8-10)
- C. The Guards' Report and the Jewish Elders' Bribe (ch. 28:11-15)
- D. The Great Commission (ch. 28:16-20)

Study Notes on Matthew

1:1-16 For a comparison of Matthew's genealogy with Luke's see note on Lk 3:23–38 . The types of people mentioned in this genealogy reveal the broad scope of those who make up the people of God as well as the genealogy of Jesus.

1:1 *son of David*. A Messianic title (see Introduction: Recipients ; Purpose ; see also note on 9:27) found several times in this Gospel (in 1:20 it is not a Messianic title). In Jesus the Davidic covenant is fulfilled (see 2Sa 7:5-16 and note on 7:11). *son of Abraham*. Because Matthew was writing to Jews, it was important to identify Jesus in this way. In Jesus the Abrahamic covenant is fulfilled (see Ge 12:2-3 ; 15:9-21 ; 17 ; Zec 9:10 and note).

1:3 *Tamar*. In Matthew's genealogy five women are named: Tamar (here), Rahab (v. 5), Ruth (v. 5), Bathsheba (not by name but by description—“Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,” v. 6) and, of course, Mary (v. 16). At least three of these women were Gentiles (Tamar, Rahab and Ruth). Bathsheba was probably an Israelite (1Ch 3:5) but was closely associated with the Hittites because of Uriah, her Hittite husband. By including these women (contrary to custom) in his genealogy, Matthew indicates at the very outset of his Gospel that God's saving activity is not limited to the people of Israel.

1:4 *Amminadab*. Father-in-law of Aaron (Ex 6:23).

1:5 *Rahab*. See Jos 2 . Since quite a long time had elapsed between Rahab and David and because of Matthew's desire for systematic organization (see note on v. 17), a number of the generations between these two ancestors were not listed by Matthew (see Luke's list: David, Jesse, Obed, Boaz [Lk 3:31-32]; cf. note on Ge 4:17–18).

1:8 *Jehoram the father*. Matthew calls Jehoram the father of Uzziah, but from 2Ch 21:4-26:23 it is clear that, again, several generations were assumed (Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah) and that

“father” is used in the sense of “forefather” (see NIV text notes on 1Ch 1:5,10).

1:11 *Josiah the father.* Similarly (see note on v. 8), Josiah is called the father of Jeconiah (i.e., Jehoiachin; see NIV text note), whereas he was actually the father of Jehoiakim and the grandfather of Jehoiachin (2Ch 36:1-9).

1:12 *Shealtiel the father.* See note on 1Ch 3:19 .

1:16 Matthew does not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus but only that he was the husband of Mary and that Jesus was born of her. In this genealogy Matthew shows that, although Jesus is not the physical son of Joseph, he is the legal son and therefore a descendant of David (see Lk 2:33 ; Jn 1:45 and notes).

1:17 *fourteen generations ... fourteen ... fourteen.* These divisions reflect two characteristics of Matthew's Gospel: (1) an apparent fondness for numbers and (2) concern for systematic arrangement. The number 14 may have been chosen because it is twice seven (the number of completeness) and/or because it is the numerical value of the name David (see notes on Pr 10:1 ; Rev 13:17). For the practice of telescoping genealogies to achieve the desired number of names see Introduction to 1 Chronicles: Genealogies .

1:18 *pledged to be married.* There were no sexual relations during a Jewish betrothal period, but it was a much more binding relationship than a modern engagement and could be broken only by divorce (see v. 19). In Dt 22:24 a betrothed woman is called a “wife,” though the preceding verse speaks of her as being “pledged to be married.” Matthew uses the terms “husband” (v. 19) and “wife” (v. 24) of Joseph and Mary before their marriage was consummated (see note on Joel 1:8). *the Holy Spirit.* The common NT way of referring to the divine Spirit, who in the OT was almost always called “the Spirit of God” or “the Spirit of the LORD .” See Ps 51:11 and note . Christian reflection on the Biblical word about him (see 3:16-17; 28:19 ; 2Co 13:14 and notes) led to the understanding that he is one of the three persons of the Trinity.

1:19 *righteous.* To Jews this meant being zealous in keeping the law. *divorce her quietly.* He would sign the necessary legal papers but not have her

judged publicly and put to death by stoning (see Dt 22:23-24).

1:20 *in a dream.* The phrase occurs five times in the first two chapters of Matthew (here; 2:12-13,19,22) and indicates the means the Lord used for speaking to Joseph. *Joseph son of David.* See notes on 1:1 ; perhaps a hint that the message of the angel related to the expected Messiah. *take Mary home as your wife.* They were legally bound to each other, but not yet living together as husband and wife. *what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.* This agrees perfectly with the announcement to Mary (Lk 1:35), except that the latter is more specific (see note on Lk 1:26–35).

1:21 *the name Jesus.* See NIV text note; the meaning is more specifically explained in the rest of the verse. *save.* See Lk 2:11 and note .

1:22 *fulfill.* Twelve times (here; 2:15,23; 3:15; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14,35; 21:4; 27:9) Matthew speaks of the OT being fulfilled, i.e., of events in NT times that were prophesied in the OT—a powerful testimony to the divine origin of Scripture and its accuracy even in small details. In the fulfillments we also see the writer's concern for linking the gospel with the OT.

1:23 See note on Isa 7:14 . This is the first of at least 47 quotations, most of them Messianic, that Matthew takes from the OT (see NIV text notes throughout Matthew).

1:24 *angel of the Lord.* See Lk 2:9 and note .

1:25 *he had no union with her until she gave birth.* Both Matthew and Luke (1:26-35) make it clear that Jesus was born of a virgin. *gave birth to ... Jesus.* In 6 or 5 B.C. (see chart, The Life of Christ ; see also note on 2:15).

2:1 *Bethlehem in Judea.* A village about five miles south of Jerusalem. Matthew says nothing of the events in Nazareth (cf. Lk 1:26-56). Possibly wanting to emphasize Jesus' Davidic background, he begins with the events that happened in David's city. It is called “Bethlehem in Judea,” not only to distinguish it from the town of the same name about seven miles northwest of Nazareth, but also to emphasize that Jesus came from the tribe (Judah) and territory that produced the line of Davidic kings. That Jews expected the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem and to be from

David's family is clear from Jn 7:42 (cf. Mi 5:2). *King Herod*. Herod the Great (37–4 B.C.), to be distinguished from the other Herods in the Bible (see chart, House of Herod). Herod was a non-Jew, an Idumean, who was appointed king of Judea by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C. and gained control in 37. Like many rulers of the day, he was ruthless, murdering one of his wives, three of his sons, his mother-in-law, a brother-in-law, an uncle and many others whom he suspected of threatening his royal power—not to mention the babies in Bethlehem (v. 16). His reign was also noted for splendor, as seen in the many theaters, amphitheaters, monuments, pagan altars, fortresses (see, e.g., note on v. 15) and other buildings he erected or refurbished—including the greatest work of all, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, begun in 20 B.C. and finished 68 years after his death. *Magi*. Probably astrologers, perhaps from Persia or southern Arabia, both of which are east of the Holy Land. *Jerusalem*. Since they were looking for the “king of the Jews” (v. 2), they naturally came to the Jewish capital city (see map No. 10 at the end of this study Bible).

☞ **2:2** *born king*. The Magi realized that Jesus was born a king, not that he would become one later on. *king of the Jews*. Indicates the Magi were Gentiles. Matthew wants to show that people of all nations acknowledged Jesus as “king of the Jews” and came to worship him as Lord. *star*. Probably not an ordinary star, planet or comet, though some interpreters have identified it with the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 7 B.C. or with other astronomical phenomena (cf. Nu 24:17 and note).

2:4 *chief priests*. See note on Mk 8:31 ; Sadducees (see note on 3:7) who were in charge of worship at the temple in Jerusalem. *teachers of the law*. The Jewish scholars of the day, professionally trained in the development, teaching and application of OT law. Their authority was not official but arose merely from their training in the traditions of Scripture interpretation (see note on Lk 5:17).

2:6 See Mic 5:2 and note .

2:11 *house*. The Magi did not visit Jesus at the manger on the night of his birth as did the shepherds. They came some months later and visited him as a “child” in his “house.” *the child with his mother Mary*. Every time the child Jesus and his mother are mentioned together, he is

mentioned first (11 , vv. 11 , 13-14 , 20-21). *gold ... incense ... myrrh*. The three gifts perhaps gave rise to the legend that there were three “wise men” (cf. NIV text note on v. 1). But the Bible does not indicate the number of the Magi, and they were almost certainly not kings. *incense*. Frankincense (see note on Ex 30:34). *myrrh*. See note on Ge 37:25 .

2:13 *angel of the Lord*. See note on Lk 2:9 .

☞ **2:15** *the death of Herod*. In 4 B.C. During the time of the Roman empire, a mistake was made in using the Roman calendar to calculate the year of Herod the Great's death, and the mistake found its way into the (Julian/Gregorian) calendar we use today. So, as strange as it may seem, King Herod died in 4 B.C. , and since Christ was born one to two years before Herod's death, he (Christ) was born in 6 or 5 B.C. *Out of Egypt I called my son*. This quotation from Ho 11:1 originally referred to God's calling the nation of Israel out of Egypt in the time of Moses. But Matthew applies it also to Jesus. He sees the history of Israel (God's “son”) recapitulated in the life of Jesus (God's unique Son; see Jn 3:16 and note). Just as Israel as an infant nation went down into Egypt, so the child Jesus went there. And as Israel was led by God out of Egypt, so also was Jesus. How long Jesus and his parents were in Egypt is not known.

2:16 *kill all the boys ... two years old and under*. The number killed has often been exaggerated as being in the thousands. In so small a village as Bethlehem, however (even with the surrounding area included), the number was probably not large—though the act, of course, was no less brutal.

2:18 See note on Jer 31:15 .

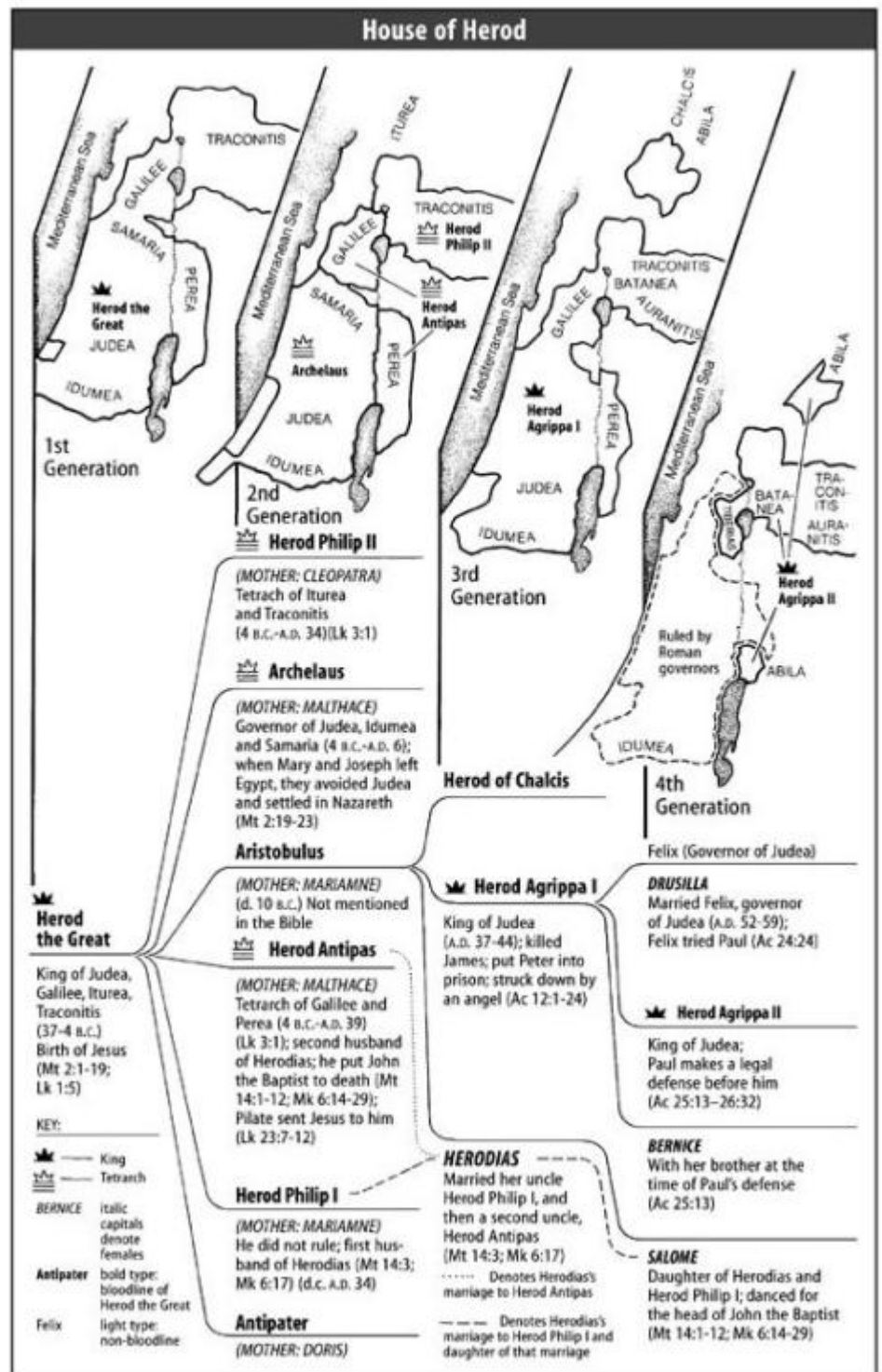
2:22 *Archelaus*. This son of Herod the Great ruled over Judea and Samaria for only ten years (4 B.C.–A.D . 6). He was unusually cruel and tyrannical and so was deposed. Judea then became a Roman province, administered by governors appointed by the emperor (see chart, House of Herod). *Galilee*. The northern part of the Holy Land in Jesus' day (see map, Journey to Bethlehem, Flight to Egypt and Return to Nazareth , and map No. 12 at the end of this study Bible).

☞ **2:23** *Nazareth*. A rather obscure town, nowhere mentioned in the OT. It was Jesus' hometown (21:11; 26:71 ; see Lk 2:39 ; 4:16-24 ; Jn 1:45-

46). *He will be called a Nazarene.* These exact words are not found in the OT and probably refer to several OT prefigurations and/or predictions (note the plural, “prophets”) that the Messiah would be despised (e.g., Ps 22:6 ; Isa 53:3), for in Jesus’ day “Nazarene” was virtually a synonym for “despised” (see Jn 1:45-46). Some hold that in speaking of Jesus as a “Nazarene,” Matthew may be alluding to the “Branch” (Hebrew *netser*) of Isa 11:1 , since the word also appears in the Targums (see note on Ne 8:8), rabbinic literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls (see essay, *The Time Between the Testaments*) as a Messianic title.

■ **3:1 John the Baptist.** The forerunner of Jesus, born c. 7 B.C. to Zechariah, a priest, and his wife Elizabeth (see Lk 1:5-80). *Desert of Judea.* An area that stretched some 20 miles from the Jerusalem-Bethlehem plateau down to the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, perhaps the same region where John lived (cf. Lk 1:80). The people of Qumran (often associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls) lived in this area too (see essay, *The Time Between the Testaments*).

■ **3:2 Repent.** Repentance is a radical change in one’s life that involves forsaking sin and turning or returning to God. *kingdom of heaven.* A phrase found only in Matthew, where it occurs 33 times. See Introduction: Recipients . Mark and Luke refer to the “kingdom of God,” a term Matthew uses only four times (see note on Mk 11:30). The “kingdom of heaven/God” in the preaching of Jesus as recounted in the Gospels is the reign of God that he brings about through Jesus Christ i.e.,



the establishment of God's rule in the hearts and lives of his people, the overcoming of all the forces of evil, the removal from the world of all the consequences of sin—including death and all that diminishes life—and the creation of a new order of righteousness and peace. The idea of God's kingdom is central to Jesus' teaching and is mentioned 50 times in Matthew alone. *is near.* See note on Mk 1:15 .

3:3 All three Synoptic Gospels quote Isa 40:3 (Luke quotes two additional verses) and apply it to John the Baptist. *make straight paths for him.* Equivalent to “Prepare the way for the Lord” (see

note on Lk 3:4). The preparation was to be moral and spiritual.

3:4 *leather belt*. Used to bind up the loose outer garments. Camel's hair and a leather belt were worn by Elijah and other prophets (see 2Ki 1:8 ; Zec 13:4-6 and notes). *locusts and wild honey*. No one living in the desert hesitated to eat insects, and locusts were among the clean foods (Lev 11:21-22). John's simple food, clothing and lifestyle were a visual protest against self-indulgence.

3:6 *Confessing their sins*. See Pr 28:13 ; 1Jn 1:9 and notes . *Jordan River*. See note on Mk 1:5 , and map, Journey to Bethlehem, Flight to Egypt and Return to Nazareth .

3:7 *Pharisees and Sadducees*. See essay, The Time Between the Testaments , and chart, Jewish Sects . See also notes on Lk 5:17 (Pharisees) and Mk 12:18 ; Lk 20:27 ; Ac 4:1 (Sadducees). The Pharisees (see notes on Mk 2:16 ; Lk 5:17) were a legalistic and separatistic group who strictly, but often hypocritically, kept the law of Moses and the unwritten “tradition of the elders” (15:2). The Sadducees (see notes on Mk 12:18 ; Lk 20:27 ; Ac 4:1) were more worldly and politically minded, and were theologically unorthodox—among other things denying the resurrection, angels and spirits (Ac 23:8). *baptizing*. See note on Mk 1:4 . *the coming wrath*. The day of God's judgment (see Ro 2:5).

3:9 *We have Abraham as our father*. See Jn 8:39 . Salvation does not come as a birthright (even for the Jews) but through faith in Christ (Ro 2:28-29 ; Ga 3:7,9,29). *these stones*. John may have pointed to the stones in the Jordan River. *children for Abraham*. The true people of God are not limited to the physical descendants of Abraham (cf. Ro 9:6-8 and notes). Whether John was speaking Hebrew or Aramaic here, the wordplay between “stones” and “children” in either language makes this famous saying all the more memorable.

3:10 *The ax is already at the root of the trees*. Judgment is near. *every tree that does not produce good fruit*. Cf. Jn 15:2 and note .

3:11 *with water for repentance*. John's baptism presupposed repentance; he would not baptize the Pharisees and Sadducees because they failed to give any evidence of repentance (vv. 7-8). *whose*

sandals I am not fit to carry. See note on Jn 1:27 . *carry*. Mark (1:7) and Luke (3:16) have “untie,” but the Greek for “carry” can also mean “remove.” *baptize you with the Holy Spirit*. See Jn 1:33 and note . *with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. Demonstrated in a dramatic way at Pentecost (Ac 1:5,8 ; 2:1-13; 11:16), though here “fire” may refer to judgment to come (see v. 12). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all God's people was promised in Joe 2:28-29 and at least partially fulfilled in Ac 2:16-21 .

3:12 *His winnowing fork*. For the process of winnowing see note on Ru 1:22 . Here it is figurative for the separation of the righteous (“wheat”) from the wicked (“chaff”). *unquenchable fire*. Eschatological judgment (see 25:41 and note ; cf. La 1:13 and note). The OT prophets and NT writers sometimes compress the first and second comings of Christ so that they seem to be one event (see, e.g., Isa 61:2 and note).

3:13 *Jesus ... baptized by John*. See map and accompanying text above, Jesus' Baptism and Temptation.

3:15 Jesus' baptism marked the beginning of his Messianic ministry. There were several reasons for his baptism: (1) The first, mentioned here, was “to fulfill all righteousness.” His baptism indicated that he was consecrated to God and officially approved by him, as especially shown in the descent of the Holy Spirit (v. 16) and the words of the Father (v. 17 ; cf. Ps 2:7 ; Isa 42:1). All God's righteous requirements for the Messiah were fully met in Jesus. (2) At Jesus' baptism John publicly announced the arrival of the Messiah and the inception of his ministry (Jn 1:31-34). (3) By his baptism Jesus completely identified himself with humanity's sin and failure (though he himself needed no repentance or cleansing from sin; see Heb 4:15 and note), becoming our substitute (2Co 5:21). (4) His baptism was an example to his followers.

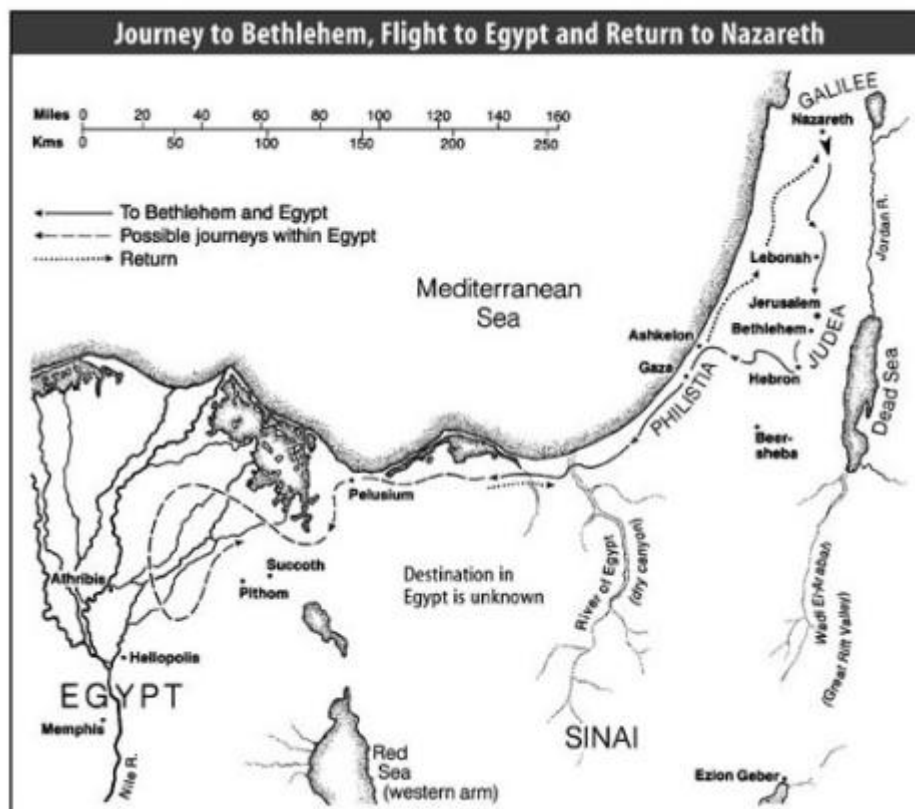
3:16-17 All three persons of the Trinity are clearly referred to here (see 1:18; 28:19 and notes).

3:16 *Spirit of God*. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus not to overcome sin (for he was sinless), but to equip him (see note on Jdg 3:10) for his work as the divine-human Messiah. *like a dove*. That is, appearing in the form of a dove (see also note on Mk 1:10).

■ **3:17** *voice from heaven.* The voice (1) authenticated Jesus' unique sonship and echoes Ps 2:7 ("This is my Son"), (2) identified Jesus with the suffering servant of Isa 42:1 ("whom I love"), and (3) offered the Father's support of Jesus in his mission ("with him I am well pleased"). This word from the Father must have greatly encouraged Jesus at the very outset of his earthly ministry. *my Son.* See notes on 14:33 ; Jn 3:16 . *I am well pleased.* The tense of the Greek verb used here is timeless. God has always been and always will be "well pleased" with his Son.

desire (see 2Co 5:21 ; Heb 7:26 ; 1Pe 2:22 and note ; 1Jn 3:5). Yet Jesus' temptation was real, not merely symbolic. He was "tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin" (see Heb 4:15 and note). He was confronted by the tempter with a real opportunity to sin. Although Jesus was the Son of God, he defeated Satan by using a weapon that everyone has at their disposal: "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ep 6:17). He met all three temptations with Scriptural truth (4 , vv. 4 , 7 , 10) from Deuteronomy.

■ **4:1** *Jesus ... tempted by the devil.* See map and accompanying text, *Jesus' Baptism and Temptation . led by the Spirit ... to be tempted.* This



■ **4:1-11** The significance of Jesus' temptations, especially because they occurred at the outset of his public ministry, seems best understood in terms of the kind of Messiah he was to be. He would not accomplish his mission by using his supernatural power for his own needs (first temptation), by using his power to win a large following by miracles or magic (second temptation) or by compromising with Satan (third temptation). Jesus had no inward desire or inclination to sin, for these in themselves are sin (Mt 5:28). Because he was God he did not sin in any way, whether by actions or word or inner

testing of Jesus (the Greek verb translated "tempted" can also be rendered "tested"), which was divinely intended, has as its primary background Dt 8:1-5 , from which Jesus also quotes in his first reply to the devil (see v. 4 and NIV text note). There Moses recalls how the Lord led the Israelites in the desert 40 years "to humble you and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands" (Dt 8:2 ; see also Dt 8:16). Here at the beginning of his ministry Jesus is subjected to a similar test and shows himself to be the true Israelite who lives "on every word that comes from

the mouth of the LORD" (Dt 8:3). And whereas Adam failed the great test and plunged the whole race into sin (Ge 3), Jesus was faithful and thus demonstrated his qualification to become the Savior of all who receive him. It was, moreover, important that Jesus be tested/tempted as Israel and we are, so that he could become our "merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb 2:17 ; see note there) and thus be "able to help those who are being tempted" (Heb 2:18 ; see Heb 4:15-16). Finally, as the one who remained faithful in temptation he became the model for all believers when they are tempted. *desert.* Probably somewhere in the desert or wilderness area stretching from the central hill country of Judea to the lower Jordan Valley and to the Dead Sea, but still west of both. *by the devil.* God surely tests his

people, but it is the devil who tempts to evil (see notes on Ge 22:1 ; Jas 1:13 ; see also 1Jn 3:8 ; Rev 2:9-10 and notes ; Rev 12:9-10). Like the Hebrew for “Satan,” the Greek for “devil” means “accuser” or “slanderer.” The devil is a personal being, not a mere force or influence. He is the great archenemy of God and the leader of the hosts of darkness.

4:2 *forty days and forty nights.* The number recalls the experiences of Moses (Ex 24:18; 34:28) and Elijah (1Ki 19:8 ; see note there), as well as the 40 years of Israel's temptation (testing) in the desert (see note on v. 1).

4:3 *If you are the Son of God.* Meaning “Since you are.” The devil is not casting doubt on Jesus' divine sonship but is tempting him to use his supernatural powers as the Son of God for his own ends. *Son of God.* See notes on Ps 2:7 ; 45:6 ; Jn 3:16 . *tell these stones to become bread.* See note on Lk 4:3 .

4:4 Just as God gave the Israelites manna in a supernatural way (see Dt 8:3 and note), so he also gave them his word by which they were to live and by keeping which they would have life (see Dt 6:2 ; 30:19-20; 32:46-47 ; cf. Jn 4:32-34 and note on 4:34 ; 6:27).

by Herod the Great (see notes on 2:1 ; Jn 2:20). The courtyard had been greatly enlarged, to about 330 by 500 yards. To accomplish this a huge platform had been erected to compensate for the sharp falling off of the land to the southeast. An enormous retaining wall made of massive stones was built to support the platform. On the platform stood the temple building, porches and courtyards flanked by beautiful colonnades (see diagram below).

4:6 *throw yourself down.* See note on Lk 4:9 . *it is written.* See note on Lk 4:10 .

4:9 *worship me.* See note on Lk 4:7 .

4:10 *Satan.* See note on v. 1 .

4:11 *the devil left him.* See note on Lk 4:13 .

4:12 See map No. 11 at the end of this study Bible. *John had been put in prison.* See Mk 1:14 and note on Lk 3:20 . The reason for John's imprisonment is given in 14:3-4 .

4:13 *Capernaum.* Although not mentioned in the OT, it was evidently a sizable town in Jesus' day. Peter's house there became Jesus' base of operations during his extended ministry in Galilee (see Mk 2:1; 9:33). A fifth-century church now stands over the supposed site of

Peter's house, and a fourth-century synagogue is located a short distance from it (see diagram, Capernaum Synagogue).

4:15-16 Another Messianic prophecy from Isaiah. Jesus spent most of his public ministry “in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali” (v. 13), which is north and west of the Sea of Galilee.

4:15 *Galilee of the Gentiles.* A region that, from the Jewish perspective in Jesus' day, was “in darkness” and “the land of the shadow of death” (v. 16), probably because it was far removed from the religious influences of Jerusalem and because large numbers of Gentiles lived there. Matthew may have chosen this text (Isa 9:1-2) because of his interest in the universal



4:5 See note on Lk 4:2 . *highest point of the temple.* See note on Lk 4:9 . *temple.* The temple, including the entire temple area, had been rebuilt

intent of the gospel (see 2:1-12; 13:38; 28:19 ; see also Introduction: Recipients).

4:17 *From that time on.* These words indicate an important turning point in the life of Jesus and occur three times in Matthew's Gospel (see also 16:21; 26:16 , NIV "From then on"). Some think these words mark the three main sections of the book. *Repent.* See note on Mk 1:4 . Jesus began his public ministry with the same message as that of John the Baptist (see 3:2 and note). The people must repent because God's reign was drawing near in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2 . *is near.* See note on Mk 1:15 .

4:18 *Sea of Galilee.* See note on Mk 1:16 . *net.* A circular casting net used either from a boat or while standing in shallow water.

☑ **4:19** *fishers of men.* Evangelism was at the heart of Jesus' call to his disciples.

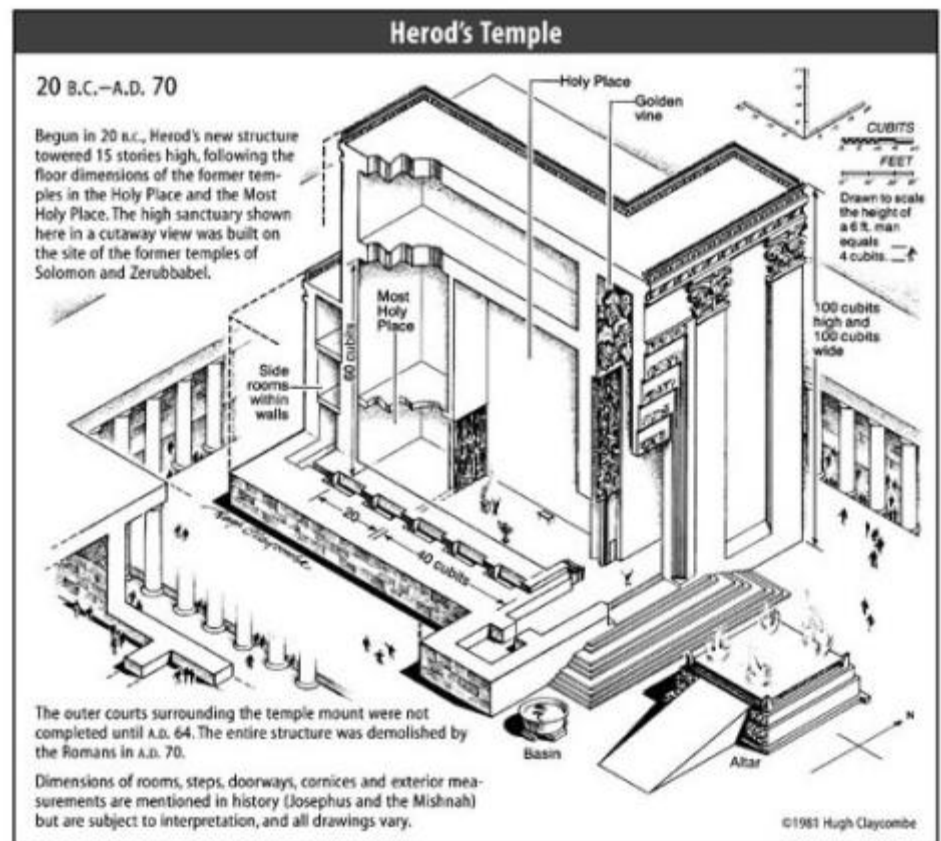
4:20 See note on Mk 1:17 .

■ **4:21** *boat.* In 1986 the remains of a 2,000-year-old typical fisherman's boat were found off the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Its discoverers named it the Jesus Boat. *preparing their nets.* Washing, mending and hanging the nets up to dry in preparation for the next day's work.

■ **4:23** *teaching ... preaching ... healing.* Jesus' threefold ministry. The synagogues (see note on Mk 1:21) provided a place for him to teach on the Sabbath. During the week he preached to larger crowds in the open air. *good news.* See note on Mk 1:1 .

4:24 *Syria.* A Roman province of somewhat shifting boundaries, lying generally north of Galilee and extending to the Taurus Mountains. Antioch and Damascus were its two leading cities. *those having seizures.* The Greek word for this expression originally meant "moonstruck" and reflects the ancient superstition that seizures were caused by changes of the moon.

4:25 *Large crowds.* Jesus' influence spread quickly over a large geographical area. *the Decapolis.* A loose league of free (relatively independent from Roman administration) cities (see NIV text note and map, The Decapolis and the Lands beyond the Jordan) characterized by high Greek culture. All but one, Scythopolis (Beth Shan), were east of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River. The league stretched from a point northeast of the Sea of Galilee southward to



Philadelphia (modern Amman). *followed him.* Not all who followed were true disciples; many were curious onlookers, as subsequent events revealed only too clearly.

■ **5:1-7:29** The Sermon on the Mount is in effect King Jesus' inaugural address, explaining what he expects of members of his kingdom. It is the first of five great discourses in Matthew (chs. 5-7 ; 10 ; 13 ; 18 ; 24-25 ; see Introduction: Structure). It contains three types of material: (1) beatitudes, i.e., declarations of blessedness (ch. 5:1-12), (2) ethical admonitions (5:13-20; 6:1-7:23) and (3) contrasts between Jesus' ethical teaching and Jewish legalistic traditions (ch. 5:21-48). The

Sermon ends with a short parable stressing the importance of practicing what has just been taught (ch. 7:24-27) and an expression of amazement by the crowds at the authority with which Jesus spoke (ch. 7:28-29).

Opinion differs as to whether the Sermon is a summary of what Jesus taught on one occasion or a compilation of teachings presented on numerous occasions. Matthew possibly took a single sermon and expanded it with other relevant teachings of Jesus. Thirty-four of the verses in Matthew's Sermon occur in different contexts in Luke than the apparently parallel Sermon on the Plain (see Lk 6:20-49 and note).

The moral and ethical standard called for in the Sermon on the Mount is so high that some have dismissed the Sermon as being completely unrealistic or have projected its fulfillment to the future kingdom. There is no doubt, however, that Jesus (and Matthew) gave the Sermon as a standard for all Christians, realizing that its demands cannot be met in our own power. It is also true that Jesus occasionally used hyperbole to make his point (see, e.g., note on 5:29–30).

5:1 mountainside. The exact location is uncertain. It may have been the gently sloping hillside at the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee, not far from Capernaum (see note on Lk 6:20–49). The new law, like the old (Ex 19:3), was given from a mountain. *sat down.* It was the custom for Jewish rabbis to be seated while teaching (see Mk 4:1 and note ; 9:35 ; Lk 4:20 and note ; 5:3 ; Jn 8:2 ; cf. Eze 8:1 and note). *disciples.* Lit. “learners.” Since at the end of the Sermon the “crowds” expressed amazement at Jesus' teaching (7:28), “disciples” may here be used in a broader sense than the Twelve. Or perhaps the Sermon is addressed to the Twelve with the crowds also listening.

■ **5:3 Blessed.** The word means more than “happy,” because happiness is an emotion often dependent on outward circumstances. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive spiritual joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God. See notes on Ps 1:1 ; Rev 1:3 . *poor in spirit.* In contrast to the spiritually proud and self-sufficient. *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* The kingdom is not something earned. It is more a gift than a reward.

5:4 those who mourn. Over both personal and corporate sins (see Ezr 9:4 ; Ps 119:36).

5:5 meek. This beatitude is taken from Ps 37:11 (see note there) and refers not so much to an attitude toward people as to a disposition before God, namely, humility. *the earth.* The new promised land (see Rev 21:1 ; cf. note on Ps 37:9).

■ **5:6 hunger and thirst for righteousness.** Have a deep longing for both personal righteousness and justice for the oppressed.

5:8 heart. The center of one's being, including mind, will and emotions (see note on Ps 4:7).

5:9 peacemakers. Those who promote peace, as far as it depends on them (Ro 12:18). In so doing, they reflect the character of their heavenly Father and so are called “sons of God” (see Jas 3:17-18).

■ **5:10 Blessed.** Because persecution provides an opportunity for believers to prove their fitness for the kingdom (see Heb 12:4-11 and notes). *persecuted.* Righteous living is often offensive to unbelievers (cf. v. 11). *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* For the blessings of God's kingdom see 3:2 and note .

5:13 salt. Used for flavoring and preserving (cf. Mk 9:50 and note). *loses its saltiness.* Most of the salt used in Israel came from the Dead Sea and was full of impurities. This caused it to lose some of its flavor.

■ **5:14 light of the world.** Although Jesus himself fulfilled the mission of the Lord's servant to be “a light for the Gentiles” (Isa 9:2; 42:6 ; see also Lk 2:32 and notes on Isa 49:6 ; Lk 2:31), he expected his followers to carry on the work (see vv. 15-16 ; cf. Jn 8:12 ; Phl 2:15 and notes).

■ **5:15 lamp.** In Jesus' day people used small clay lamps that burned olive oil drawn up by a wick (see note on Ex 25:37). *bowl.* A bowl that held about eight quarts of ground meal or flour.

5:16 praise your Father. Good deeds are not to be done in a public way for one's own honor (“before men, to be seen by them,” 6:1) but for the glory of God (see 1Co 10:31 ; Phl 1:11 ; 1Pe 2:12 and notes). *Father in heaven.* Matthew uses the phrase “Father in heaven” or “heavenly Father” 17 times, Mark and Luke only once each, and John not at all.

5:17 *the Law*. The first five books of the OT. *the Prophets*. Not only the Latter Prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which we call Major Prophets, and the 12 Minor Prophets (lumped together by the Jews as “the Book of the Twelve”)—but also the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings). Taken together, “the Law” and “the Prophets” designated the entire OT (see Lk 24:27 and note), including the Writings, the third section of the Hebrew Bible. See 13:35 , where Matthew introduces a quotation from the Writings (Ps 78:2) with “what was spoken through the prophet.” *fulfill*. Jesus fulfilled the Law in the sense that he gave it its full meaning. He emphasized its deep, underlying principles and total commitment to it rather than mere external acknowledgment and obedience.

☒ **5:18-20** Jesus is not speaking against observing all the requirements of the Law but against hypocritical, Pharisaical legalism. Such legalism was not the keeping of all details of the Law but the hollow sham of keeping laws externally to gain merit before God while breaking them inwardly. It was following the letter of the Law while ignoring its spirit. Jesus repudiates the Pharisees' interpretation of the Law and their view of righteousness by works. He preaches a righteousness that comes only through faith in him and his work. In the rest of the chapter, he gives six examples of Pharisaical externalism.

5:18 *smallest letter*. In Greek *iota* , which we use when we say, “It doesn't make one iota of difference.” It is the nearest Greek equivalent to the Hebrew *yodh*, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet (see Ps 119:73 title). *least stroke of a pen*. The Greek word for this phrase means “horn” and was used to designate the slight extension of a pen stroke that distinguished one Hebrew letter from another similar letter (somewhat like the bottom of a “j” that distinguishes it from an “i”).

5:20 *Pharisees*. See note on 3:7 . *teachers of the law*. See note on 2:4 . *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 .

☒ **5:21-22** *it was said ... But I tell you*. The contrast that Jesus sets up (21 , vv. 21 , 27 , 31 , 33 , 38 , 43) is not between the OT and his teaching (he has just established the validity of the OT Law). Rather, it is between the externalistic interpretations of the Law present in the Rabbinic tradition on the one hand and Jesus' correct

interpretation of the Law on the other. *murder*. Several Hebrew and Greek verbs mean “kill.” The ones used here and in Ex 20:13 mean specifically “murder.”

5:22-24 *brother*. That is, brother or sister; the Greek word was commonly used to refer to both (see note on Ro 1:13).

5:22 *Raca*. May be related to the Aramaic word for “empty” and mean “Empty-head!” *Sanhedrin*. See note on Mk 14:55 . *hell*. The Greek word is *ge(h)enna* , which derives its name from a deep ravine south of Jerusalem, the “Valley of (the Sons of) Hinnom” (Hebrew *ge' hinnom*). During the reigns of the wicked Ahaz and Manasseh, human sacrifices to the Ammonite god Molech were offered there. Josiah desecrated the valley because of the pagan worship there (2Ki 23:10 ; see Je 7:31-32 and note on 7:31 ; Manasseh 19:6). It became a sort of perpetually burning city dump and later a figure for the place of final punishment (see notes on Isa 66:24 ; Jer 7:31).

5:23-26 Two illustrations of dealing with anger by means of reconciliation.

5:25 Cf. Lk 12:57-59 .

5:26 *penny*. The smallest Roman copper coin (see note on Lk 12:59).

5:28 *looks at a woman lustfully*. Not a passing glance but a willful, calculated stare that arouses sexual desire. According to Jesus this is a form of adultery even if it is only “in his heart,” (see Job 31:1 and note).

☒ **5:29-30** Jesus is not teaching self-mutilation, for even a blind man can lust. What he is saying is that we should deal as drastically as necessary with sin, a point Jesus repeated on at least one other occasion (see 18:8-9 ; Mk 9:43-48).

5:30 *hell*. See note on v. 22 .

5:32 *except for marital unfaithfulness*. See note on 19:3 . Neither Mk 10:11-12 nor Lk 16:18 mentions this exception.

5:33-37 The OT recognized the useful role of swearing oaths in certain situations (even God swore oaths: see, e.g., Ge 22:16 ; Jos 5:6 ; Ps 89:3-4,35 ; Isa 45:22 ; Je 22:5 ; Eze 26:7 ; see also notes on Ge 9:13 ; 15:17 ; Dt 6:13 ; Jer 22:5 ; Heb

6:13)—common profanity is not in view. Jesus urged such honesty and integrity in all human speech that swearing oaths in support of assertions or commitments would not be necessary.

5:38 See notes on Ex 21:23–25 ; Lev 24:20 .

5:39 *resist*. Here it probably means in a court of law. *strikes*. The Greek verb used here means “slaps you with the back of the hand.” It was more an insult (cf. 26:67) than an act of violence. The point is that it is better to be insulted even twice than to take the matter to court. Ancient Near Eastern society had become very litigious.

5:40 *tunic ... cloak*. The first was an undergarment, the second a loose outer one. Since the outer garment was used to sleep in, OT law prohibited anyone from taking it even as a pledge overnight (see Ex 22:26–27 ; Dt 24:12–13).

5:42 Probably not a general requirement to give to everyone who asks but a reference to the poor (cf. Dt 15:7–11 ; Ps 112:5,9).

5:43 *hate your enemy*. Words not found anywhere in the OT. However, hatred for one's enemies was an accepted part of the Jewish ethic at that time in some circles (cf., e.g., the Dead Sea Scrolls work, *The Rule of the Community* 1.4,10). See note on Lev 19:18 .

5:44 *Love your enemies*. See note on Ex 23:4–5 . *pray*. Prayer is one of the practical ways love expresses itself (cf. Job 42:10 ; Ps 35:13–14 and notes).

5:45 *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven*. That is, be truly like him by loving “your enemies” and praying “for those who persecute you.” (v. 44 ; see v. 48 and note). *the evil and the good*. God shows his love to people without distinction.

5:46 *tax collectors*. Traditionally known as “publicans,” these were local men employed by Roman tax contractors to collect taxes for them. Because they worked for Rome and often demanded unreasonable payments, the tax collectors gained a bad reputation and were generally hated and considered traitors (see notes on Mk 2:14–15 ; Lk 3:12).

5:48 *Be perfect*. Christ sets up the high ideal of perfect love (see vv. 43–47)—not that we can

fully attain it in this life. That, however, is God's high standard for us.

6:1 *acts of righteousness*. The language comes from Jewish tradition. This verse introduces the discussion of three acts of righteousness: (1) giving (vv. 2–4), (2) praying (vv. 5–15) and (3) fasting (vv. 16–18). Jesus' concern here is with the motives behind such acts. *reward from your Father*. Spiritual growth and maturity or perhaps a heavenly reward of some kind—or both.

6:2 *when you give*. Not “if you give.” Jesus presupposes the disciples' giving to the poor. *announce it with trumpets*. Perhaps a reference to the noise made by coins as they were thrown into the temple treasury (see note on Mk 12:41). Or the phrase may be used figuratively to mean “make a big show of it.” *hypocrites*. The Greek word means “play-actor.” Matthew uses the word 13 times (Mark, twice; Luke, three times). Here it refers to those who fake being pious. *their reward in full*. The honor they receive from people is all the reward they get.

6:3 *do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing*. Not to be taken literally but as a way of emphasizing that one should not call attention to one's giving. Self glorification is always a present danger.

6:6 Jesus' followers are not to make a show of their praying, in contrast to “the hypocrites” (v. 5). It does not mean that all prayer should be private, as the plurals “our” and “us” in vv. 9–13 indicate. *room*. The Greek word here probably means “storeroom,” because unlike most of the rooms in the house, it had a door that could be shut.

6:7 *babbling like pagans*. They used long lists of the names of their gods in their prayers, hoping that by constantly repeating them they would call on the name of the god that could help them. Jesus is not necessarily condemning all long prayers, but meaningless verbiage in praying.

6:9–13 Commonly known as “The Lord's Prayer,” it is really “The Disciples' Prayer,” since it was meant as a model for them. The prayer nestles at the literary center of the Sermon on the Mount, and the surrounding texts in the Sermon echo the prayer's concerns. It contains six petitions, three relating more directly to God (vv. 9–10) and three to us (vv. 11–13). The order of these

petitions is significant and intentional. A similar prayer in Lk 11:2-4 occurs in a different historical setting.

▣ **6:9** *Our Father*. Never used by Jesus to refer to his and the disciples' Father together (see note on vv. 9-13 ; see also Jn 20:17 and note). *hallowed*. God is already holy (see Lev 11:44 and note ; 1Pe 1:15), so the prayer is not that God be made holy but that he be regarded as holy. By his saving and judging acts in history he shows himself holy (see Lev 10:3 ; Eze 36:23 and notes). This petition is that he so achieve his saving purposes in the world that his holiness is displayed before the eyes of the world's people and acknowledged by them—which will happen only as his kingdom comes. *name*. See notes on Ps 5:11 ; Eze 20:9 .

6:10 *your kingdom come*. Not in the sense of to “come” into existence—after all, it is already here (see 3:2 ; Lk 17:21 and notes)—but to “come” more and more completely until its full and final consummation. *your will be done on earth*. Logically follows “your kingdom come.” *on earth as it is in heaven*. Probably to be read with each of the three preceding petitions.

6:11 That is, meet our needs “each day” (Lk 11:3 ; see Ex 16:4 and note).

6:12 *debts*. Moral debts, i.e., sins (see note on Lk 11:4).

▣ **6:13** *lead us not into temptation*. That is, do not lead us through trials so deep that they would tempt us to be unfaithful to you (see 1Co 10:13 and note). God does not tempt (in the sense of enticing to sin; see Jas 1:13 and note). *the evil one*. Satan. Others think the reference is to “evil,” i.e., evil circumstances (see the first part of the NIV text note). For the second part of the NIV text note cf. 1Ch 29:10-11 .

6:15 *forgive ... forgive*. See Ep 4:32 and note .

6:16 *fast*. See notes on Mk 2:18 ; Lk 18:12 . Jesus does not condemn fasting as such but ostentation in fasting. *hypocrites*. See note on v. 2 . *their reward in full*. See note on v. 2 .

6:17 *put oil on your head and wash your face*. That is, maintain your regular appearance. Jews put ashes on their heads when fasting.

▣ **6:19-21** The dangers of riches are often mentioned in the NT (e.g., v. 24 ; 13:22; 19:22 ; Mk 10:17-30 ; Lk 12:16-21 ; 1Ti 6:9-10,17-19 ; Heb 13:5 ; Jas 5:2-3), but nowhere are they condemned in and of themselves. What Jesus condemns here is greed and the hoarding of wealth.

6:19 *Do not store up*. Or “Stop storing up.” They may have already started to do it. *moth and rust*. Representative of all agents and processes that destroy worldly possessions. *break in and steal*. Most houses in the Holy Land had walls made of mud bricks and could be broken into easily.

6:20 *treasures in heaven*. Anything done in this life that has eternal value will be rewarded. Cf. “rich toward God” (Lk 12:21).

6:21 See Lk 12:34 . *heart*. See note on 5:8 .

6:22 *The eye is the lamp of the body*. It lets light in to illumine the body. *your eyes are good*. You recognize the folly of storing up wealth (v. 19). The Greek term for “good,” however, may also be rendered “healthy,” here implying “generous.” *whole body*. Entire person.

6:23 *your eyes are bad*. They are blind to the deceitfulness of wealth. The Greek term for “bad,” however, may also be rendered “unhealthy,” here implying “stingy.”

6:24 See Lk 16:13 ; Jas 4:4 .

6:25 *do not worry*. See Phl 4:6 and note . *worry*. Undue anxiety—rather than a legitimate concern to provide for one's daily needs (cf. Lk 10:41-42 ; 2Th 3:6-12).

▣ **6:27** *add a single hour*. But anxiety may very well shorten one's life span, as modern medicine has shown.

6:28 *lilies*. Here represents flowers generally.

6:30 *thrown into the fire*. Grass was commonly used to heat clay ovens in the Holy Land. *you of little faith*. See 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20 ; Lk 12:28 .

▣ **6:33** The heart of the matter. *kingdom*. See note on 3:2 . *his righteousness*. The righteous life that God requires, as the content of the Sermon emphasizes (see, e.g., 5:6,10,20; 6:1).

☒ **7:1** The Christian is not to judge hypocritically or self-righteously, as can be seen from the context (v. 5). The same thought is expressed in 23:13-39 (cf. Ro 2:1). Obeying Christ's commands in this chapter does not preclude assessing another person's character—whether one is a dog (v. 6) or a false prophet (v. 15), or whether one's life shows fruit (v. 16). Scripture repeatedly exhorts believers to evaluate carefully (see Jn 7:24) and choose between good and bad people and things (“sexually immoral,” 1Co 5:9 ; those who masquerade as angels of light, 2Co 11:14 ; “dogs,” Phl 3:2 ; “false prophets,” 1Jn 4:1). The Christian is to “test everything” (1Th 5:21).

7:3-5 Jesus rebukes hypocritical judging.

7:3 *speck of sawdust ... plank*. An example of hyperbole in the teachings of Jesus (cf. 19:24). Its purpose is to drive home a point (see Lk 6:41 and note).

7:5 *hypocrite*. See note on 6:2 .

7:6 Teaching about the kingdom should be given in accordance with the spiritual capacity of the learners. *dogs*. The unclean dogs of the street were held in low esteem.

7:7-11 See note on Lk 11:5–13 .

☒ **7:8** *ask ... seek ... knock*. Greek present imperatives are used here, indicating constant asking, seeking and knocking. Persistent prayer is being emphasized (cf. Jas 4:2-3 ; cf. also Ge 32:26 and note).

7:11 *good gifts*. See Lk 11:13 and note .

7:12 The so-called Golden Rule is found in negative form in Rabbinic Judaism and also in Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. It occurred in various forms in Greek and Roman ethical teaching. Jesus stated it in positive form. *in everything*. Probably refers to the teaching of the entire Sermon up to this point. *sums up*. Cf. 22:36-40 ; Ro 13:8-10 and relevant notes . *the Law and the Prophets*. See note on 5:17 .

7:13 *narrow gate*. The gate that leads into the kingdom of heaven is synonymous with “life” (v. 14). *destruction*. Separation from God in hell.

7:15 *false prophets*. People who have not been sent by God but who claim that they have been (see 24:24 ; Je 23:16 and note).

7:19 See Jn 15:6 and note ; cf. Mt 3:10 .

7:20 Cf. Jn 15:7 and note .

☒ **7:21** *Lord*. Here seems to mean more than merely “sir” or “master” in view of the fact that Jesus is the one who makes the final decision about a person's eternal destiny. See Lk 6:46 ; Col 2:6 ; cf. Ro 10:9 and note ; Sirach 14:9 ; 1Co 12:3 ; Phl 2:11 and note on 2:10–11 . *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 . *does the will of my Father*. The deciding factor as to who enters the kingdom (see Mk 3:35 ; Ro 10:9-10 and notes).

7:22 *that day*. The day of judgment (cf. Mal 3:17-18). *prophecy*. In the Bible this verb primarily means to give a message from God, not necessarily to predict. *demons*. See note on Mk 1:23 .

7:24-27 This parable ends the Sermon on the Mount and it also ends the so-called “Sermon on the Plain” (“level place”) found in Lk 6:17-49 .

☒ **7:24** *rock*. The Bible often speaks metaphorically of God or Christ as a “rock” (see Ge 49:24 ; Ps 18:2 ; 1Co 10:4 and notes). Jesus' reference here to a rock foundation may involve a subtle allusion to this metaphor.

7:25 *rain came down*. The Holy Land is known for its torrential rains that often cause disastrous floods.

7:28 *were amazed*. A common reaction by Jesus' listeners to his teaching—both its presentation and its authority (see note on Mk 1:22).

7:29 *authority*. The teachers of the law quoted other rabbis to support their own teaching (see note on 2:4), but Jesus spoke with divine authority (see 9:6,8 ; cf. Jn 7:46).

8:1 *mountainside*. See 5:1 and note .

8:2 *leprosy*. See NIV text note; see also note on Lev 13:2 . *Lord*. See note on 7:21 . *make me clean*. Leprosy made a person ceremonially unclean (see Lev 13:3,8,11,20) and socially an outcast (see Lev 13:45-46).

8:3 *touched the man*. See note on Mk 1:41 .

8:4 *don't tell anyone*. Jesus did not wish to stir up the popular, but mistaken, expectations that a wonder-working Messiah would soon arise as king of the Jews and deliver them from the Roman yoke. For similar instructions see 9:30; 12:16; 16:20; 17:9 . In Mark see 1:34 , 44 and note on 1:34 ; 3:12; 5:43 and note ; 7:36; 8:30; 9:9 and note . In Luke see 4:41 ; 8:56; 9:21 and note ; 24:21 and note . In John see 6:15 and note . *show yourself to the priest*. See note on Lk 5:14 . *a testimony to them*. See note on Mk 1:44 . *them*. The priests and the people.

8:5 *Capernaum*. See note on 4:13 . *centurion*. A Roman military officer in charge of 100 soldiers. In Luke's account (Lk 7:1-5) Jewish elders and friends of the centurion came to Jesus on his behalf, but Matthew does not mention these intermediaries.

8:8 *I do not deserve to have you come under my roof*. In Greek the words “I do not deserve” are the same as those used by John the Baptist in 3:11 (“I am not fit”). The entire statement reveals how highly the centurion regarded Jesus and also reveals his own sense of unworthiness to ask this Jewish wonder-worker to enter his house and heal his son.

8:10 *he was astonished*. See note on Lk 7:9 . In his incarnate state Jesus experienced every human emotion. *such great faith*. See note on Lk 7:9 .

8:11 The universality of the gospel is one of Matthew's themes (see Introduction: Recipients). *feast ... in the kingdom of heaven*. The eschatological Messianic banquet that symbolizes the blessings of an intimate relationship with God (see Isa 25:6-9 and note on 25:6).

8:12 *subjects of the kingdom*. Jews who thought their Judaism was an inherited passport for entrance into the kingdom (see 3:9-10 and note on 3:9). *outside, into the darkness*. Hell. *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. A phrase used only in Matthew's Gospel (here; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30)—though an almost identical phrase occurs in Lk 13:28 —to describe the horrible suffering experienced in hell.

8:14 *Peter's mother-in law*. See notes on Mk 1:30 ; Lk 4:38 .

8:15 *him*. Jesus. Mk 1:31 and Lk 4:39 have “them.” She began to serve not only Jesus but also her guests, probably by preparing a meal for them.

8:16 *evening*. See Lk 4:40 and note . *demon-possessed*. See notes Mk 1:23 ; Lk 4:33 .

8:17 *carried*. Bore the burden of. The diseases were not transferred to Jesus in the sense of making him ill.

8:18 *the other side*. The east side.

8:19 *teacher of the law*. See note on 2:4 .

8:20 *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 .

8:21 *bury my father*. See note on Lk 9:59 .

8:22 *let the dead bury their own dead*. Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead. The time of Jesus' ministry was short and demanded full attention and commitment. This statement stresses the radical demands of Jesus' discipleship, since Jews placed great importance on the duty of children to bury their parents.

8:23-27 See note on Mk 4:35–41 .

8:24 *furious storm*. See note on Mk 4:37 . *But Jesus was sleeping*. See note on Mk 4:38 ; cf. Jon 1:4-5 .

8:26 *little faith*. See 6:30 and note .

8:27 *What kind of man is this?* See note on Mk 4:41 .

8:28 *region of the Gadarenes*. The region around the city of Gadara, six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Mark and Luke identify the region by the capital city Gerasa, located about 35 miles southeast of the Sea (see note on Lk 8:26). *two*. Mk 5:2 and Lk 8:27 (see note there) mention only one Gadarene demoniac. *demon-possessed*. See note on v. 16 .

8:29 *Son of God*. See note on Lk 8:28 . *appointed time*. The time of their judgment (see notes on Mk 5:10 ; Lk 8:31).

8:30 *herd of pigs*. Large numbers of Gentiles lived in the territory of the Decapolis (see map, The Decapolis and the Lands beyond the Jordan). Normally Jews did not raise pigs, since they were

considered the most ceremonially unclean of all animals.

8:32 Though Jesus seemingly consented to the demons' request, the pigs carried the demons into the depths of the sea—perhaps symbolic of the Abyss (see Lk 8:31 and note).

8:34 *pleaded with him to leave.* They were probably more concerned about their financial loss than about the deliverance of the miserable demon-possessed man (see note on Mk 5:17).

9:1 *crossed over.* The northern end of the Sea of Galilee. *his own town.* Capernaum (see note on 4:13).

9:2 *their faith.* The faith of the men who carried him as well as the faith of the paralyzed man. *your sins are forgiven.* See note on Mk 2:5 . In this case, perhaps there was a relationship between the man's sin and his paralysis (cf. Jn 9:1-3). Very likely Jesus is evoking Ps 103:3 .

9:3 *blaspheming.* Here the term includes usurping God's prerogative to forgive sins (see notes on Mk 2:7 ; Lk 5:21).

9:5-6 See notes on Mk 2:9–10 ; 14:64 .

9:6 *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31 .

9:9 *Matthew.* Mark and Luke call this disciple Levi in the parallel accounts (but see also Mk 3:18 ; Lk 6:15 ; Ac 1:13). *tax collector's booth.* See note on Mk 2:14 . *got up and followed him.* See note on Lk 5:28 .

9:10 *tax collectors.* See notes on 5:46 ; Mk 2:16 . “*sinner.*” See note on Mk 2:15 .

9:11 *Pharisees.* See note on Mk 2:16 .

9:12 *not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.* See note on Lk 5:31 .

9:13 *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.* See note on Mk 2:17 .

9:14 See notes on Mk 2:18 ; Lk 5:33 .

9:15 See notes on Mk 2:19–20 .

9:17 *new wineskins.* In ancient times goatskins were used to hold wine. As the fresh grape juice

fermented, the wine would expand, and the new wineskin would stretch. But a used skin, already stretched, would break (see note on Job 32:19). Jesus brings a newness that cannot be confined within the old forms.

9:18 *ruler.* From Mark and Luke we know that he was a synagogue ruler named Jairus (see notes on Mk 5:22 ; Lk 8:41). *has just died.* Mk 5:23 has “is dying,” but Matthew omits reference to the later messengers (Mk 5:35) and condenses (see notes on 21:12–17 ; 21:18–22) by presenting at the outset what was actually true before Jesus reached the house.

9:20 *subject to bleeding for twelve years.* See notes on Mk 5:25 ; Lk 8:43 .

9:21 See notes on Mk 5:28 ; Lk 8:45 .

9:22 *daughter.* See note on Lk 8:48 . *healed.* See note on Mk 5:34 .

9:23 *flute players.* Musicians hired to play in mourning ceremonies. *noisy crowd.* Mourners hired to wail and lament (see note on Mk 5:38).

9:24 *not dead but asleep.* See note on Lk 8:52 .

9:25 *took the girl by the hand.* Touching a dead body ordinarily resulted in ceremonial uncleanness (see Lev 11:31; 21:1 and note , 11 ; 22:4 ; Nu 19:14 and note), but Jesus' action brought life, not defilement.

9:27 *blind men.* Isaiah predicted the healing of the blind in the Messianic age (Isa 35:5). *Son of David.* A popular Jewish title for the coming Messiah (e.g., 12:23; 20:30; 21:9; 22:41-45 ; see note on 1:1).

9:29 *According to your faith.* That is, “Because you have faith,” not “In proportion to your faith.” Jesus did not provide healing according to the amount of faith the blind men had (see 17:20 and note). Cf. 8:13 ; Mk 9:23 and note ; 11:23 ; Jn 11:40 .

9:30 See notes on 8:4 ; 16:20 .

9:32 *could not talk.* Isaiah also (see note on v. 27) predicted that the mute would talk in the Messianic age (Isa 35:6).

9:33 *amazed*. See 8:27; 13:54; 15:31; 21:20; 22:22 ; cf. Mk 1:22 and note .

9:34 *prince of demons*. See note on 10:25 .

9:35 *synagogues*. See note on Mk 1:21 . *good news*. See note on Mk 1:1 .

9:36 *compassion*. Jesus' compassion for people is often noted in the Gospels (see 14:14; 15:22; 20:34 ; Mk 1:41; 6:34 ; 8:2). *like sheep without a shepherd*. See Eze 34:5 ; Zec 10:2; 13:7 and notes ; Mk 6:34 .

10:2-4 See notes on Lk 6:14–16 .

10:2 *apostles*. The only occurrence of this word in Matthew's Gospel. See note on Mk 6:30 .

10:3 *Thaddaeus*. Also called Judas (not Iscariot [Jn 14:22]); see Mk 3:18 ; Lk 6:16 ; Ac 1:13 and note .

10:4 *the Zealot*. Either a description of Simon's religious zeal or a reference to his membership in the party of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group violently opposed to Roman rule over the Holy Land.

10:5 *Do not go*. The good news about the kingdom was to be proclaimed first to Jews only. After his death and resurrection, Jesus commanded the message to be taken to all nations (28:19 ; cf. 21:43). *Samaritans*. A mixed-blood race resulting from the intermarriage of Israelites left behind when the people of the northern kingdom were exiled and Gentiles brought into the land by the Assyrians (2Ki 17:24). Bitter hostility existed between Jews and Samaritans in Jesus' day (see Jn 4:9 and note).

10:7 *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 .

10:8 *leprosy*. See NIV text note and note on Lev 13:2 .

10:9-10 See notes on Mk 6:8–9 .

10:10 *the worker is worth his keep*. Cf. 1Co 9:4-14 ; 1Ti 5:17-18 and note on 5:18 .

10:11 *stay at his house*. See note on Lk 9:4 .

10:12 *your greeting*. The Jews' greeting was *shalom*, “peace” (see Lk 10:5).

10:13 *If the home is deserving*. That is, “If a man of peace is there” (Lk 10:6). *let your peace return to you*. Either (1) retract your blessing, or (2) leave the house.

10:14 *shake the dust off your feet*. A symbolic act practiced by the Pharisees when they left a ceremonially unclean Gentile area. Here it represented an act of solemn warning to those who rejected God's message (see notes on Lk 9:5 ; Ac 13:51 ; cf. Ac 18:6).

10:15 *I tell you the truth*. See note on Mk 3:28 . *Sodom and Gomorrah*. See Ge 19:23-29 ; Lk 10:12 and note .

10:16 Cf. 7:15 ; cf. also Paul's statement in Ro 16:19 : “I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.”

10:17 *local councils*. The lower courts, connected with local synagogues, that tried less serious cases and flogged those found guilty. *synagogues*. See notes on Mk 1:21 ; Lk 21:12 .

10:18 Anticipates the mission to the Gentiles. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes the universality of the gospel (see note on 8:11 ; see also Introduction: Recipients).

10:19 *do not worry about what to say*. Namely, to defend yourselves (Lk 21:14-15). *you will be given what to say*. “Words and wisdom” that cannot be resisted (Lk 21:15 ; see note there).

10:20 *the Spirit of your Father speaking*. See Mk 13:11 ; Lk 12:11-12 ; cf. Lk 21:14-15 .

10:21 The allusion is to Mic 7:6 , which is quoted in vv. 35-36 .

10:22 *All*. Hyperbole. *he who stands firm to the end will be saved*. See note on Mk 13:13 .

10:23 Some take Jesus' saying here as a reference to his second coming at the end of the age (see 24:30), but it is hard to reconcile this with the failure of the disciples to “finish going through” (evangelize) the cities of Israel before this happens. It is therefore probably best understood as referring to his coming in judgment on the Jews when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in A.D. 70.

10:25 *Beelzebub*. The prince of demons (12:24); the Greek form of the Hebrew name Baal-Zebub (“lord of the flies”), which is a parody on and mockery of the actual epithet, Baal-Zebul (“Exalted Baal” or “Baal the Prince”; see NIV text note here and note on Jdg 10:6). The name came to be used of Satan.

10:26-33 See Lk 12:2-9 and notes .

10:26 *them*. The persecutors (vv. 21-25).

10:28 *cannot kill the soul*. See Lk 12:4 and note . *soul*. The true self (see note on Ps 6:3). Body and soul are closely related in this life but are separated at death and then reunited at the resurrection (cf. 2Co 5:1-10 and notes ; Phl 1:23-24). *the One*. God. He alone determines the final destiny of us all. *destroy both soul and body in hell*. See Lk 12:5 and note . *hell*. See note on 5:22 .

10:29 *two sparrows sold for a penny*. Cf. Lk 12:6 and note .

10:31 *worth more than many sparrows*. See 6:26 .

10:32-33 See Lk 12:8-9 and notes .

10:34 At first glance this saying sounds like a contradiction of Isa 9:6 (“Prince of Peace”), Lk 2:14 (“on earth peace to men”) and Jn 14:27 (“Peace I leave with you”). It is true that Christ came to bring peace—peace between the believer and God, and peace among humans. Yet the inevitable result of Christ's coming is conflict—between Christ and the antichrist, between light and darkness, between Christ's children and the devil's children. This conflict can occur even between members of the same family (vv. 35-36 ; Mk 10:29-30).

10:37 See Lk 14:26 and note .

■ **10:38** *take his cross*. The first mention of the cross in Matthew's Gospel. The cross was an instrument of death and here symbolizes the necessity of total commitment—even to the point of death—on the part of Jesus' disciples (see note on Mk 8:34).

10:39 See note on Lk 9:24 .

■ **10:40-42** During times of persecution, hospitality was especially important and could be dangerous. So Jesus indicates that those who

provide it and show kindness to God's people will receive a reward.

10:42 *cup of cold water*. See note on Mk 9:41 .

11:1 While the 12 apostles were carrying out their first mission, Jesus continued his ministry in Galilee. *Galilee*. See note on 2:2 .

11:2 *John*. The Baptist (see note on 3:1). *in prison*. See note on Lk 7:19 .

11:3 *the one who was to come*. The Messiah. *expect someone else*. See note on Lk 7:19 .

11:4 *report to John what you hear and see*. See note on Lk 7:22 .

11:5 *leprosy*. See NIV text note; see also note on Lev 13:2 . *the good news is preached to the poor*. See note on Lk 7:22 .

11:6 *man who does not fall away*. See note on Lk 7:23 .

11:7-10 See Lk 7:24-28 and notes .

11:10 See Mal 3:1 and note .

11:11 *greater than he*. John belonged to the age of the old covenant, which was preparatory to Christ. The least NT believer has a higher privilege in Christ as a part of his bride (the church, Ep 5:25-27,32) than John the Baptist, who was only a friend of the bridegroom (Jn 3:29). Another view, however, stresses the expression “he who is least,” holding that the key to its meaning is found in 18:4 “whoever humbles himself like this child.” Such a person, though “least,” is regarded by God as even greater than John the Baptist.

11:12 *From the days of John the Baptist*. From the beginning of Jesus' ministry. *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 . *forcefully advancing*. The Greek here can be taken in either an active (NIV) or a passive sense. In this context its passive meaning would be “suffering violent attacks.” The term “forceful men,” then, would be understood in a negative sense, “violent people.” The verse would then emphasize the ongoing persecution of the people of the kingdom.

11:13 *Prophets and the Law*. The entire OT (see 5:17 and note) prophesied the coming of the

kingdom. John represented the end of the old covenant era.

11:14 *he is the Elijah who was to come.* A reference to Mal 4:5, which prophesied the reappearance of Elijah before the day of the Lord. Some of the people remembered the prophecy and asked John the Baptist, “Are you Elijah?” He answered, “I am not” (Jn 1:21). John was not literally the reincarnation of Elijah, but he did fulfill the function and role of the prophet (see Mt 17:10-13 and note on Lk 1:17).

11:16 *like children sitting in the marketplaces.* See note on Lk 7:32 .

11:17 *played the flute.* As at a wedding. *sang a dirge.* As at a funeral. The latter symbolized the ministry of John, the former that of Jesus. The people of Jesus' “generation” (v. 16) were like children who refused to respond on either occasion.

11:19 *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31 . *friend of tax collectors and “sinners.”* See note on Lk 7:34 . *wisdom is proved right by her actions.* Apparently means that God (wisdom) had sent both John and Jesus in specific roles, and that this would be vindicated by the lasting works of both Jesus and John (see note on Lk 7:35).

11:20 *repent.* See note on 3:2 .

11:21 *Korazin.* Mentioned in the Bible only twice (here and in Lk 10:13), it was near the Sea of Galilee, probably about two miles north of Capernaum. *Bethsaida.* On the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. Philip the tetrarch rebuilt Bethsaida and named it Julias, after Julia, daughter of Caesar Augustus. *Tyre and Sidon.* Cities on the Phoenician coast north of the Holy Land (see note on Mk 7:31). *sackcloth.* Here a sign of repentance (see note on Ge 37:34). Cf. Rev 6:12 . *ashes.* Also a sign of repentance.

11:23 *Capernaum.* See note on Lk 10:15 . *Sodom.* See notes on 10:15 ; Ge 13:10 ; Lk 10:12 .

11:25 *Lord of heaven and earth.* A title for God emphasizing his sovereignty and found only three times in the Bible (here; Lk 10:21 ; Ac 17:24). *these things.* Either the significance of Jesus' miracles (see vv. 20-24) or of his entire mission. *wise.* According to the standards of this age (see 1Co 1:26-29 ; cf. 1Co 3:18 and note). *little*

children. The disciples or, more generally, the humble followers of Jesus.

11:26 *your good pleasure.* Since God is “Lord of heaven and earth” (v. 25), he sovereignly reveals and conceals.

11:27 *All things.* The full revelation of God (see v. 25). *No one knows the Son.* Total knowledge of the Son belongs only to the Father. Believers can “know” the Son for salvation (1Jn 5:20) and in a deep and satisfying way, but not completely (see Jn 10:14 and note ; cf. Phl 3:7-11 and notes). *except ... those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.* Christ sovereignly chooses those to whom he reveals a saving knowledge of God (see Jn 14:6 and note).

11:28 *weary and burdened.* Probably a reference to the “heavy loads” the Pharisees placed “on men's shoulders” by insisting on a legalistic interpretation of the law (23:4).

11:29 *yoke.* Cf. v. 30 and note . *find rest for your souls.* See Je 6:16 and note .

11:30 *my burden is light.* Cf. Ps 55:22 ; 1Jn 5:3 and notes .

12:1 *grainfields.* Of wheat or barley, the latter eaten by poorer people. *pick some heads of grain.* See note on Mk 2:23 .

12:2 *Pharisees.* See note on 3:7 . *what is unlawful on the Sabbath.* See note on Mk 2:24 .

12:3 *what David did.* See note on Mk 2:25 .

12:4 *consecrated bread.* Each Sabbath, 12 fresh loaves of bread were to be set on a table in the Holy Place (Ex 25:30 ; Lev 24:5-9). The old loaves were eaten by the priests.

12:5 *desecrate the day.* By doing required work associated with the sacrifices (see Nu 28:9 ; cf. Jn 7:22-23 and note on 7:22).

12:8 *the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.* See note on Lk 6:5 .

12:9 *synagogue.* See note on Mk 1:21 .

12:10 *heal on the Sabbath.* The rabbis prohibited healing on the Sabbath, unless it was feared the victim would die before the next day. Obviously

the man with the shriveled hand was in no danger of this.

12:11-12 Jesus contrasts the worth of an animal with that of a human being (cf. Lk 13:15-16 ; 14:5 and notes).

12:12 *lawful to do good on the Sabbath*. See Mk 3:4 ; Lk 6:9 and notes .

12:13 “*Stretch out your hand.*” *So he stretched it out.* The fact that the man stretched out his shriveled hand shows there is a connection between faith and Jesus' healing power.

12:14 See notes on Mk 3:6 ; Lk 6:11 .

12:16 *not to tell who he was*. See note on 8:4 .

■ **12:18-21** Another fulfillment passage (see note on 1:22). This one is from Isaiah's first servant song (see Isa 42:1-4 and note) and is the longest OT quotation in Matthew's Gospel. It summarizes the quiet ministry of the Lord's servant, who will bring justice and hope to the nations.

12:18 *my servant*. Jesus is called God's servant only here and in Ac 3:13 (see note there), 26 ; 4:27 , 30 . *the one I love, in whom I delight*. See note on 3:17 . *put my Spirit on him*. See Isa 11:2; 61:1 and notes .

■ **12:20** Jesus mends broken lives (see v. 15 ; Jn 4:4-42 ; 8:3-11).

12:22 *demon-possessed*. See notes on Mk 1:23 ; Lk 4:33 .

12:23 *Son of David*. See note on 9:27 .

12:24 See 10:25 ; Lk 11:19 and notes .

12:25 *kingdom divided against itself*. See note on Lk 11:17 .

12:26 *Satan*. See notes on 4:1 ; 16:23 .

12:28 *kingdom of God*. See note on 3:2 . *has come upon you*. See note on Mk 1:15 .

■ **12:30** There can be no double-mindedness in our relationship to Jesus (see note on Lk 11:23 ; cf. Ps 119:113 ; Mk 9:40 ; Lk 9:50 and note ; Jas 1:8; 4:8).

12:31 *blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven*. The context (24 , vv. 24 , 28 , 32) suggests that the unpardonable sin was attributing to Satan Christ's authenticating miracles done in the power of the Holy Spirit (see note on Mk 3:29).

12:32 *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 . *this age ... the age to come*. See Ep 1:21 and note .

12:33 See 3:16 ; cf. Jas 3:11-12 .

12:34 *brood of vipers*. In the NT an expression used only by John the Baptist (3:7 ; Lk 3:7) and Jesus (here; 23:33). In this context it refers to the Pharisees (v. 24). *out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks*. See 15:18-19 . *heart*. See note on Ps 4:7 .

12:36 *day of judgment*. At Christ's second coming; sometimes referred to as “that day” (7:22 ; 2Ti 1:12,18), “the day of slaughter” (Jas 5:5 ; see note there).

12:38 *miraculous sign*. The Pharisees wanted to see a spectacular miracle, preferably in the sky (see Lk 11:16), as the sign that Jesus was the Messiah. Instead, he cites them a “sign” from history. See note on Lk 11:29 .

■ **12:39** *adulterous*. Referring to spiritual, not physical, adultery, in the sense that their generation had become unfaithful to its spiritual husband (God; see Ex 34:15 ; Ho 1:2 and notes). *sign of the prophet Jonah*. See note on Lk 11:30 .

12:40 *three days and three nights*. Including at least part of the first day and part of the third day, a common Jewish reckoning of time. See note on Lk 24:46 . *huge fish*. The Greek word does not mean “whale” but rather “sea creature,” i.e., a huge fish (see note on Jnh 1:17). *Son of man*. See note on Mk 8:31).

12:41-42 *one greater than Jonah ... one greater than Solomon*. See note on Lk 11:31-32 .

12:42 *Queen of the South*. In 1Ki 10:1 she is called the queen of Sheba, a country in southwest Arabia, now called Yemen.

12:43-45 See notes on Lk 11:24-25 .

12:46 *mother and brothers*. See note on Lk 8:19 .

12:50 *whoever does the will of my Father*. See notes on Mk 3:35 ; Lk 8:21 .

13:1 *went out of the house*. See “went into the house” (v. 36). These two phrases determine the setting of Jesus' teaching in vv. 1-35 .

13:2 *sat in it*. See note on Mk 4:1 .

13:3-9 See vv. 18-23 for the interpretation of this first parable.

13:3 *parables*. Our word “parable” comes from the Greek *parabole*, which means “a placing beside”—and thus a comparison or an illustration. Its most common use in the NT is for the illustrative stories that Jesus drew from nature and human life. The Synoptic Gospels contain about 30 of these stories. John's Gospel contains no parables but uses other figures of speech (see notes on Mk 4:2 ; Lk 8:4). *to sow his seed*. See note on Lk 8:5 . According to Mk 4:14 ; Lk 8:11 (see notes there), the seed is the word of God.

13:4-6 See note on Mk 4:3–8 .

13:4 *birds*. Satan, “the evil one” (v. 19).

13:5 *rocky places*. Not ground covered with small stones, but shallow soil on top of solid rock. See note on Lk 8:6 .

13:8 *a hundred*. See notes on Mk 4:8 ; Lk 8:8 .

13:9 *let him hear*. See note on Lk 8:8 .

13:10 See note on Lk 8:9 .

13:11 *secrets of the kingdom of heaven*. See notes on Mk 4:11 ; Lk 8:10 .

13:13-14 Jesus speaks in parables because of the spiritual dullness of the people (see note on Lk 8:4).

13:13 *Though seeing, they do not see*. See notes on Mk 4:12 ; Lk 8:10 .

13:14-15 See Isa 6:9-10 and notes .

13:18 *what the parable of the sower means*. Jesus seldom interpreted his parables, but here he does.

13:19 *message*. Cf. Luke's “word of God” (8:11). *evil one*. Satan (the devil; see Mk 4:15 ; Lk 8:12 and note).

13:21 Cf. 24:10-12 ; see note on Lk 8:13 .

13:22 *the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth*. Lk 8:14 adds life's “pleasures” to these two phrases. *deceitfulness of wealth*. See note on Mk 4:19 .

13:23 *understands*. Cf. the Isaiah quotation in vv. 14-15 . Matthew uses this word six times in this chapter (here and in vv. 13-15 , 19 , 51). *hundred ... times*. See note on Lk 8:8 .

13:24-30 See vv. 36-43 for the interpretation.

13:24 *The kingdom of heaven is like*. This phrase introduces six of the seven parables in this chapter (all but the parable of the sower).

13:25 *weeds*. Probably darnel, which looks very much like wheat while it is young, but can later be distinguished. This parable does not refer to unbelievers in the professing church. The field is the world (v. 38). Thus in this world the people of the kingdom live side by side with the people of the evil one.

13:30 *harvest*. The final judgment (see notes on Joel 3:13 ; Mk 4:29 ; Rev 14:15).

13:31-32 Although the kingdom will seem to have an insignificant beginning, it will eventually spread throughout the world (see note on Mk 4:30–34).

13:32 *the smallest ... the largest*. The mustard seed is not the smallest seed known today, but it was the smallest seed used by farmers and gardeners there and at that time, and under favorable conditions the plant could reach about ten feet in height. *a tree ... its branches*. Likely an allusion to Da 4:21 , suggesting that the kingdom of heaven will expand to world dominion and that people from all nations will find rest in it (cf. Da 2:35,44-45 ; 7:27 ; Rev 11:15).

13:33 In the Bible, yeast usually symbolizes that which is evil or unclean (see note on Mk 8:15). Here, however, it is a symbol of growth. As yeast permeates a batch of dough, so the kingdom of heaven spreads through a person's life. Or it may signify the growth of the kingdom by the inner

working of the Holy Spirit (using God's word). See note on Lk 13:21 .

13:35 *spoken through the prophet*. The quotation is from Ps 78 (see note on 78:2), a psalm ascribed to Asaph, who according to 2Ch 29:30 was a “seer” (prophet). For another possible understanding of this phrase see 5:17 and note .

13:37 , 41 Son of Man. See note on Mk 8:31 .

13:42 *fiery furnace*. Often mentioned in connection with the final judgment in apocalyptic literature (see Rev 19:20; 20:14). *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. Occurs six times in Matthew's Gospel (here; v. 50 ; 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30) and nowhere else in the NT (but see note on 8:12).

13:43 *the righteous will shine like the sun*. See Da 12:3 . *let him hear*. See note on Lk 8:8 .

☞ **13:44-46** These two parables teach the same truth: The kingdom is of such great value that one should be willing to give up all one has in order to gain it. Jesus did not imply that one can purchase the kingdom with money or good deeds.

13:44 *treasure hidden in a field*. In ancient times it was common to hide treasure in the ground since there were no banks—though there were “bankers” (25:27 ; see note there).

13:47-51 The parable of the net teaches the same general lesson as the parable of the weeds: There will be a final separation of the righteous and the wicked. The parable of the weeds also emphasizes that we are not to try to make such a separation now. That is entirely the Lord's business (vv. 28-30 , 41-42).

13:50 See note on v. 42 .

13:51 *Yes*. Probably an overstatement by the disciples, especially in view of Jesus' words in 15:16 .

13:53 Concludes a teaching section and introduces a narrative section (cf. 7:28-29).

13:54 *his hometown*. Nazareth (see note on 2:23). *teaching the people in their synagogue*. See note on Mk 1:21 . *amazed*. See note on 7:28 .

13:55 *carpenter's son*. See note on Mk 6:3 . Apparently Joseph was no longer living at the

time of this incident. *brothers*. Sons born to Joseph and Mary after the virgin birth of Jesus (see note on Lk 8:19).

13:58 *lack of faith*. The close relationship between faith and miracles is stressed in Matthew's Gospel (cf. 8:10,13; 9:2,22,28-29).

14:1 *tetrarch*. The ruler of a fourth part of a region. “Herod the tetrarch” (Herod Antipas) was one of several sons of Herod the Great. When Herod the Great died, his kingdom was divided among three of his sons (see chart, House of Herod ; see also map, The Holy Land under Herod the Great). Herod Antipas ruled over Galilee and Perea (4 B.C. – A.D. 39). Matthew correctly refers to him as tetrarch here, as Luke regularly does (Lk 3:19; 9:7 ; Ac 13:1). But in v. 9 Matthew calls him “king”—as Mk 6:14 also does—because that was his popular title among the Galileans, as well as in Rome.

14:2 *John ... risen from the dead*. See note on Mk 6:16 .

14:3 *Herod had arrested John*. See note on Mk 6:17 . *Herodias*. A granddaughter of Herod the Great (see chart, House of Herod). First she married her uncle, Herod Philip (Herod the Great also had another son named Philip), who lived in Rome. While a guest in their home, Herod Antipas persuaded Herodias to leave her husband for him. Marriage to one's brother's wife, while the brother was still living, was forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev 18:16). *Philip*. The son of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high priest, and thus a half-brother of Herod Antipas, born to Malthace (see chart, House of Herod).

14:6 *daughter of Herodias*. Salome, according to Josephus. She later married her granduncle, the other Philip (son of Herod the Great), who ruled the northern territories (Lk 3:1). At this time Salome was a young woman of marriageable age. Her dance was doubtless lascivious, and the performance pleased both Herod and his guests.

14:7 *whatever she asked*. See Mk 6:22 and note .

14:8 *platter*. A flat wooden dish on which meat was served.

14:13-21 See 15:37 ; Mk 6:32-44 ; Lk 9:10-17 ; Jn 6:1-13 and notes .

14:13 *what had happened.* Probably refers to vv. 1-2 , namely, Herod's response to reports about Jesus. *withdrew ... to a solitary place.* To avoid the threat of Herod and the pressing of the crowds. Jesus' time had not yet come (see Jn 2:4 and note ; cf. Jn 6:15).

14:14 *compassion.* See note on 9:36 .

14:20 *twelve basketfuls.* See note on Jn 6:13 .

14:21 *besides women and children.* Matthew alone notes this. He was writing to the Jews, who did not permit women and children to eat with men in public. So they were in a place by themselves.

14:22 *made.* The Greek word used here means “to compel” and suggests a crisis. John records that after the miracle of the loaves and fish the crowds “intended to ... make him [Jesus] king by force” (6:15). This involved a complete misunderstanding of the mission of Jesus. The disciples may have been caught up in the enthusiasm and needed to be removed from the area quickly.

14:23 *pray.* Matthew speaks of Jesus praying only here and in Gethsemane (cf. 26:36-46).

14:24 *considerable distance from land.* See Jn 6:19 and note .

14:25 *fourth watch.* 3:00–6:00 A.M. . According to Roman reckoning the night was divided into four watches: (1) 6:00–9:00 P.M. ., (2) 9:00–midnight, (3) midnight–3:00 A.M. . and (4) 3:00–6:00 A.M. . (see note on Mk 13:35). The Jews had only three watches during the night: (1) sunset–10:00 P.M. ., (2) 10:00 P.M. .–2:00 A.M. . and (3) 2:00 A.M. .–sunrise (see Jdg 7:19 and note ; 1Sa 11:11). *walking on the lake.* See note on Mk 6:48 . *lake.* The Sea of Galilee (see note on Mk 1:16).

14:26 *ghost.* See note on Mk 6:49 .

14:27 *It is I.* Lit. “I am” (cf. Ex 3:14 ; Isa 43:10; 51:12 ; Jn 8:58 and note).

14:28 *if it's you.* A condition assumed to be true. Peter knew it was Jesus, and that is why he stepped out of the boat onto the water in the first place.

14:31 *You of little faith.* See note on 6:30 . *why did you doubt?* See Jas 1:5-8 .

14:33 *Son of God.* This is the first time the disciples use the full title in addressing Jesus (cf. 3:17 , where God called him “my Son”; see also Jn 3:16 and note).

14:34 *Gennesaret.* Either the narrow plain (about four miles long and less than two miles wide) on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near the north end (north of Magdala), or a town in the plain. The plain was considered a garden spot, fertile and well watered.

14:36 *just touch the edge of his cloak.* See note on Mk 5:28 .

15:2 *tradition of the elders.* After the Babylonian exile, the Jewish rabbis began to make meticulous rules and regulations governing the daily life of the people. These were interpretations and applications of the law of Moses, handed down from generation to generation. In Jesus' day this “tradition of the elders” was in oral form. It was not until c. A.D. 200 that it was put into writing in the Mishnah. *wash.* See note on Mk 7:3 .

15:5-6 See notes on Mk 7:11 .

15:7-20 See Mk 7:6-23 and notes .

15:7 *hypocrites.* See note on 6:2 .

15:8-9 See Isa 29:13 and note .

15:13 *Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted.* Probably refers to the Pharisees and teachers of the law who were in Jesus' audience (vv. 1 , 12).

15:15 *parable.* See note on Mk 13:3 . The parable Peter refers to is found in v. 11 .

15:21 *Tyre.* See note on Mk 7:24 . *Sidon.* About 25 miles north of Tyre.

15:22 *Canaanite.* A term found many times in the OT but only here in the NT. In NT times there was no country known as Canaan. Some think this was the Semitic way of referring to the people of Phoenicia at this time. Mark says the woman was “a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia” (7:26 ; see note there). *Son of David.* See note on 9:27 ; shows that this pagan woman had some

recognition of Jesus' Messianic claims. *demon possession*. See Mk 1:23 ; Lk 4:33 and notes .

15:26 *children's*. "The lost sheep of Israel" (v. 24). *bread*. God's covenanted blessings. *dogs*. Gentiles. Jesus' point was that the gospel was to be given first to Jews. The woman understood Jesus' implication and was willing to settle for "crumbs" (v. 27). Jesus rewarded her "great faith" (v. 28).

15:28 Jesus was pleased with the woman's reply (v. 27). It revealed not only her wit but also her faith and humility. *Woman*. See note on Jn 2:4 .

15:29 *there*. The "region of Tyre and Sidon" (v. 21 ; see note on Mk 7:31).

15:31 *amazed*. Cf. Mk 1:22 and note .

15:32-39 See notes on Mk 8:1-10 .

15:32 *compassion*. See note on 9:36 .

15:36 *when he had given thanks*. The Jewish practice at meals (see 1Ti 4:3-5).

15:37 The feeding of the 5,000 is recorded in all four Gospels, but the feeding of the 4,000 is only in Matthew and Mark. The 12 baskets mentioned in the accounts of the feeding of the 5,000 were possibly the lunch baskets of the 12 apostles. The 12 baskets of leftovers may also suggest a sufficient abundance to feed all 12 tribes of Israel (cf. note on Ex 25:30). The seven baskets mentioned here were probably larger.

15:39 *Magadan*. Also called Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene. Mk 8:10 has "Dalmanutha."

16:1 *Pharisees and Sadducees*. See note on 3:7 . Normally these two groups were opponents, but they had a common enemy in Jesus. *sign from heaven*. See note on Mk 8:11 .

16:4 *sign of Jonah*. See 12:39-40 and note on Lk 11:30 .

16:6 *yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees*. See v. 12 ; see also note on Mk 8:15 .

16:7 *because we didn't bring any bread*. Apparently the disciples took Jesus' statement about "yeast" (v. 6) to somehow relate to their being short of bread. Perhaps they thought they

would be required to bake bread when they arrived at the other side of the lake and were being warned by Jesus not to use any yeast provided by the spiritually contaminated religious leaders.

16:8 *little faith*. See note on 6:30 .

16:12 Matthew often explains the meaning of Jesus' words (cf. 17:13).

16:13 *Caesarea Philippi*. To be distinguished from the magnificent city of Caesarea, which Herod the Great had built on the Mediterranean coast. Caesarea Philippi, rebuilt by Herod's son Philip (who named it after Tiberius Caesar and himself), was north of the Sea of Galilee near the slopes of Mount Hermon on what is today the Golan Heights. Originally it was called Paneas (the ancient name survives today as Banias) in honor of the Greek god Pan, whose shrine was located there. The region was especially pagan. *Who do people say the Son of Man is?* See note on Lk 9:18 . *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 .

16:14 *John the Baptist*. See Mk 6:16 and note . *Elijah*. See Mk 6:15 and note .

16:16 *Peter answered*. See note on Lk 9:20 . *Christ*. See NIV text note on 1:17 ; see also note on Jn 1:25 . The OT equivalent (*Messiah*) is used of anyone who was anointed with the holy oil, such as the priests and kings of Israel (e.g., Ex 29:7,21 ; 1Sa 10 ; 1,6 ; 16:13 ; 2Sa 1:14,16). The word carries the idea of being chosen by God, consecrated to his service, and endowed with his power to accomplish the assigned task. Toward the end of the OT period the word assumed a special meaning. It denoted the ideal king anointed and empowered by God to rescue his people from their enemies and establish his righteous kingdom (Da 9:25-26). The ideas that clustered around the title *Messiah* tended to be political and national in nature. Probably for that reason Jesus seldom used the term. When he did accept it as applied to himself, he did so with reservations (cf. Mk 8:27-30 ; 14:61-63).

16:17 *Simon son of Jonah*. In Jn 1:42 Jesus identifies Peter as "Simon son of John." Probably Simon Peter was the son of Johanan (the Hebrew form of the name), and Jonah is an Aramaic abbreviation of Johanan while John is from the Greek form of the name. *man*. Lit. "flesh and blood" (see notes on 1Co 15:50 ; Gal 1:16).

16:18 *Peter ... rock ... church.* In the Greek “Peter” is *petros* (“detached stone”) and “rock” is *petra* (“bedrock”). Several interpretations have been given to these words: The bedrock on which the church is built is (1) Christ; (2) Peter's confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah (v. 16); (3) Christ's teachings—one of the great emphases of Matthew's Gospel; (4) Peter himself, understood in terms of his role on the day of Pentecost (Ac 2), the Cornelius incident (Ac 10) and his leadership among the apostles. Ep 2:20 indicates that the church is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (see note on Jn 1:42). *church.* In the Gospels this word is used only by Matthew (here and twice in 18:17). In the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the OT) the underlying Greek word is used for the congregation of Israel. In Greek circles of Jesus' day it indicated the assembly of free, voting citizens in a city (cf. Ac 19:32,39,41). *Hades.* The Greek name for the place of departed spirits, generally equivalent to the Hebrew *Sheol* (see note on Ge 37:35). The “gates of Hades” may mean the “powers of death,” i.e., all forces opposed to Christ and his kingdom (but see note on Job 17:16).

16:19 *keys.* Perhaps Peter used these keys on the day of Pentecost (Ac 2) when he announced that the door of the kingdom was unlocked to Jews and proselytes and later when he acknowledged that it was also opened to Gentiles (Ac 10 ; cf. Isa 22:22 ; Rev 3:7 and notes). *bind ... loose.* Not authority to determine, but to announce, guilt or innocence (see 18:18 and context; cf. Jn 20:23 and note ; Ac 5:3,9).

16:20 *not to tell.* Because of the false concepts of the Jews, who looked for an exclusively national and political Messiah, Jesus didn't want to precipitate a revolution against Rome (see notes on 8:4 ; Lk 9:21).

16:21 *began.* The beginning of a new emphasis in Jesus' ministry. Instead of teaching the crowds in parables, he concentrated on preparing the disciples for his coming suffering and death.

16:22 *Peter ... began to rebuke him.* See note on Mk 8:32 .

16:23 *Satan.* A loanword from Hebrew, meaning “adversary” or “accuser” (see NIV text note on Job 1:6 ; see also notes on Mk 8:33 ; Rev 2:9).

16:24 See note on Mk 8:34 . *take up his cross.* See note on 10:38 (Lk 9:23 adds “daily”; see also note there).

16:25 *save his life.* See note on Mk 8:35 . *whoever loses his life.* See note on Lk 9:24 .

16:26 *whole world.* See note on Mk 8:36 . *soul.* See note on 10:28 .

16:27 *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31 . *is going to come.* The second coming of Christ. *in his Father's glory.* See note on Mk 8:38 ; cf. Jn 17:1-5 . *according to what he has done.* See Ps 62:12 and note ; see also notes on Ro 2:1-16 ; 2:6-8 .

16:28 There are two main interpretations of this verse: (1) It is a prediction of the transfiguration, which happened a week later (17:1) and which demonstrated that Jesus will return “in his Father's glory” (16:27). (2) It refers to the Son of Man's authority and kingly reign in his post-resurrection church. Some of his disciples will witness—even participate in—this as described in the book of Acts. The context seems to favor the first view. See note on 2Pe 1:16 .

17:1-9 The transfiguration was: (1) a revelation of the glory of the Son of God, a glory hidden now but to be fully revealed when he returns (see 2Th 1:10); (2) a confirmation of the difficult teaching given to the disciples at Caesarea Philippi (ch. 16:13-20); and (3) a beneficial experience for the disciples, who were discouraged after having been reminded so recently of Jesus' impending suffering and death (16:21). See notes on Mk 9:2-7 ; Lk 9:28-35 .

17:1 *six days.* Mark also says “six days”(Mk 9:2), counting just the days between Peter's confession and the transfiguration, whereas Luke, counting all the days involved, says, “About eight days” (Lk 9:28). *Peter, James and John.* See 26:37 ; Mk 5:37 and note). *high mountain.* See note on Lk 9:28 . *by themselves* . Luke adds “to pray” (Lk 9:28).

17:2 *he was transfigured.* His appearance changed. The three disciples saw Jesus in his glorified state (see Jn 17:5 ; 2Pe 1:17).

17:3 *Moses and Elijah.* Moses appears as the representative of the old covenant and the promise of salvation, which was soon to be fulfilled in the death of Jesus. Elijah appears as the appointed

restorer of all things (Mal 4:5-6 ; Mk 9:11-13). Lk 9:31 says that they talked about Christ's death. See note on Lk 9:30 .

17:4 *three shelters*. See notes on Mk 9:5 ; Lk 9:33 .

17:5 *bright cloud*. Signifying the presence of God (see Ex 13:21; 19:16 and notes ; 24:15-16 ; 34:5; 40:34-38 ; see also note on Mk 9:7). *them*. Jesus, Moses and Elijah. *This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased*. The same words spoken from heaven at Jesus' baptism (see 3:17 and note). No mere man, but the very Son of God, was transfigured. *Listen to him*. See note on Mk 9:7 .

17:6 *terrified*. Primarily with a sense of awe at the presence and majesty of God.

17:9 *Don't tell anyone*. See note on Mk 9:9 ; cf. Lk 9:36 .

17:10 Traditional Jewish eschatology, based on Mal 4:5-6 , held that Elijah must appear before the coming of the Messiah. The disciples reasoned that if Jesus really was the Messiah, as the transfiguration proved him to be, why had not Elijah appeared?

17:12 *In the same way*. As John the Baptist was not recognized and was killed, so Jesus would be rejected and killed (see 14:1-12).

17:13 See note on 16:12 .

17:15 *seizures*. See note on 4:24 .

17:17 *unbelieving*. See v. 20 and note .

17:20 *little faith*. Not so much the quantity of their faith as its quality—a faith that is bathed in prayer (see Mk 9:29). *mustard seed*. See 13:31-32 and notes . *say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there.'* A proverbial statement meaning to remove great difficulties (cf. Isa 54:10 ; Zec 4:7 and note ; 1Co 13:2). In this context it probably refers to removing the problems associated with the work of the kingdom.

17:21 See NIV text note on v. 20 .

17:22 The second prediction of Christ's death, the first being in 16:21 . *Galilee*. See note on Mk 9:30 . *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 .

17:24 *Capernaum*. See note on 4:13 . *two-drachma tax*. The annual temple tax required of every male 20 years of age and older (Ex 30:13 ; 2Ch 24:9 ; Ne 10:32). It was worth half a shekel (approximately two days' wages) and was used for the upkeep of the temple.

17:25 *What do you think ... ?* Jesus frequently asks this question in Matthew's Gospel (18:12; 21:28; 22:17,42).

17:26 *the sons are exempt*. The implication is that Peter and the rest of the disciples belonged to God's royal household, but unbelieving Jews did not (see 21:43).

■ **17:27** *not offend*. Elsewhere the Greek verb used here means “to cause to sin” (18:6,8-9), “to fall away” (11:6; 26:31,33), “to put an obstacle in the way (of faith)” (Ro 14:13; 16:17). Here it would appear that Jesus does not want an inconsequential matter to create an obstacle for faith in him on the part of the Jews.

18:1 *Who is the greatest ... ?* See v. 4 and note on Lk 9:46 .

18:3 *like little children*. Trusting and unpretentious.

18:4 *greatest*. See note on Lk 9:48 .

18:6,10,14 *little ones*. All believers, regardless of age (see Mk 9:42 and note ; Lk 17:2).

18:6 *large millstone*. Lit. “millstone of a donkey,” i.e., a millstone turned by a donkey—far larger and heavier than the small millstones (24:41) used by women each morning.

■ **18:8-9** Hyperbole: Deal as drastically as necessary with sin in order to remove it from your life. This calls for self-discipline. See note on 5:29–30 .

18:8 *thrown into eternal fire*. See Rev 19:20 and note ; 20:15 .

18:9 *hell*. See note on 5:22 .

18:10 *their angels*. Guardian angels not exclusively for children, but for God's people in general (Ps 34:7; 91:11 ; Heb 1:14). *always see the face of*. Have constant access to.

18:11 See NIV text note on v. 10 .

18:12-14 The parable of the lost/wandering (see vv. 12-13) sheep is also found in Lk 15:3-7 . There it applies to unbelievers, here to believers. Jesus used the same parable to teach different truths in different situations.

18:12 *sheep*. See note on Lk 15:4 .

18:13 Cf. the “father” in the parable of the lost son (Lk 15:31-32).

18:14 *not willing that any ... should be lost*. See 1Ti 2:4 ; 2Pe 3:9 and notes .

18:15 *brother*. Fellow believer. *just between the two of you*. To protect the brother from the harm caused by gossip.

18:17 *church*. Local congregation. Here and 16:18 are the only two places where the Gospels use the word “church.” *pagan*. For the Jews this meant any Gentile. *tax collector*. See note on 5:46 . This verse establishes one basis for excommunication (when people refuse to respond to church discipline; see 2Th 3:14 and note ; cf. Ro 16:17).

18:18 See note on 16:19 .

18:19 *anything*. Probably not a reference to prayer generally but to disciplinary decisions, especially in the context of vv. 15-18 .

18:20 Christ promises his presence with those involved in the proper disciplinary function of the church.

18:22 *seventy-seven times*. Times without number (see NIV text note).

18:23 *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 .

18:24 *ten thousand talents*. See NIV text note.

18:25 For this practice of selling into slavery see Ex 21:2 ; Lev 25:39 ; 2Ki 4:1 ; Ne 5:5 ; Isa 50:1 .

18:28 *hundred denarii*. See 20:2 and note .

☞ **18:35** God is very forgiving, but he also judges those who refuse to forgive (v. 34 ; cf. 6:12,14-15).

19:1 *Judea*. See note on Mk 10:1 . *other side of the Jordan*. The east side, known later as Transjordan or Perea and today simply as Jordan. Jesus now began ministering there (see note on Lk 13:22). *Jordan*. See note on Mk 1:5 .

19:3 *Pharisees*. See note on Mk 2:16 . *for any and every reason*. This last part of the question is not in the parallel passage in Mark (10:2). Matthew possibly included it because he was writing to Jews, who were aware of the dispute between the schools of Shammai and Hillel over the interpretation of Dt 24:1-4 . Shammai held that “something indecent” (Dt 24:1) meant “marital unfaithfulness”(Mt 19:9)—to him the only allowable cause for divorce in that passage. Hillel emphasized the preceding clause, “who becomes displeasing to him” (Dt 24:1). He would allow a man to divorce his wife if she did anything he disliked—even if she burned his food while cooking it. Jesus clearly took the side of Shammai (see v. 9), but only after first pointing back to God's original ideal for marriage in Ge 1:27; 2:24 .

19:10-12 See 1Co 7:7-8,26 , 32-35 .

19:11 *this word*. The disciples' conclusion in v. 10 : “it is better not to marry.” This teaching is not meant for everyone. Jesus then gives three examples of persons for whom it is meant in v. 12 .

19:12 *born that way*. Impotent. *made that way*. By castration. *have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven*. Those who have voluntarily adopted a celibate lifestyle in order to give themselves more completely to God's work. Under certain circumstances celibacy is recommended in Scripture (cf. 1Co 7:25-38), but it is never presented as superior to marriage.

19:14 *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 . *belongs to such as these*. See note on Mk 10:14 .

19:15 *placed his hands on them*. Mk 10:16 adds “and blessed them.”

19:16 *a man*. See note on Mk 10:17 . *what good thing must I do ... ?* The rich man was thinking in terms of righteousness by works. Jesus had to correct this misunderstanding first before answering the question more fully. *eternal life*. The first use of this term in Matthew's Gospel (see v. 29 ; 25:46). In John it occurs much more frequently, often taking the place of the term “kingdom of God (or heaven)” used in the

Synoptics, which treat the following three expressions as synonymous: (1) eternal life (v. 16 ; Mk 10:17 ; Lk 18:18), (2) entering the kingdom of heaven (v. 23 ; cf. Mk 10:24 ; Lk 18:24) and (3) being saved (vv. 25-26 ; Mk 10:26-27 ; Lk 18:26-27).

19:17 *Why do you ask me about what is good?* Jesus wanted the man to think seriously about what is good, especially since Jesus' concept of it differed widely from that of the religious leaders (cf. Mk 10:18). *There is only One who is good.* The good is not something to be done as meritorious in itself. God alone is good, and all other goodness derives from him—even the keeping of the commandments, which Jesus proceeded to enumerate (vv. 18-20). *If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.* “To enter life” is the same as “to get eternal life” (v. 16). The requirement to “obey the commandments” is not to establish one's merit before God but is to be an expression of true faith. The Bible always teaches that salvation is a gift of God's grace received through faith (see Ep 2:8-9 and notes).

19:19 *love your neighbor as yourself.* See Lev 19:18 and note .

19:20 *all these I have kept.* See note on Mk 10:20 .

■ **19:21** *perfect.* The Greek word means “goal, end” (cf. note on Ro 10:4). His goal was eternal life, but wealth and lack of commitment stood in his way. *go, sell your possessions.* In his listing of the commandments, Jesus omitted “Do not covet.” This was the rich man's main problem and was preventing him from entering life (see note on Mk 10:21).

19:22 *went away sad.* See note on Mk 10:22 .

19:23 *kingdom of heaven.* See note on 3:2 .

19:24 *camel to go through the eye of a needle.* See note on Mk 10:25 .

19:26 See note on Mk 10:27 .

19:28 *I tell you the truth.* See note on Mk 3:28 . *Son of Man.* See note on Mk 8:31 . *judging.* Governing or ruling (cf. OT “judge”; see Introduction to Judges: Title).

19:29 *receive a hundred times as much.* Mark adds, “and with them, persecutions” (see note on

Mk 10:30). *inherit eternal life.* Eternal life is not earned; it is a gift. The word “inherit” often occurs in eschatological contexts in the NT (see 5:5 ; Mk 10:17 ; 1Co 6:9-10 ; 15:50 ; Ga 5:21 ; Heb 1:14 ; 6:12 ; Rev 21:7).

19:30 This saying of Jesus also appears in other contexts (see 20:16 ; Mk 10:31 and note ; Lk 13:30). In the kingdom of heaven there are many reversals, and the day of judgment will bring many surprises.

20:1-16 This parable occurs only in Matthew's Gospel. In its original setting, its main point seems to be the sovereign graciousness and generosity of God extended to latecomers (the poor and the outcasts of society) into God's kingdom. It is addressed to the grumblers (v. 11) who just cannot handle this amazing expression of God's grace. They almost certainly represent the religious leaders who opposed Jesus.

20:2 *denarius.* The usual daily wage. A Roman soldier also received one denarius a day.

20:3 *third hour.* 9:00 A.M .

20:5 *sixth hour ... ninth hour.* Noon and 3:00 P.M . respectively.

20:6 *eleventh hour.* 5:00 P.M .

20:8 *When evening came.* Because farm workers were poor, the law of Moses required that they be paid at the end of each day (cf. Lev 19:13 ; Dt 24:14-15).

20:13 *Friend.* A term of mild rebuke (see 22:12 ; 26:50).

20:15 *are you envious ... ?* Lit. “is your eye evil ... ?” Apparently the evil eye was associated with jealousy and envy (cf. 1Sa 18:9). *because I am generous.* It was not a matter of justice but of generosity.

20:16 See note on 19:30 .

20:17-19 See Mk 10:32-34 ; Lk 18:31-33 and notes .

20:19 *will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified.* An additional statement in this third prediction of the passion. Jesus would not be killed by the Jews, which

would have been by stoning, but would be crucified by the Romans. All three predictions include his resurrection on the third day (16:21; 17:23).

20:20 *mother of Zebedee's sons*. Mark has “James and John, the sons of Zebedee,” asking the question (Mk 10:35-37), yet there is no contradiction. The three joined in making the petition.

20:21 *want*. See note on Mk 10:35–36 . *sit at your right and the other at your left*. See note on Mk 10:37 .

20:22 *drink the cup*. A figure of speech meaning to “undergo” or “experience.” Here the reference is to suffering (cf. 26:39). The same figure of speech is used in Je 25:15 ; Eze 23:31-32 ; Hab 2:16 ; Rev 14:10; 16:19 ; 18:6 for divine wrath or judgment. See note on Mk 10:38 .

20:23 *drink from my cup*. James was martyred (see Ac 12:2 and note); John was exiled (see Rev 1:9 and note). *is not for me to grant*. See note on Mk 10:40 ; see also Mt 11:27; 24:36 ; Jn 14:28 .

20:24 See note on Mk 10:41 .

20:26 *Not so with you*. See note on Mk 10:43 .

■ **20:28** *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 . *ransom*. The Greek word was used most commonly for the price paid to redeem a slave. Similarly, Christ paid the ransom price of his own life to free us from the slavery of sin. *for*. Emphasizes the substitutionary nature of Christ's death. *many*. Christ “gave himself as a ransom for all men” (1Ti 2:6). Salvation is offered to “all,” but only the “many” (i.e., the elect) receive it. See note on Mk 10:45 .

20:29 *Jericho*. See note on Mk 10:46 .

20:30 *Two blind men*. The other Synoptics mention only one (see note on Lk 18:35). *Son of David*. A Messianic title (see note on 9:27).

20:34 *compassion*. See note on 9:36 .

21:1 *Jerusalem*. See map No. 10 at the end of this study Bible. *Bethphage*. Means “house of figs.” It is mentioned in the Bible only in connection with the Triumphal Entry. See map, Passion Week . *Mount of Olives*. See note on Mk 11:1 .

21:2 *donkey*. An animal symbolic of humility, peace and Davidic royalty (see notes on Zec 9:9 ; Lk 19:30). See also note on Mk 11:2 . *colt*. See notes on Mk 11:2 ; Lk 19:30 .

21:3 *Lord*. See note on Lk 19:31 .

21:5 See note on Zec 9:9 .

21:7 *Jesus sat on them*. He sat on the cloaks. We know from Mark (11:2) and Luke (19:30 ; see note there) that he rode the colt.

21:8 *spread their cloaks on the road*. An act of royal homage (see 2Ki 9:13). *branches*. See note on Mk 11:8 .

21:9 These are three separate quotations, not necessarily spoken at the same time. *Hosanna*. See Ps 118:25-26 and notes ; Je 31:7 and note ; expresses both prayer and praise (see NIV text note). *Son of David*. See note on 9:27 . *in the highest*. That is, may those in heaven sing “Hosanna” (see Ps 148:1-2 ; Lk 2:14).

21:10 *Who is this?* Because of Jesus' dramatic entry into the city, the people were wondering who he really was.

21:11 *the prophet*. Refers either to a prophet in general (see 13:57) or to the prophet predicted in Dt 18:15-18 (see note on 18:15 ; see also Dt 34:10-12 and note on 34:12).

21:12-17 In the Synoptics the clearing of the temple occurs during the last week of Jesus' ministry; in John it takes place during the first few months (Jn 2:12-16). Two explanations are possible: (1) There were two clearings, one at the beginning and the other at the end of Jesus' public ministry. (2) There was only one clearing, which took place during Passion Week but which John placed at the beginning of his account for theological reasons—to show that God's judgment was operative through the Messiah from the outset of Jesus' ministry. However, different details are present in the two accounts (the selling of cattle and sheep in Jn 2:14 , the whip in Jn 2:15 , and the statements of Jesus in Mt 21:13 ; Jn 2:16). From Matthew's and Luke's accounts we might assume that the clearing of the temple took place on Sunday, following the so-called Triumphal Entry (ch. 21:1-11). But Mark (11:15-19) clearly indicates that it was on Monday. Matthew often compressed narratives.

21:12 *temple area*. The “buying and selling” took place in the large outer court of the Gentiles, which covered several acres (see notes on Mk 11:15 ; Lk 19:45 ; Jn 2:14).

21:13 *house of prayer*. Mark adds “for all nations” (11:17 ; see note there). *den of robbers*. See Je 7:11 and note .

21:16 See Ps 8:1b-2 and note .

21:17 *Bethany*. See note on Mk 11:1 ; a village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem and the final station on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. It was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (Jn 12:1-3).

21:18-22 See note on vv. 12–17 ; another example of compressing narratives. Mark (11:12-14 , 20-25) places the cursing of the fig tree on Monday morning and the disciples' finding it withered on Tuesday morning. In Matthew's account the tree withered as soon as Jesus cursed it, emphasizing the immediacy of judgment. For the theological meaning of this event see note on Mk 11:14 .

21:18 *city*. Jerusalem.

21:21 *have faith and do not doubt*. See 17:20 and note ; Jas 1:5-8 . *Go, throw yourself into the sea*. A proverbial hyperbolic statement (cf. 17:20 and note).

21:22 See 1Jn 5:14-15 and note on 5:14 .

21:23 *temple courts*. See note on Mk 11:27 . *chief priests and the elders*. See notes on 2:4 ; Mk 8:31 ; Lk 19:47 . *By what authority ... ?* See notes on Mk 11:28 ; Lk 20:2 .

21:25 *from heaven, or from men?* See notes on Mk 11:30 ; Lk 20:4 .

21:31 *tax collectors*. See note on 5:46 . *kingdom of God*. See notes on 3:2 ; Lk 4:43 ; 1Co 4:20 .

■ **21:32** *way of righteousness*. Doing what is right and obeying God's will, which included believing what Jesus was teaching about how one is to enter the “kingdom of God” (v. 31).

21:33-46 See notes on Mk 12:1–12 ; Lk 20:9–19 .

21:33 *winepress*. See notes on Isa 5:2 ; Rev 14:19 . *watchtower*. For guarding the vineyard, especially

when the grapes ripened, and for shelter (see Isa 5:2 and note).

21:35-37 The tenants are the Jews, or their leaders. The servants represent the OT prophets, many of whom were killed. The son represents Christ, who was condemned to death by the religious leaders.

21:41 *other tenants*. Gentiles, to whom Paul turned when Jews, for the most part, rejected the gospel (Ac 13:46; 18:6). By the second century the church was composed mainly of Gentiles.

21:42 See note on Ps 118:22 . *Have you never read ... ?* See v. 16 ; 12:3; 19:4 ; Mk 12:10 .

21:44 *will be broken to pieces*. See note on Lk 20:18 .

21:45 *chief priests*. See notes on 2:4 ; Mk 8:31 ; Lk 19:47 . *Pharisees*. See notes on 3:7 ; Mk 2:16 ; Lk 5:17 . *parables*. See notes on 13:3 ; Mk 4:2 ; Lk 8:4 .

22:1-14 In Luke's Gospel this parable is spoken by Jesus at a banquet in response to a remark made by one of the guests about “the feast in the kingdom of God” (Lk 14:15 ; see note there).

22:7 *burned their city*. A common military practice; here possibly an allusion to the coming destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

22:11 *not wearing wedding clothes*. It may have been the custom for a host to provide guests with wedding garments. This would have been necessary for the guests at this banquet in particular, for they were brought in directly from the streets (vv. 9-10). The failure of the man in question to avail himself of a wedding garment was therefore an insult to the host, who had made the garments available.

22:12 *Friend*. See note on 20:13 .

22:13 *gnashing of teeth*. See note on 13:42 .

■ **22:14** A proverb-like summary of the meaning of the parable. God invites “many” (perhaps “all” in view of the Semitic usage of “many”; cf. Mt 20:28; 26:28 ; Ro 5:15,19) to be part of his kingdom, but only some (a comparative “few”) are chosen by him (Jesus appears to echo 2 Esdras 8:3 : “Many have been created, but few will be saved”). This does not mean that God chooses

arbitrarily. The invitation must be accepted, followed by appropriate conduct. Proper behavior is evidence of being chosen.

22:15-17 The Pharisees were ardent nationalists, opposed to Roman rule, while the hated Herodians, as their name indicates, supported Roman rule represented by the Herods. Now, however, the Pharisees enlisted the help of the Herodians to trap Jesus in his words (cf. note on Mk 3:6). After trying to put him off guard with flattery, they sprang their question: “Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” (v. 17). If he said “No,” the Herodians would report him to the Roman governor and he would be executed for treason. If he said “Yes,” the Pharisees would denounce him to the people as disloyal to his nation.

22:17 *pay taxes to Caesar*. See note on Mk 12:14 .

22:18 *hypocrites*. See note on 6:2 .

■ **22:19** *denarius*. The common Roman coin of that day (see note on 20:2). On one side was the portrait of Emperor Tiberius and on the other the inscription in Latin: “Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of the divine Augustus.” The coin was issued by Tiberius and was used for paying tax to him.

22:21 *to God what is God's*. In distinguishing clearly between Caesar and God, Jesus also protested against the false and idolatrous claims made on the coins (see previous note ; see also note on Mk 12:17).

22:22 *amazed*. See Mk 1:22 and note .

22:23 *Sadducees*. See notes on 3:7 ; Ezr 7:2 ; Mk 12:18 ; Lk 20:27 ; Ac 4:1 ; see also chart, Jewish Sects , and essay, The Time Between the Testaments .

22:23-40 See Mk 12:18-31 ; Lk 20:27-40 and notes .

22:24 *Moses told us*. Jesus quoted from the Pentateuch when arguing with the Sadducees, since those books had special authority for them (see note on Mk 12:18). The reference (Dt 25:5-10) is to the levirate law (from Latin *levir*, “brother-in-law”), which was given to protect the widow and guarantee continuance of the family line.

22:37 *with all your heart ... soul ... mind*. With your whole being. The Hebrew of Dt 6:5 (see note there) has “heart ... soul ... strength,” but some manuscripts of the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the OT) add “mind.” Jesus combined all four terms in Mk 12:30 . *soul*. See note on 10:28 .

22:39 See note on Lev 19:18 .

22:40 *the Law and the Prophets*. The entire OT (see note on 5:17).

22:41-46 See notes on Mk 12:35-40 ; Lk 20:44-47 .

22:44 See note on Ps 110:1 . Jesus bases his argument on Ps 110 , the most frequently quoted OT passage in the NT (see introduction to Ps 110). He assumes the traditional Davidic authorship of the psalm and was in support of his argument.

23:2 *teachers of the law*. See note on 2:4 . *Pharisees*. See notes on 3:7 ; Lk 5:17 . *sit in Moses' seat*. A position of authority. They considered themselves to be the authorized successors of Moses as teachers of the law.

23:3 *not practice what they preach*. See Jas 1:22-25 .

23:4 *tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders*. Cf. Jesus' words in 11:28-30 and see note on 11:28 ; see also note on Lk 11:46 .

23:5 *phylacteries*. These miniature boxes (see NIV text note) contained four passages (Ex 13:1-10 ; 13:11-16 ; Dt 6:4-9 ; 11:13-21). *tassels*. See note on Nu 15:38 .

23:6 *most important seats in the synagogues*. See note on Mk 12:39 .

23:7 *Rabbi*. A Hebrew word meaning “(my) teacher.”

23:8-10 The warning is against seeking titles of honor to foster pride.

23:12 See Jas 4:6,10 ; 1Pe 5:5 .

23:13-32 Seven woes pronounced by Jesus on the religious leaders (see the six woes in Lk 11:42-44,46-52 ; cf. the six woes in Isa 5:8-25 and in

28:1-35:10 [see note there]; and the five woes in Hab 2:6-19).

23:13 *hypocrites*. See 15 , vv. 15 , 23 , 25 , 27 , 29 ; see also note on 6:2 . *shut the kingdom ... in men's faces*. See Lk 11:52 and note .

23:14 See NIV text note on v. 13 .

23:15 Jesus does not criticize the Pharisees for their evangelistic zeal. He objects to its results. The converts became even more sons of hell (i.e., bound for hell) than their teachers. *convert*. The Greek for this word is found in the NT only here and in Ac 2:11 (see note there); 6:5 (see note there); 13:43 . *hell*. See notes on 5:22 ; Lk 12:5 .

23:16-22 When the teachers of the law and the Pharisees took an oath, they differentiated between what was binding and what was not. This allowed for evasive oath-taking. Jesus rejected all such subtleties by showing how foolish they were and by insisting that people simply tell the truth (see 5:33-37 and note).

Jewish Sects

Matthew Pharisees

Their roots can be traced to the second century B.C. —to the Hasidim.

1. Along with the Torah, they accepted as equally inspired and authoritative all the prescriptions set forth in the oral traditions preserved by the rabbis.
2. On free will and determination, they held to a mediating view that did not allow either human free will or the sovereignty of God to cancel out the other.
3. They accepted a rather developed hierarchy of angels and demons.
4. They believed in the immortality of the soul and in reward retribution after death.
5. They taught that there was a future for the dead.
6. They were champions of human equality.
7. The main emphasis of their teaching was ethical rather than theological.

Matthew Sadducees

They probably had their beginning during the Hasmonean period (166-63 B.C.). Their demise occurred c. A.D. 70 with the fall of Jerusalem.

1. They considered only the books of Moses to be canonical Scripture, denying that the oral law was authoritative and binding.
2. They interpreted Mosaic law more literally than did the Pharisees.
3. They were very exacting in Levitical purity.
4. They attributed all to free will.
5. They argued there is neither resurrection of the dead nor a future life.
6. They rejected the idea of a spiritual world.
7. They rejected a belief in angels and demons.

Matthew Essenes

They probably originated among the Hasidim, along with the Pharisees, from whom they later separated (1 Maccabees 2:42 ; 7:13). They were a group of very strict and zealous Jews who took part with the Maccabeans in a revolt against the Syrians, c. 165-155 B.C. , and may have been the group who moved to Qumran c. 150 B.C. , where they copied and/or wrote most of the Dead Sea Scrolls and deposited them in nearby caves (see essay, *The Time Between the Testaments: Essenes*).

1. They followed a strict observance of the purity laws of the Torah.
2. They were notable for their communal ownership of property.
3. They had a strong sense of mutual responsibility.
4. Daily worship was an important feature along with a daily study of their sacred scriptures.
5. Solemn oaths of piety and obedience had to be taken.
6. Sacrifices were offered on holy days and during their sacred seasons, but not at the temple.

7. Marriage was avoided but was not condemned in principle.

8. They attributed to fate everything that happened.

Matthew Zealots

They originated during the reign of Herod the Great c. 6 B.C. and ceased to exist in A.D. 73 at Masada.

1. They opposed payment of taxes to a pagan emperor, saying that allegiance was due only to God.

2. They were fiercely loyal to Jewish tradition.

3. They endorsed the use of violence as long as it accomplished a good end.

4. They were opposed to the use of the Greek language in the Holy Land.

23:23 Jesus does not criticize the observance of the minutiae of the law (he says, “without neglecting” them—including the tithe), but he does criticize the hypocrisy often involved (see notes on 5:18–20 ; Lk 11:42). *cummin*. A spice indigenous to western Asia and resembling the caraway in taste and appearance. *justice, mercy and faithfulness*. See Mic 6:6 , 8 and notes .

23:24 *strain out*. The strict Pharisee would carefully strain his drinking water through a cloth to be sure he did not swallow a gnat, the smallest of ceremonially unclean animals. But, figuratively, he would swallow a camel—one of the largest. *swallow a camel*. Hyperbole (see 7:3 and note ; 19:24 ; Mk 10:25 and note).

■ **23:26** *clean the inside*. A total moral renewal that will manifest itself in righteous living (see v. 23).

23:27 *whitewashed tombs*. A person who stepped on a grave became ceremonially unclean (see Nu 19:16), so graves were whitewashed to make them easily visible, especially at night. They appeared clean and beautiful on the outside, but the inside contained the bones of the dead and related matters that defiled persons, making them unclean.

23:29 *tombs for the prophets*. See note on Lk 11:47 .

23:31 *descendants*. In the sense that they imitate the actions of their murderous ancestors.

23:32 Cf. Ge 15:16 ; 1Th 2:14-16 ; spoken ironically. They would bring the sin of their ancestors to completion with the crucifixion of the Son of God (cf. 21:38-39 and note on 21:35–37).

23:33 *hell*. See notes on 5:22 ; Lk 12:5 .

23:34 *prophets and wise men and teachers*. Cf. Je 18:18 ; Eze 7:26 and notes . *synagogues*. See note on Mk 1:21 .

23:35 *Abel to ... Zechariah*. The murder of Abel is recorded in Ge 4:8 and that of Zechariah, son (perhaps grandson, since he is here called “son of Berekiah”; see NIV text note on 1Ch 1:5 ; see also note on Da 5:1) of Jehoiada, in 2Ch 24:20-22 (Chronicles comes at the close of the OT according to the Hebrew arrangement). The expression was somewhat like our “from Genesis to Revelation.” Jesus was summing up the history of martyrdom in the OT.

23:36 *all this*. All the righteous blood of the martyrs (see v. 30). *will come upon this generation*. Jesus' contemporaries; a prophecy fulfilled, at least in part, in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 (see vv. 37-38).

23:37-39 See notes on Lk 13:34–35 .

24:1-25:46 The Olivet discourse, the fifth and last of the great discourses in Matthew's Gospel (see notes on 5:1-7:29 ; Mk 13:1–37 ; Lk 21:5–37 ; see also Introduction: Structure).

■ **24:2** *not one stone ... left*. Fulfilled literally in A.D. 70, when the Romans under Titus completely destroyed Jerusalem and the temple buildings. Stones were even pried apart to collect the gold leaf that melted from the roof when the temple was set on fire. *stone*. See note on Mk 13:1 . *thrown down*. Excavations in 1968 uncovered large numbers of these stones, toppled from the walls by the invaders.

■ **24:3** *Mount of Olives*. A ridge a little more than a mile long, beyond the Kidron Valley east of Jerusalem and rising about 200 feet above the city

(see map, Passion Week). *when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?* Jesus deals with these questions but does not distinguish them sharply. However, it appears that the description of the last days (which begin with Jesus' incarnation and end with his second coming) is presented in vv. 4-14 , the destruction of Jerusalem in vv. 15-22 (see Lk 21:20) and Christ's coming in vv. 23-31 . The rest of the discourse is largely taken up with warnings and exhortations to live responsibly and courageously despite trials, persecutions and uncertainty about the exact time of his coming (24:32-25:46). This last section contains several eschatological parables (25:1-13,14-30,31-46).

24:4 *Watch out.* See note on Mk 13:5 .

24:5-14 See Lk 21:8-18 and note on 21:9 .

24:5 *in my name.* Claiming to be the Messiah (see Mk 13:6 and note). *Christ.* See NIV text note on 1:17 . *will deceive many.* See 1Jn 2:18 and note .

24:8 *birth pains.* The rabbis spoke of “birth pains,” i.e., sufferings, that would precede the coming of the Messiah (see Isa 13:8 and note).

24:13 See note on Mk 13:13 ; cf. 2Ti 2:10-13 ; Heb 10:36; 11:27 ; Jas 1:12; 5:11 .

24:14 *preached in the whole world.* Despite his Jewish interests, Matthew has a universal outlook (see Introduction: Recipients). *testimony to all nations.* This missionary mandate (see 28:18-20 and notes) must be fulfilled before the end comes.

24:15 *the abomination that causes desolation.* The detestable thing causing the desolation of the holy place. The primary reference in Daniel (see NIV text note for references) was to 168 B.C. , when Antiochus IV Epiphanes erected a pagan altar to Zeus in the temple of Jerusalem. According to some, there were still two more stages in the progressive fulfillment of the predictions in Daniel and Matthew: (1) the Roman destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, and (2) the setting up of an image of the antichrist in Jerusalem (see 2Th 2:4 ; Rev 13:14-15 ; see also notes on Da 9:25–27 ; 11:31). *let the reader understand.* These are Jesus' words, not Matthew's. He exhorts the readers of Daniel's prophecy to understand what they read.

24:16 *mountains.* The Transjordan mountains, where Pella was located. Christians in Jerusalem fled to that area during the Roman siege shortly before A.D. 70. Some believe a similar fleeing will occur in a future tribulation period (identified with the 70th “seven” in Da 9:27).

24:17 *roof of his house.* See notes on Mk 2:4 ; Lk 17:31 .

24:19 See note on Mk 13:17 .

24:20 *in winter.* See note on Mk 13:18 . *or on the Sabbath.* Matthew alone includes this phrase because he was writing to Jews, who were forbidden to travel more than about three quarters of a mile on the Sabbath (“a Sabbath day's walk,” Ac 1:12 ; see note there).

24:21 *great distress, unequalled.* Josephus, the Jewish historian who was there, describes the destruction of Jerusalem in almost identical language. Some believe the reference is also to a future period of great distress (see note on v. 16 ; see also Da 12:1 and note ; cf. Rev 6-18).

24:22 *days ... cut short.* Some hold that this statement means that the distress will be of such intensity that, if allowed to continue, it would destroy everyone. Others believe that Christ is referring to the cutting short of a previously determined time period (such as the 70th “seven” of Da 9:27 or the 42 months of Rev 11:2; 13:5). *the elect.* The people of God.

24:24 *false Christs.* See 1Jn 2:18 and note .

24:26 *inner rooms.* See Lk 12:3 and note .

24:27 Christ's second coming will not be in secret, witnessed by only a favored few; it will be visible to all (see v. 30). *as lightning.* See note on Lk 17:24 .

24:28 *there the vultures will gather.* The gathering of vultures obviously indicates the presence of carrion; the coming of Christ will likewise be obvious. See note on Lk 17:37 , where the saying is used in a slightly different sense.

24:29 See note on Mk 13:25 .

24:30 *sign.* Here probably means “banner” or “standard” (see Isa 11:12; 18:3 ; 49:22 ; Je 4:21; 51:27). *the Son of Man coming on the clouds.*

Alludes to Da 7:13 and refers to Christ's second coming (see 2Th 1:7-10 ; Rev 19:11-16). *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 . *all the nations ... will mourn*. Because they now face judgment (see Rev 1:7 ; cf. Zec 12:10-12). *on the clouds*. After the manner in which God came down on Mount Sinai (see 17:5 and note). *with power and great glory*. Cf. 1Ch 29:11 ; Ps 63:2 ; 66:2-3 ; Hab 3:3-4 .

24:31 *gather his elect*. See note on Mk 13:27 .

24:33 *it*. The kingdom of God (see Lk 21:31 and note on 21:29).

24:34 *I tell you the truth*. See note on Mk 3:28 . *this generation*. See note on Lk 21:32 .

24:35 Jesus' words are more certain than the existence of the universe.

24:36 *that day*. See note on Lk 21:34 . *nor the Son*. See note on Mk 13:32 .

24:40-41 *taken*. See note on Lk 17:35 .

■ **24:42** *keep watch*. Vigilance is the order of the day, because the time of Christ's coming is unknown (see notes on Mk 13:32).

24:44 *be ready*. See 25:10,29 ; 1Th 5:6 and notes ; cf. 1Jn 2:28 .

24:51 *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. See note on 13:42 .

25:1-12 The parable emphasizes the need for watchfulness in the event of a long delay in Christ's coming (see v. 13 and note).

25:1 *At that time*. The time of Christ's coming. *kingdom of heaven*. See note on 3:2 . *ten virgins*. Perhaps the bridesmaids, who were responsible for preparing the bride to meet the bridegroom. *lamps*. The Greek noun can refer to lamps or torches (as in Rev 8:10), which is probably its meaning here.

25:3 *oil*. Olive oil.

25:7 *trimmed*. The charred ends of the rags were cut off and oil was added.

■ **25:9** *No*. When Christ returns, preparedness cannot be shared or transferred. Personal responsibility is emphasized (see v. 12). *there*

may not be enough. Torches required large amounts of oil in order to keep burning, and the oil had to be replenished about every 15 minutes.

25:13 *keep watch*. The main point of the parable. *the day or the hour*. Of the coming of Christ (see 24:36 and note).

25:14-30 For a similar parable see Lk 19:12-27 .

25:15 *talent*. The term was first used for a unit of weight (about 75 pounds), then for a unit of coinage. The present-day use of "talent" to indicate an ability or gift is derived from this parable and often leads to a misunderstanding of the parable.

25:21 *faithful with a few ... in charge of many*. Cf. 13:12 ; see notes on v. 29 ; Mk 4:25 ; Lk 19:26 .

25:26 See note on Lk 19:22 .

25:27 *bankers*. Sat at small tables and changed money (cf. 21:12).

■ **25:29** The main point of the parable. Being ready for Christ's coming involves more than playing it safe and doing little or nothing. It demands the kind of devoted service in Christ's kingdom that produces results (see note on Lk 19:26).

25:30 *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. See note on 13:42 .

25:31-46 The two most widely accepted interpretations of this judgment are: (1) It will occur at the beginning of an earthly millennial kingdom (vv. 31 , 34 ; see Rev 20:4 and note on 20:2). Its purpose will be to determine who will be allowed to enter the kingdom (v. 34). The basis for judgment will be the kind of treatment shown to the Jewish people ("these brothers of mine," v. 40) during the preceding great tribulation period (vv. 35-40 , 42-45). Ultimately, how one treats them will reveal whether or not one is saved (vv. 41 , 46). (2) The judgment referred to occurs at the great white throne at the end of the age (Rev 20:11-15). Its purpose will be to determine who will be allowed to enter the eternal kingdom of the saved and who will be consigned to eternal punishment in hell (vv. 34 , 46). The basis for judgment will be whether love is shown to God's people (see 1Jn 3:14-15). See note on v. 40 .

25:31 *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 . *in his glory*. See 16:27; 24:30 . *angels*. See 13:41-42 ; 2Th 1:7 ; Rev 14:17-20 . *sit on his throne*. Not only as judge but also as king (vv. 34 , 40).

25:32 *All the nations*. Both Jews and Gentiles (see 28:19 and note). *separates the sheep from the goats*. Cf. 7:21-23; 13:40-43 .

25:33 *on his right*. See Mk 10:37 and note .

■ **25:34-40** Rewards in the kingdom of heaven are given to those who serve without thought of reward. There is no hint of merit here, for God gives out of grace, not debt.

25:34 *inheritance*. See Ac 20:32 ; Ep 1:14,18 ; 5:5 ; Col 1:12; 3:24 ; Heb 9:15 ; 1Pe 1:4 . *kingdom*. See note on 3:2 . *since the creation of the world*. Cf. Ep 1:4 and note .

25:40 *least of these brothers of mine*. To whom does Jesus refer? The principal views are: (1) all who are hungry, thirsty, poor, needy or otherwise distressed—but this seems too comprehensive; (2) apostles and other Christian missionaries—but this seems too restrictive; (3) the Jews mentioned in the first interpretation in the note on vv. 31-46 ; (4) Jesus' disciples (12:46-50; 28:8-10); (5) “God's people” mentioned in the second interpretation in the note on vv. 31-46 .

25:41 *eternal fire prepared for the devil*. See Rev 20:10 . *fire*. See Jude 7 ; Rev 19:20 and notes ; 20:15 .

25:46 *eternal punishment* ... *eternal life*. See Da 12:2 ; Jn 5:28-29 ; see also Jn 5:29 ; Ro 2:6-8 ; Ga 6:8 and notes . The parallelism between these two phrases prevents any weakening of the former.

26:2 *Passover*. See notes on Mk 14:1 ; Jn 2:13 . *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 .

■ **26:3** *chief priests and the elders of the people*. The priestly and lay leadership of the Sanhedrin (see note on 2:4). *Caiaphas*. High priest A.D. 18-36 and the son-in-law of Annas (see Jn 18:13 and note), a former high priest, who served A.D. 6-15. In 1991 an ossuary (a limestone chest made for

preserving the bones of the dead) was found in Jerusalem inscribed with the name Caiaphas (see chart, Major Archaeological Finds Relating to the New Testament).

26:5 *there may be a riot*. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish pilgrims came to Jerusalem for Passover (see note on Mk 14:2), and riots were not unknown. The religious leaders (v. 3) knew that many people admired Jesus.

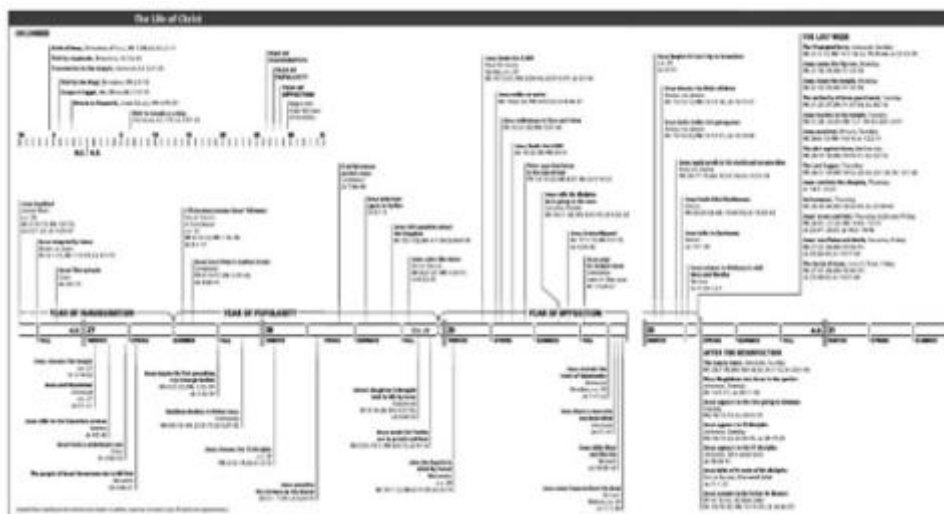
26:6-13 See note on Jn 12:1-11 .

26:6 *Bethany*. See note on 21:17 . *Simon the Leper*. Mentioned elsewhere only in Mk 14:3 . He was probably a well-known victim of leprosy who had been healed by Jesus.

26:7 *a woman*. Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus (see Jn 12:3 and note). *alabaster jar*. See note on Mk 14:3 . Most “alabaster” jars of that time were made from a form of marble.

26:9 *given to the poor*. See note on Mk 14:5 .

26:10 *beautiful*. The Greek word has an aesthetic



26:15 *thirty silver coins*. Equivalent to 120 denarii. Laborers customarily received one denarius for a day's work (ch. 20:1-16). See notes on 20:2 ; Zec 11:12 .

26:17 *first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread*. The 14th of Nisan (March-April), it was also called the preparation of the Passover. The Passover meal was eaten the evening of the 14th after sunset—and therefore technically on the 15th, since the Jewish day ended at sunset. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st of Nisan (see Lev 23:5-6), but in the time of Christ the entire period, Nisan 14–21, was referred to under that name (see note on Mk 14:12).

26:18-30 These verses indicate that Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples the night before his crucifixion. For more information on the Lord's Supper see notes on Mk 14:22 .

26:18 *The Teacher says*. See note on Lk 22:11 . *My appointed time*. Jesus' crucifixion.

26:19 *as Jesus had directed them*. See note on Lk 22:13 . *prepared the Passover*. See note on Mk 14:1 .

26:20 *When evening came*. See note on Mk 14:17 . *reclining at the table*. See note on Mk 14:18 .

26:21 *I tell you the truth*. See note on Mk 3:28 .

26:23 *dipped his hand into the bowl with me*. It was the custom—still practiced by some in the Middle East—to take a piece of bread, or a piece of meat wrapped in bread, and dip it into a bowl of sauce (made of stewed fruit) on the table. *will betray me*. In that culture, as among Arabs today, to eat with a person was tantamount to saying, “I am your friend and will not hurt you.” This fact made Judas's deed all the more despicable (cf. Ps 41:9 and note).

26:24 *as it is written about him*. See note on Mk 14:21 . *Son of Man*. See note on Mk 8:31 .

26:26-28 See notes on Mk 14:22–24 .

26:27 *took the cup*. See note on Lk 22:17 .

26:28 *blood of the covenant ... poured out for many*. See note on Mk 14:24 .

26:29 *drink it anew ... in my Father's kingdom*. At the Messianic banquet (see Lk 22:16 and note).

26:30 *hymn*. The Passover fellowship was concluded with the second half of the Egyptian Hallel Psalms (Ps 115-118). Ps 113-114 were sung before the meal. *Mount of Olives*. See note on Mk 11:1 .

26:31 *all fall away*. Not Peter only, but all the eleven (Judas had previously withdrawn, Jn 13:30). The meaning of the words “fall away” is seen in Peter's denial (vv. 69-75) and in the terrified flight of the other disciples (v. 56). *I will strike the shepherd*. See note on Zec 13:7 .

26:32 *into Galilee*. Cf. 28:10,16-20 ; Mk 16:7 ; Jn 21:1-23 .

26:34 *before the rooster crows*. The reference may be to the third of the Roman watches into which the night was divided (see note on 14:25 ; see also Mk 13:35 and note). Or it may simply refer to early morning when the rooster crows.

26:36 *Gethsemane*. The name means “oil press,” a place for squeezing the oil from olives (see note on Mk 14:32).

26:37 *Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*. The latter were James and John. These three disciples seem to have been especially close to Jesus (see note on Mk 5:37).

■ **26:38-39** Jesus did not die serenely as many martyrs have. He was no mere martyr; he was the Lamb of God bearing the penalty of the sins of the entire human race. The wrath of God was turned loose on him. Only this can adequately explain what took place at Gethsemane.

26:38 *soul*. See 10:28 and note . *overwhelmed with sorrow*. See Isa 53:3 and note .

26:39 *cup*. A symbol of deep sorrow and suffering. Here it refers to his Father's face being turned away from him when he who had no sin was made sin (perhaps a sin offering) for us (see 27:46 ; 2Co 5:21 and note).

26:41 See note on Mk 14:38 .

26:45 *the hour*. See note on Lk 22:53 . *Son of Man*. see note on Mk 8:31 .

26:47 *Judas*. See notes on Jn 6:70 ; 17:12 . *large crowd armed with swords and clubs*. See note on Mk 14:43 . *chief priests and the elders*. See notes on v. 3 ; 2:4 .

26:48 *the one I kiss*. See note on Lk 22:47 .

26:49 *Rabbi*. Hebrew word for “(my) teacher.” *kissed him*. See notes on Mk 14:45 ; Lk 22:47 .

26:50 *Friend*. See note on 20:13 .

26:51 *one of Jesus' companions*. Peter (see Jn 18:10 and note). *servant of the high priest*. Malchus (see Jn 18:10 and note). *cutting off his ear*. Perhaps Peter intended a more fatal blow but missed and only succeeded in “cutting off his ear.”

26:53 *legions*. A Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers.

26:54 *Scriptures be fulfilled*. In view of v. 56 probably a reference to Zec 13:7 (see note on Mk 14:49).

26:55 Jesus protested the manner of his arrest. The crowd sent by the Sanhedrin (see note on Mk 14:55) had come after him as if he were a dangerous criminal or insurrectionist.

26:56 *disciples deserted him*. Contrast v. 35 .

26:57-27:26 For a summary of the two stages (religious and civil) of the trial of Jesus see note on Mk 14:53-15:15 .

26:57 *Caiaphas*. See v. 3 ; Jn 11:49 and notes . *teachers of the law*. See note on 2:4 . *elders*. See notes on Ex 3:16 ; 2Sa 3:17 .

26:59 *Sanhedrin*. See note on Mk 14:55 .

26:61 *I am able to destroy the temple of God*. Possibly an intentional distortion of Jesus' words (see Mk 14:58 ; Jn 2:19 and notes).

26:63 *I charge you under oath*. Jesus refused to answer the question of v. 62 (see v. 63a). But when the high priest used this form, Jesus was legally obliged to reply. *Christ*. See note on 16:16 .

26:64 This Son of Man saying brings together Ps 110:1 and Da 7:13 . See Mt 17:5 ; 24:30 and notes .

26:65 *tore his clothes*. Something that ordinarily the high priest was forbidden by law to do (Lev

10:6 ; 21:10), but this was considered a highly unusual circumstance. The high priest interpreted Jesus' answer in v. 64 as blasphemy (see note on Mk 14:64).

26:67-68 Mark (14:65) and Luke (22:64) report that they blindfolded Jesus, which explains the mocking command: “Prophecy ... Who hit you?”

26:73 *After a little while*. Lk 22:59 says “About an hour later.” *your accent gives you away*. Peter had a Galilean accent that was conspicuous in Jerusalem. Cf. Jdg 12:6 and note .

27:1 *Early in the morning*. Continues the narrative from 26:68 . The Sanhedrin could not have a legal session at night, so at daybreak they held a special meeting to make the death sentence (see 26:66) official. See notes on Mk 14:53-15:15 ; 15:1 ; Lk 22:66 ; Jn 18:28 .

27:2 *handed him over to Pilate*. The Sanhedrin had been deprived by the Roman government of the right to carry out capital punishment, except in the case of a foreigner who entered the sacred precincts of the temple. So Jesus had to be handed over to Pilate for execution (see Jn 18:31 and note). For additional information about Pilate see note on Lk 3:1 .

27:3-10 See Ac 1:16-19 .

27:3 *thirty silver coins*. See 26:15 and note .

27:5 *temple*. Probably the treasury room of the temple (see v. 6). *hanged himself*. See note on Ac 1:18 .

27:8 *Field of Blood*. Cf. “Valley of Slaughter” in Je 19:6 .

27:9 *Jeremiah*. The quotation that follows seems to combine Zec 11:12-13 and Je 19:1-13 (or perhaps Je 18:2-12 or 32:6-9). But Matthew attributes it to the better-known prophet Jeremiah, just as Mark (1:2-3) quotes Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 but attributes them both to the better-known prophet Isaiah (see note on Mk 1:2).

27:11 *governor*. Pontius Pilate (see note on v. 2). *king of the Jews*. See note on Jn 18:33 .

27:14 *Jesus made no reply*. See 26:63 ; Mk 15:4 ; Isa 53:7 and notes . *amazement of the governor*. Probably because he had never seen such behavior

before. He had no idea that Jesus was carrying out his Father's plan for the redemption of the world (see note on Mk 15:4).

27:15 *governor's custom.* Of which nothing is known outside the Gospels.

27:16 *notorious.* Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion (Lk 23:19 ; Jn 18:40), presumably against the Romans. So he would have been a folk hero among the Jews. See notes on Mk 15:7 ; Lk 23:18 ; Jn 18:40 . Some manuscripts use Barabbas's full name, Jesus Barabbas, in vv. 16-17 . If that is the correct reading, it sharpens the point of Pilate's question in v. 17 .

27:19 Matthew is the only writer who records this incident. *dream.* Dreams play an important role in Matthew's account of Jesus' life and ministry, especially in his accounts of Jesus' infancy (see 1:20; 2:12,13,19,22) and of his death (here).

27:24 *washed his hands.* See Dt 21:6 ; Ps 26:6 and notes ; 73:13 .

27:25 A chilling response by a bloodthirsty crowd. It has often been used to justify the persecution of the Jewish people. It should be noted, however, that it was not God but the people themselves who uttered these words. There is no evidence here that God granted their request. If there was a fulfillment, it was most likely in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

27:26 *flogged.* Roman floggings were so brutal that sometimes the victim died before crucifixion (see note on Mk 15:15).

27:27 *Praetorium.* The governor's official residence in Jerusalem (see notes on Mk 15:16 ; Ac 23:25).

27:28 *scarlet robe.* The outer cloak of a Roman soldier. Mk 15:17,20 ; Jn 19:2,5 describe it as purple.

27:29 *crown of thorns.* See note on Mk 15:17 . *staff.* A mock scepter. *Hail, king of the Jews.* See note on Mk 15:18 .

27:30-31 See Isa 50:6 and note .

27:30 *spit on him.* See note on Mk 15:19 .

27:32 *they.* See v. 27 . *Cyrene.* See note on Mk 15:21 . *Simon ... to carry the cross.* See note on Mk 15:21 .

27:33 *Golgotha.* See note on Mk 15:22 .

27:34 *mixed with gall.* Tradition says that the women of Jerusalem customarily furnished this painkilling narcotic to prisoners who were crucified. Matthew may intend an allusion to Ps 69:21 . Jesus refused to drink it, probably because he wanted to be fully conscious until his death (v. 50).

27:35 *crucified.* See note on Mk 15:24 . *casting lots.* Explained more precisely in Jn 19:23-24 (see notes there; see also NIV text note here).

27:37 See notes on Mk 15:26 ; Lk 23:38 ; Jn 19:19 .

27:38 *Two robbers.* See note on Mk 15:27 .

27:39 *shaking their heads.* See Ps 22:7 and note .

27:41 *chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders.* The Sanhedrin (see note on v. 1).

27:43 See Ps 22:8 and note .

27:45 *From the sixth hour until the ninth hour.* From noon until 3:00 P.M .

27:46 *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* Here Jesus spoke a dialect of Aramaic, which Matthew translates for his readers (see note on Mk 15:34).

27:47 *Elijah.* See note on Mk 15:35 .

27:48 *sponge.* See note on Jn 19:29 . *wine vinegar.* See notes on Mk 15:36 ; Lk 23:36 ; Jn 19:29 .

27:49 See note on Mk 15:35 .

27:50 *loud voice.* See note on Jn 19:30 .

Mt 27:51 *curtain.* The curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. The tearing of the curtain signified Christ's making it possible for believers to go directly into God's presence (see Mk 15:38 ; Lk 23:45 ; Heb 9:1-14 ; 10:14-22 and notes).

27:51b-53a *The earth shook ... they went.* Or "The earth shook, the rocks split ⁵² and the tombs

broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.⁵³ They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went ... ”

27:54 *centurion*. See note on 8:5 . *Son of God*. See note on Lk 23:47 .

27:55 *women ... to care for his needs*. Women played a significant role in the ministry of Jesus (see Mk 15:41 ; Lk 23:49) and his disciples (see Lk 8:3 and note).

27:56 See notes on Mk 15:40 ; Lk 24:10 .

27:57 *Arimathea*. A village about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem; perhaps to be identified with Ramathaim, the birthplace of the prophet Samuel (see 1Sa 1:1 and note). *Joseph*. See notes on Lk 23:50 ; Jn 19:38 .

27:58 *asked for Jesus' body*. See note on Lk 23:52 .

27:60 *new tomb*. See note on Mk 15:46 .

27:61 *the other Mary*. Presumably the mother of James and Joses (v. 56).

27:62 *The next day, the one after Preparation Day*. Saturday, the Sabbath. Friday was the preparation day for the Sabbath (sunset Friday to sunset Saturday).

27:64 *This last deception will be worse than the first*. The first would be that Jesus was the Messiah, the second that he had risen as the Son of God.

27:65 *Take a guard*. Either of Roman soldiers or of their own temple police; 28:14 implies that they were answerable to Pilate (“the governor”), which may favor Roman soldiers. On the other hand, the fact that in 28:11 they “reported to the chief priests” (instead of to Pilate) may favor temple police, who would have been under the authority of the religious leaders. (“Take a guard” may also be rendered “You have a guard.”)

28:1 *first day of the week*. See note on Lk 24:1 . *the other Mary*. See note on 27:61 . Mk 16:1 adds Salome, and Lk 24:10 adds Joanna.

28:2 *There was*. The sense is “Now there had been.” The parallel accounts (Mk 16:2-6 ; Lk 24:1-7 ; Jn 20:1) make it clear that the events of

vv. 2-4 occurred before the women actually arrived at the tomb. *violent earthquake*. Only Matthew mentions this earthquake and the one at Jesus' death (27:51,54).

28:6 *just as he said*. See 16:21 and note .

28:7 *going ahead of you into Galilee*. See 26:32 and note .

28:10 *my brothers*. His “disciples” (v. 16).

28:11-15 Only Matthew tells of the posting of the guard (ch. 27:62-66), and he follows up by telling about their report.

28:11 *reported to the chief priests*. See note on 27:65 .

28:13 *His disciples ... stole him away*. One of many human attempts to explain away Christ's resurrection. *while we were asleep*. It is more likely that Jewish temple police would be willing to admit to such dereliction of duty than Roman soldiers would.

28:14 See note on 27:65 .

28:16 *eleven*. Judas had committed suicide (see 27:5 and note). *mountain*. Cf. note on 5:1 . *had told them*. See v. 10 .

28:17 *some*. Probably of the 11 disciples, though it may include others as well. *doubted*. Full recognition of Jesus' resurrection did not come to them immediately. After the traumatic experience of the crucifixion, it took time for the disciples to come to that full awareness (see Lk 24:10-11,25-26 , 36-47).

28:18 *authority*. See 10:1 ; see also 7:29; 16:28 ; Jn 17:2 and notes . *in heaven and on earth*. The scope of Christ's authority is the entire universe.

■ **28:19-20** Christ's program of missions: “make disciples of all nations.” It involves three steps: (1) “go,” (2) “baptizing them” and (3) “teaching them to obey everything” Christ has commanded.

■ **28:19** *disciples*. See 5:1 and note . *all nations*. Contrast 10:5-6 and note . *baptizing them*. As a sign of their union with and commitment to Christ (see notes on Ac 2:38 ; Ro 6:3-4). *Father ... Son ... Holy Spirit*. The Trinitarian formula (see 3:16-17 and note ; 1Co 12:4-6 ; 2Co 13:14 and

note ; Ep 1:2-13 ; 4:4-6 ; 2Th 2:13 and note ; Tit 3:4-6 ; 1Pe 1:2 and note ; 1Jn 4:13-14 ; Rev 1:4-6 and NIV text note on 1:4).

☞ **28:20** *with you.* Matthew ends with the reassuring and empowering words of him who came to earth to be “God with us” (1:23). See note on 2Co 13:14 .