



OpenEnglish**Bible**

OPEN ENGLISH BIBLE
NT, PSALMS
and selected Old Testament books

PUBLICATION DATA

This is a development version of the Open English Bible, after release 2016.1.

This version uses Commonwealth spelling (for example, 'colour').

PREFACE

The Open English Bible

The Open English Bible project aims to create a modern English translation of the Bible which is completely free of copyright restrictions and available without cost for any purpose.

The OEB is your Bible — you can use it in worship, print as many copies as you want (in whole or part), republish it on your own website, even remix it or take it as the base for your own translation to meet your needs and the needs of your community. And you can do this without needing our permission or paying us a cent (or penny, rupee or kobo).

Base texts

The normative text for the OEB New Testament is the Westcott & Hort critical text. Since the NA28 is subject to a claim of copyright, W&H remains the best available public domain text.

The normative text for the OEB Old Testament is the Codex Leningradensis (Leningrad Codex); specifically the electronic version of the Westminster Leningrad Codex.

The OEB is being created by taking existing English language translations which are in the public domain, and conforming them to modern English and suitable public domain Greek and Hebrew source texts.^p The New Testament of the OEB is being formed on the base of the ‘Twentieth Century New Testament’, in particular the revised edition published in 1904. The Old Testament books which have been completed at this stage lean heavily on the work of John Edgar McFadyen and Charles Foster Kent, both of whom were very respected turn of the century Old Testament scholars.^p The TCNT was one of the earliest 20th century attempts at a translation in clear modern language aimed at the ordinary reader and based on a modern textual base (ie Westcott & Hort). Predating the mid-20th century translations such as the New English Bible and even Moffatt’s groundbreaking attempt, it is out of copyright worldwide. The TCNT also has a particular resonance with the open source and free content communities of today - it was created by a loose collaboration of volunteers rather

than a top-down hierarchy. Given the requirements of modern language and public domain status the TCNT was the best contender.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE BOOK OF RUTH

Naomi and Ruth

- 1 In the time when the judges ruled, there was once a famine in the land. A man from Bethlehem in Judah took his wife and two sons to live in the territory of Moab. His name was Elimelech and his wife's was Naomi, and his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. After they had been living in Moab for some time, Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons, who married Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, Mahlon and Chilion both died, and Naomi was left alone, without husband or sons.
- 6 So she set out with her daughters-in-law to return from the land of Moab, for she had heard that the LORD had remembered his people and given them food. As they were setting out together on the journey to Judah, 7 Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, 'Go, return both of you to the home of your mother. May the LORD be kind to you as you have been kind to 9 the dead and to me. The LORD grant that each of you may find peace and happiness in the house of a new husband.'
- 10 Then she kissed them; but they began to weep aloud and said to her, 11 'No, we will return with you to your people.' But Naomi said, 'Go back, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Can I still bear sons who might 12 become your husbands? Go back, my daughters, go your own way, because I am too old to have a husband. Even if I should say, "I have hope," even if 13 I should have a husband tonight and should bear sons, would you wait for them until they were grown up? Would you remain single for them? No, my daughters! My heart grieves for you, for the LORD has sent me adversity.'
- 14 Then they again wept aloud, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth stayed with her.
- 15 'Look,' said Naomi, 'your sister-in-law is going back to her own people 16 and to her own gods. Go along with her!' But Ruth answered, 'Do not urge me to leave you or to go back. I will go where you go, and I will stay wherever you stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God;

- 17 I will die where you die, and be buried there. May the LORD bring a curse
18 upon me, if anything but death separate you and me.' When Naomi saw
that Ruth was determined to go with her, she ceased urging her to return.
19 So they journeyed on until they came to Bethlehem. Their arrival stirred
the whole town, and the women said, 'Can this be Naomi?'
20 'Do not call me Naomi,' she said to them, 'call me Mara¹, for the
21 Almighty has given me a bitter lot. I had plenty when I left, but the LORD
has brought me back empty handed. Why should you call me Naomi, now
22 that the LORD has afflicted me, and the Almighty has brought misfortune
on me?' So Naomi and Ruth, her Moabite daughter-in-law, returned from
Moab. They reached Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

In the Fields of Boaz

- 2 Now Naomi was related through her husband to a very wealthy man of
2 the family of Elimelech named Boaz. Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, 'Let
me now go into the fields and gather leftover grain behind anyone who
will allow me.'
'Go, my daughter,' she replied.
3 So she went to glean in the field after the reapers. As it happened, she
was in that part of the field which belonged to Boaz, who was of the family
4 of Elimelech. When Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers,
'The LORD be with you,' they answered him, 'May the LORD bless you.'
5 'Whose girl is this?' Boaz asked his servant who had charge of the reapers.
6 The servant who had charge of the reapers replied, 'It is the Moabite girl
7 who came back with Naomi from the territory of Moab. She asked to be
allowed to glean and gather sheaves after the reapers. So she came and
has continued to work until now and she has not rested a moment in the
field.'
8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, 'Listen, my daughter. Do not go to glean in
9 another field nor leave this place, but stay here with my girls. Watch where
the men are reaping and follow the gleaners. I have told the young men
not to trouble you. When you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink of that
which the young men have drawn.'
10 Then she bowed low and said to him, 'Why are you so kind to me, to take
11 interest in me when I am just a foreigner?' Boaz replied, 'I have heard what

¹ 1:20 In Hebrew 'Naomi' means 'pleasant,' and 'Mara' means 'bitter.'

you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you left your father and mother and your native land to come to
12 a people that you did not know before. May the LORD repay you for what you have done, and may you be fully rewarded by the God of Israel, under
13 whose wings you have come to take refuge.' Then she said, 'I trust I may please you, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, although I am not really equal to one of your own servants.'

14 At mealtime Boaz said to Ruth, 'Come here and eat some of the food and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar.' So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed her some roasted grain. She ate until she was satisfied and
15 had some left. When she rose to glean, Boaz gave this order to his young
16 men: 'Let her glean even among the sheaves and do not disturb her. Also pull out some for her from the bundles and leave for her to glean, and do not find fault with her.'

17 So she gleaned in the field until evening, then beat out what she had
18 gleaned. It was about a bushel of barley. Then she took it up and went into the town and showed her mother-in-law what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her that which she had left from her meal after she had had enough.

19 'Where did you glean today, and where did you work?' asked her mother-in-law. 'A blessing on him who took notice of you!'

So she told her mother-in-law where she had worked. 'The name of the man with whom I worked today,' she said, 'is Boaz.'

20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, 'May the blessing of the LORD rest on this man who has not ceased to show his loving-kindness to the living and to the dead. The man,' she added, 'is a near relation of ours.'

21 'He told me,' Ruth said, 'that I must keep near his young men until they have completed all his harvest.'

22 Naomi said to Ruth, 'It is best, my daughter, that you should go out with
23 his girls because you might not be as safe in another field.' So she gleaned with the girls of Boaz until the end of the barley and wheat harvest; but she lived with her mother-in-law.

Night and morning

- 3 One day, Naomi said to Ruth, 'My daughter, should I not seek to secure
2 a home for you where you will be happy and prosperous? Is not Boaz,
3 with whose girls you have been, a relative of ours? Tonight he is going to winnow barley on the threshing-floor. So bathe and anoint yourself and

put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing-floor. But do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

4 Then when he lies down, mark the place where he lies. Go in, uncover his feet, lie down, and then he will tell you what to do.'

5 'I will do as you say.' Ruth said to her.

6 So she went down to the threshing-floor and did just as her mother-in-law told her. When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in a happy mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then

8 Ruth came quietly and uncovered his feet and lay down. At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and there was a woman lying at his feet!

9 'Who are you?' he said. 'I am Ruth your servant,' she answered, 'Spread 10 your cloak over your servant, for you are a near relative.' He said, 'May you be blest by the Lord, my daughter. You have shown me greater favour now than at first, for you have not followed young men, whether poor or rich.'

11 My daughter, have no fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for the whole 12 town knows that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a near 13 relative, but there is another man nearer than I. Stay here tonight, and then in the morning, if he will perform for you the duty of a kinsman, well, let him do it. But if he will not perform for you the duty of a kinsman, then as surely as the Lord lives, I will do it for you. Lie down until morning.'

14 So she lay at his feet until morning, but rose before anyone could recognise her, for Boaz said, 'No one must know that a woman came to the 15 threshing-floor.' He also said, 'Bring the cloak which you have on and hold it.' So she held it while he poured into it six measures of barley and laid it on her shoulders. Then he went into the city.

16 When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, 'Is it you, my 17 daughter?' Then Ruth told Naomi all that the man had done for her. 'He gave me these six measures of barley,' she said, 'for he said I should not go to my mother-in-law empty-handed.'

18 'Wait quietly, my daughter.' Naomi said, 'Until you know how the affair will turn out, for the man will not rest unless he settles it all today.'

4 Then Boaz went up to the gate and sat down. Just then the near kinsman of whom Boaz had spoken came along. Boaz said, 'Hello, So-and-so (calling 2 him by name), come here and sit down.' So he stopped and sat down. Boaz also took ten of the town elders and said, 'Sit down here.' So they sat down.

3 Then he said to the near relative, 'Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is offering for sale the piece of land which belonged to 4 our relative Elimelech, and I thought that I would lay the matter before you, suggesting that you buy it in the presence of these men who sit here and of the elders of my people. If you will buy it and so keep it in the

possession of the family, do so; but if not, then tell me, so that I may know; for no one but you has the right to buy it, and I am next to you.'

'I will buy it,' he said.

5 Then Boaz said, 'On the day you buy the field from Naomi, you must also marry Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to preserve the name of the dead in connection with his inheritance.'

6 'I cannot buy it for myself without spoiling my own inheritance,' the near relative said. 'You take my right of buying it as a relative, because I cannot do so.'

7 Now this used to be the custom in Israel: to make valid anything relating to a matter of redemption or exchange, a man drew off his sandal and gave it to the other man; and this was the way contracts were attested in Israel.

8 So when the near relative said to Boaz, 'Buy it for yourself,' Boaz drew off the man's sandal.

9 Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, 'You are witnesses at this time that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that was

10 Chilion's and Mahlon's from Naomi. Moreover I have secured Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in connection with his inheritance, so that his name will not disappear from among his relatives and from the household where he lived. You are witnesses this day.'

11 Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, 'We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built the house of Israel. May you 12 do well in Ephrata, and become famous in Bethlehem. From the children whom the LORD will give you by this young woman may your household become like the household of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.'

13 So Boaz married Ruth, and she became his wife; and the LORD gave to her 14 a son. Then the women said to Naomi, 'Blessed be the LORD who has not left you at this time without a near relative, and may his name be famous 15 in Israel. This child will restore your vigor and nourish you in your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is worth more to you than seven sons, has borne a son to Boaz!'

16 So Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him as if he was her 17 own. The women of the neighbourhood gave him a name, saying, 'A son is born to Naomi!' They named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who was the father of David.

Genealogy

- 18 This is the genealogy of Perez:
Perez was the father of Hezron,
19 Hezron of Ram,
Ram of Amminadab,
20 Amminadab of Nashon,
Nashon of Salmon,
21 Salmon of Boaz,
Boaz of Obed,
22 Obed of Jesse,
Jesse of David.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

*Samuel**Samuel's Birth*

- 1 NOW THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN OF RAMAH, a Zuphite of the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. He had two wives: 2 the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. 3 Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. This man used to go up from his city year by year to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of armies in Shiloh. Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to 4 the LORD there. It came to pass on one occasion that Elkanah sacrificed. Now he used to give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons 5 and daughters, but to Hannah he used to give a double portion because 6 he loved her. But the LORD had shut up her womb. Her rival used to vex 7 her bitterly in order to make her angry, because the LORD had shut up her 8 womb. This happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house 9 of the LORD, she used to vex her; therefore she wept and would not eat. But 10 Elkanah her husband said to her, 'Hannah, why do you weep and not eat, and why is your heart sad? Am not I better to you than ten sons?' 11 So Hannah rose up, after they had eaten in Shiloh, and stood before the LORD. Now Eli the priest was sitting at his seat at the door-posts of the temple of the LORD. She was greatly distressed and prayed fervently to the 12 LORD and wept bitterly. She vowed a vow, saying,

'O LORD of armies!
If you will indeed look on the affliction of your maid-servant,
remember me and not forget your maid-servant,
but will give to your maid-servant a boy
then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life.
A razor will not come upon his head.'

- 12 While she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Now Hannah was speaking to herself. Only her lips moved, but her voice 14 was not heard; therefore Eli took her for a drunken woman. So Eli said to

her, 'How long will you act like a drunken woman? Put away the effects of your wine and go from the presence of the LORD.'

15 'No, my lord,' Hannah answered, 'I am an unfortunate woman! I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but I have been pouring out my heart before the LORD. Do not take your maid-servant to be a vile woman, for because of the greatness of my grief and vexation have I continued speaking until now.'

17 Then Eli answered, 'Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of him.'

18 She said, 'Let your maid-servant find favour in your sight.' So the woman went her way and ate, and her countenance was no more sad.

19 They rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

20 And Hannah conceived, and it came to pass at the coming around of the new year that she bore a son, and named him Samuel², saying, 'For I have asked him of the LORD.'

21 The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. But Hannah did not go up; for she said to her husband, 'When the child is weaned then I will bring him and he will appear in the presence of the LORD and will live there forever.'

23 Elkanah her husband said to her, 'Do what seems good to you: wait until you have weaned him; only may the LORD establish your word.'

24 So the woman waited and nursed her son until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, together with a three-year-old bullock and a bushel of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. They slew the bullock and Hannah brought the lad to Eli. She said, 'Oh, sir, by your life, I am the woman who stood near you here, praying fervently to the LORD. This is the lad regarding whom I was fervently praying, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of him. Now, I on my part have given him to the LORD; as long as he lives he is given to the LORD.' So she left him there before the LORD.

2 And Hannah prayed:

My heart exults in the LORD,
my strength is exalted in the LORD;
my mouth laughs at my enemies;

² 1:20 Heb: Asked of God

because I rejoice in your salvation.

- 2 There is none holy as the LORD,
there is none like you;
there is no rock like our God.
- 3 Do not talk so proudly,
let not arrogance come out of your mouth,
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
- 4 The bows of the mighty men are broken,
and they that stumbled are girded with strength.
- 5 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread,
and they that were hungry have ceased;
while the barren has borne seven,
she who had many children has languished.
- 6 The LORD kills, and makes alive;
he brings down to the grave, and brings up.
- 7 The LORD makes poor, and makes rich;
he brings low, he also lifts up.
- 8 He raises up the poor out of the dust,
he lifts up the needy from the garbage heap
to make them sit with princes,
and inherit the throne of glory.
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S,
and he has set the world upon them.
- 9 He will guard the feet of his holy ones,
but the wicked will be put to silence in darkness;
for not by strength will humans prevail.
- 10 They who strive with the LORD will be broken to pieces;
against them will he thunder in heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth,
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the power of his anointed.
- 11 So Elkanah went to Ramah. But the lad was ministering to the LORD in
the presence of Eli the priest. Now the sons of Eli were base scoundrels;
they had no regard for the LORD, nor for what was justly due to the priest
from the people. Whenever a man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant

would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in
14 his hand, and would strike into the pot or the kettle or the basin or the
dish. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. So
they did to all the Israelites who came to sacrifice to the LORD in Shiloh.
15 Moreover before they burned the fat, the priest's servant used to come
and say to the man who was making the offering, 'Give me meat to roast
16 for the priest; for he will not take from you boiled flesh, but raw.' Should
the man, however, say to him, 'First you should burn the fat, then take as
much as you desire,' he would reply, 'No, you must give it at once or else I
17 will take it by force.' The sin of the young men was very great before the
18 LORD, for the men had contempt for the offering of the LORD. And Samuel
continued ministering before the LORD – a lad girded with a linen ephod.
19 His mother used to make him a little robe and bring it to him from year
to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.
20 And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, 'The LORD repay you
with offspring from this woman for the gift which she gave to the LORD.'
21 Then they would return to their own home. And the LORD visited Hannah
so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. The child
Samuel grew up before the LORD.

22 Now Eli was very old; and whenever he heard what his sons were doing
to all Israel, how they lay with the women who did service at the door of
23 the tent of meeting, he said to them, 'Why do you do such things as these,
24 which I hear from the mouth of all the people. No, my sons; for it is no
25 good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. If one
man sin against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sin against
the LORD, who could act as mediator for him?' Notwithstanding they did
not listen to the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to slay them.
26 But the lad Samuel kept on growing larger and better in the estimation
both of the LORD and of men.

27 There came a man of God to Eli and said to him, 'This is the LORD's
message: I revealed myself to your father's house, when they were in Egypt
28 servants to Pharaoh's house, and I chose him from all the tribes of Israel
to be my priest to go up to my altar to burn sacrifices, to bear an ephod
before me, and I gave to your father's house for food all the offerings of the
29 Israelites made by fire. Why do you look with envious eyes on my sacrifices
and offerings, and honour your sons above me in fattening yourselves with
30 the first-fruits of all the offerings which the Israelites bring me?" Therefore
the LORD the God of Israel says, "I had indeed thought that your house
and the house of your father would walk before me forever," but now the
LORD says, "Far be it from me, for them who honour me I will honour,

- 31 and they who despise me will be lightly esteemed. The days are quickly coming when I Will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house.
- 32 You will look in affliction and enviously on all the prosperity which I will give Israel, and there will not be an old man in your house forever. The only one of you whom I do not cut off from my altar will be spared to weep out his eyes and to wear out his body, and all of your household will die by the sword of men. This will be the sign to you that will come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both will die. And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do according to that which is in my heart and in my desire, and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before my anointed forever. Anyone who is left in your house will come to do him obeisance for a piece of money or a loaf of bread, and will beg to be given in one of the priests' offices so that they may eat a morsel of bread.”
- 3 The child Samuel continued ministering before the LORD in the presence of Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; there were no frequent visions. Once at that time, when Eli was lying in his Samuel place – his eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see – and while the lamp of God was still burning, and Samuel was lying in the temple of the LORD where the ark of God was, the LORD called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ He said, ‘Here I am.’ He ran to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am; you called me.’ But he said, ‘I didn’t call, lie down again.’ So he went and lay down. Then the LORD called yet again, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, ‘Here I am; you called me.’ But he answered, ‘I didn’t call, my son. Lie down again.’ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD neither had the word of the LORD yet been revealed to him. So when the LORD called Samuel again the third time, he arose and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am; for you called me.’ Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the child. So Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down; and if you are called, say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.”’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.
- 10 Then the LORD came, and stood there, and called as at other times, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak; for your servant is listening.’ And the LORD said to Samuel, ‘See, I am about to do such a thing in Israel, that the ears of everyone who hears it will ring. In that day I will perform toward Eli all that I have spoken against his house from beginning to end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever, for the guilt which he knew, in that his sons were blaspheming God and he did not restrain them.
- 11 Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the guilt of Eli’s house will not be expiated with sacrifice nor offering forever.’

15 And Samuel lay there until the morning. Then he rose early in the morning and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to
16 make the known the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel,
17 my son.' He said, 'I am here.' He said, 'What is the thing that the LORD has
18 spoken to you? Hide nothing from me. May God do to you whatever he
will, if you conceal from me a word of all that he spoke to you.' So Samuel
told him everything; and hid nothing from him. And Eli said, 'It is the
LORD; let him do what seems good to him.'

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words
20 fall to the ground. All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel
21 was established as a prophet of the LORD. And the LORD again appeared in
4 Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel, and the word of Samuel
came to all Israel.

Samuel the judge

Now in those days the Philistines assembled to make war against Israel.
Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and encamped at Ebenezer;
2 and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. The Philistines put themselves in
array against Israel, and Israel was smitten before the Philistines, and the
battle was hard fought and they slew in the ranks on the field about four
3 thousand men. But when the people returned to the camp, the elders of
Israel said, 'Why has the LORD smitten us today before the Philistines? Let
us bring to us the ark of our God out of Shiloh, that it may come among
4 us and save us from the hand of our enemies.' So they sent to Shiloh; and
took from there the ark of the LORD of armies who sits enthroned above
the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with
5 the ark of God. When the ark of God the LORD came to the camp, all Israel
shouted such a great shout that the earth rang.

6 When the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, 'What does
this great shouting in the Hebrew's camp mean?' When they learned that
7 the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, they were afraid, and said,
8 'These are their gods. They have come to them to the camp. Woe to Woe
to us! Nothin like this has happened to us before! Who can deliver us
out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the
9 Egyptians with every sort of plague and pestilence. Be strong, and be men,
O Philistines, so that you will not become slaves to the Hebrews, as they
have been slaves to you.'

10 So the Philistines fought and there was great slaughter. Israel was defeated and each fled to his home. There fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, perished.

12 A Benjamite ran from the ranks and came to Shiloh the same day with his garments torn and with earth on his head. Just as he came, Eli was sitting upon his seat beside the gate watching the road, for his heart was trembling for the ark of God. When the man came to the city to inform 14 it, all the city cried out. When Eli heard the noise of the crying he said, 15 'What is this tumultuous noise?' The man came quickly and told Eli. (Now Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were set, so that he could not see). The man said to Eli, 'I have come from the battle, for I fled today 17 from the ranks.' He said, 'How went the matter, my son?' He that brought the tidings answered, 'Israel fled before the Philistines, and there was also a great slaughter among the people, and your two sons also, Hophni 18 and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.' When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell from his seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years.

19 His daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was pregnant and near her time. When she heard the report regarding the capture of the ark of God, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and 20 crouched down and gave birth to a child. As she lay dying, the women who stood by her said to her, 'Do not fear, for you have given birth to a 21 son.' But she neither answered nor heeded. She named the child Ichabod, saying, 'The glory is taken away from Israel,' meaning the capture of the 22 ark of God, and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. 'Glory has left Israel,' she said, 'because the ark of God is taken.'

5 The Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to 2 Ashdod. Then the Philistines took the ark of the LORD and brought it to the 3 house of Dagon and set it up by the side of Dagon. When the Ashdodites arose early the next day, there was Dagon fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. They raised up Dagon and set him in his place 4 again. But when they arose early on the following morning, behold there was Dagon fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and both his hands were cut off upon the threshold, 5 and only the body of Dagon was left. This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do not tread on the threshold of 6 Dagon in Ashdod to this day, but step over it. The hand of the LORD was heavy upon the Ashdodites, and he destroyed them, and struck them with

7 tumors, both in Ashdod and its borders. When the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, 'The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for his hand is severe on us and on Dagon our god.' So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, 'What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?' They answered, 'Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath.' So they moved the ark of the God of Israel to Gath. But after they had brought it to Gath, the hand of the LORD was against the city – there was a very great panic – and he struck the men of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them. So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But when the ark of God came to Ekron, the Ekroneites cried out, 'They have brought around the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.' They sent therefore and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines and said, 'Send away the ark of the God of Israel, let it go back to its own place and not kill us and our people.' For a deadly panic had seized the entire city. The hand of God was very heavy there. The men who did not die were stricken with the tumors, and the cry of lamentation from the city went up to heaven.

6 The ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines for seven months.
2 Then the Philistines summoned the priests and the diviners, and said, 'What should we do with the ark of the LORD? Show us how we should 3 send it to its place.' They said, 'If you are sending the ark of the God of Israel, you must not send it away empty. You must return to him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and it will be made known to you why 4 his hand is not removed from you.' Then they were asked, 'What should the guilt offering be which we should return to him?' and they said, 'Five golden tumors, and five golden rats, corresponding to the number of the lords of the Philistines; for one plague was upon you as well as upon your 5 lords. Therefore you should make images of your tumors, and images of your rats that ravage the land, and you should give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lighten his hand from on you and your gods and 6 your land. Why be stubborn, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh were stubborn? Remember how he made sport of them until they let Israel go?'

7 So take and prepare a new cart, and two milch cows which have never been yoked, and fasten the cows to the cart. But leave their calves behind 8 them at home. Take the ark of the LORD and place it on the cart and put the golden objects which you are returning to him as a guilt offering in a box 9 at its side. Then send it on its way. Watch; if it goes on the way to its own land, to Beth-shemesh, then it was the LORD who did us this great harm, but if not, then we will know that it was not his hand that stuck us but it was an accident that happened to us.'

10 The men did all this. They took two mulch cows and fastened them
11 to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. They placed the ark of the
12 LORD on the cart, and the box with the golden rats and the images of their
13 tumors. The cows took a straight course in the direction of Beth-shemesh.
14 They went along the highway, lowing as they went, and did not turn left
15 nor right. The lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth-
16 shemesh. The inhabitants of Beth-shemesh were harvesting their wheat in
17 the valley. They lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, and came rejoicing
18 to meet it. When the cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh,
19 it stood still there, near a great stone. So they chopped up the wood of
20 the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. The Levites
21 took down the ark of the LORD and the box that was with it, in which
22 were the golden objects, and placed them on the great stone. The men of
23 Beth-shemesh offered to the LORD on that day burnt offerings and ordinary
24 sacrifices. When the five lords of the Philistines saw it, they returned to
25 Ekron on that day.

26 These are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned as a guilt
27 offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one
28 for Gath, and one for Ekron. The golden rats correspond to the number of
29 all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fortified
30 cities and of country villages. A witness is the great stone, by which they
31 set down the ark of the LORD. To this day it is in the field of Joshua of
32 Beth-shemesh.

33 The descendants of Jechoniah, however, did not rejoice with the men
34 of Beth-shemesh, when they welcomed the ark of the LORD. So he killed
35 seventy of them, and the people mourned because the LORD had struck
36 the people with such a great slaughter. The people of Beth-shemesh said,
37 'Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom can we
38 send him to be rid of him?' So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of
39 Kiriath-jearim, saying, 'The Philistines have brought back the ark of the
40 LORD. Come and take it back with you.'

41 So the people of Kiriath-jearim came, and took the ark of the LORD, and
42 carried it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar,
43 his son, to guard the ark of the LORD.

44 Many years passed from the time the ark began to abide in Kiriath-
45 jearim – twenty years. All the nation of Israel turned to the LORD, and
46 Samuel spoke to all the nation Israel, saying, 'If with all your heart you are
47 returning to the LORD, then put away the foreign gods and the Astartes
48 from among you and direct your hearts towards the LORD and serve him
49 alone, so that he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.' So the

- 5 Israelites put away the Baals and the Astartes, and served the LORD only.
6 Then Samuel said, 'Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede for
7 you with the LORD.' So they assembled at Mizpah, and drew water and
8 poured it out before the LORD, and fasted all day and confessed, 'We have
9 sinned against the LORD.' And Samuel judged the Israelites in Mizpah.
10 When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had assembled at Mizpah,
11 the lords of the Philistines marched against Israel. When the Israelites
12 heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines and said to Samuel, 'Don't
13 cease to cry to the LORD our God for us, so that he will save us out of the
14 power of the Philistines.' Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it as a
15 whole burnt offering to the LORD, and cried to the LORD on behalf of Israel,
16 and the LORD answered him. While Samuel was offering the burnt offering,
17 the Philistines drew near to fight against Israel. But the LORD thundered
18 with a mighty voice on that day against the Philistines, and threw them
19 into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. The men of Israel
20 went forth from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and struck them until
21 they were below Beth-car.
22 Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Jeshanah and
23 named it Ebenezer, saying, 'This is how far the LORD has helped us.' So the
24 Philistines were subdued and came no more within the border of Israel.
25 The hand of the LORD was against the Philistines as long as Samuel lived.
26 The cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to
27 Israel from Ekron to Gath. Israel recovered their territory from the power
28 of the Philistines. There was peace between Israel and the Amorites.
29 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. He used to go around from
30 year to year in succession to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and he used to
31 judge Israel in all those places. But he always returned to Ramah, for there
32 was his home, and there he judged Israel. There he built an altar to the
33 LORD.

*Samuel and Saul**Development of Monarchy*

- 8 WHEN SAMUEL GREW OLD HE APPOINTED HIS SONS JUDGES OVER Israel. The eldest
9 was called Joel, and his second was called Abijah. They were judges in Beer-
10 sheba. However his sons did not follow his ways, but turned aside after
11 unjust gain and took bribes and perverted justice. So all the elders of Israel

5 assembled and came to Samuel at Ramah, and they said to him, 'You have become old and your sons don't follow your ways. Appoint for us a king
6 to rule us like all the other nations.' But the statement displeased Samuel,
7 when they said, 'Give us a king to judge us.' And Samuel prayed to the
7 LORD. The LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people and all
8 that they say to you. For they have not rejected you, but they have rejected
8 me from being king over them. Like all the deeds which they have done to
9 me since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day, in
9 that they have forsaken me and served other gods, so also are they doing
9 to you. Listen to what they have to say, but solemnly warn them, and show
them the ways of the king who will reign over them.'

10 Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking
11 him to appoint a king. He said, 'This will be the way of the king who will
12 reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots
13 and cavalry. They will run before his chariots, and he will appoint for
himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some
13 to plow his ground and to reap his harvest and to make his implements
14 of war and the equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to
14 be perfumers and to be cooks and to be bakers. Of your fields and your
vineyards and your oliveyards, he will take the best and give them to his
15 servants. He will take a tenth of your grain fields and of your vineyards
16 and give to his eunuchs and to his servants. He will take your male and
female slaves, and the best of your cattle and your donkeys, and use them
17 for his work. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you will become his
18 slaves. Then you will cry out in that day against your king whom you
19 chose for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.' But the
20 people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and said, 'No, we must have
21 a king over us, so that we will like all other the nations, and so that our
22 king can rule us and go out before us and fight our battles.' And Samuel
heard all the words of the people and repeated them to the LORD. And the
LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to their voice and make them a king.' And
Samuel said to the people of Israel, 'Each of you return to your city.'

9 Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish the son of
Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite,
2 a man of wealth. He had a son whose name was Saul, a man in the prime of
life and handsome. There was no one among the Israelites more handsome
than he was. He was a head taller than any of the people.
3 Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, had strayed. Kish said to Saul his
son, 'Take one of the servants with you and go out and find the donkeys.'
4 They passed through the hill country of Ephraim, and the land of Shalishah,

but did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. They passed through the land of the Benjamites but did not find them.

- 5 When they reached the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, 'Come, let us return, or my father will stop thinking of the donkeys and become anxious for us.' But the servant answered, 'There is in this city a man of God, and the man is held in honour. All that he says is sure to come true. Let us go there now, and perhaps he can give us information about the mission on which we are going.' Saul said to the boy, 'But, suppose we go, what should we take to the man? For the bread is gone from our sacks, and there is no present to take to the man of God.'
- 6 What do we have?' The servant answered Saul again, 'See I have with me a quarter shekel of silver, and I will give it to the man of God so that he 7 may give us information regarding our mission.' (Formerly in Israel, when someone went to inquire of God, they said, 'Come let us go to the seer,' because what is nowadays called a prophet was previously called a seer).
- 8 Then Saul said to his servant, 'Your advice is good. Come, let us go.' So 9 they went to the city where the man of God was.

- 10 As they were going up the ascent to the city, they met some young girls 11 going out to draw water and said to them, 'Is the seer here?' They answered, 'Yes, he is there ahead of you. Hurry, he has come today to the city because 12 the people have a sacrifice today on the high place. As soon as you come to the city, you will at once find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not eat until he comes, because he is needed to bless 13 the sacrifice before the guests eat. Now go up, and at this time you will 14 meet him.' So they went up to the city. When they came within the city gate, Samuel was just coming out toward them, to go up to the high place.

- 15 Now the Lord had given to Samuel, a day before Saul came, the following 16 revelation: 'At this time tomorrow I will send you a man out of the land of Benjamin and you must anoint him to be a prince over my people Israel. He will save my people out of the hand of the Philistines, because I have seen 17 the suffering of my people, and their cry has reached me.' When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord indicated to him, 'This is the man of whom I spoke to 18 you! He is the one who will rule over my people.' Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, 'Tell me, please, where the seer's house is.'
- 19 And Samuel answered Saul, 'I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you will eat with me today. In the morning I will let you go, and 20 will tell you all that is in your heart. As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not trouble yourself about them. They have been found. To whom does all that is desirable in Israel belong? Does it not belong to

- 21 you, and to your ancestral house? Saul answered, ‘But I am a Benjamite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family is the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin! Why do you speak like this to me?’
- 22 Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall and made them sit at the head of the guests (who were about thirty persons).
- 23 And he said to the cook, ‘Bring the portion I gave you, which I told you to put aside.’ The cook took up the leg and placed it before Saul. And Samuel said, ‘See, the meat is served! Eat! It was kept for you until the appointed time, so that you might eat with those whom I have invited.’
- 25 So Saul ate with Samuel that day. After they came down from the high place into the city, they spread a bed for Saul on the roof, and he lay down for the night. At daybreak Samuel called to Saul on the roof, ‘Get up, so that I can send you on your way.’ So Saul arose, and he and Samuel went out into the street.
- 27 As they were going down at the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, ‘Tell your servant to go on ahead of us, but you stay here so that I can make known to you the word of God.’
- 10 Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said, ‘The LORD has anointed you to be a ruler over his people Israel. You will reign over the people of the LORD and save them from the power of their enemies all around. This will be the sign that the LORD has anointed 2 you to be a ruler over his heritage: when you go from me today you will find two men at Rachel’s tomb, in the boundary of Benjamin at Zelzah. They will say to you, “The donkeys you went to seek are found, and now your father has dismissed the matter of the donkeys and is anxious for you, 3 asking, ‘What should I do about my son?’” Then you will go on from there and come to the oak of Tabor. There three men going up to God to Bethel will meet you, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves 4 of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. They will greet you and give 5 you two loaves of bread which you will take from their hand. After that you will come to Gibeah-elohim, where the garrison of the Philistines is. When you come to the city, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place with a lyre, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before 6 them, and they will be prophesying. The spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and will be turned into another 7 man. When these signs come to you, you will do as the occasion offers, for 8 God is with you. You must go down before me to Gilgal, and then I will come down to you, to offer burnt offerings. Wait seven days until I come to you and show you what to do.’

9 As Saul turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him a change of
10 heart, and all those signs came to pass that day. On his way to Gibeah, a
11 band of prophets met him, and the spirit of God possessed him, and he
12 prophesied among them. When everyone who knew him saw him in the
13 act of prophesying with the prophets, the people said to one another, 'What
14 has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?' One of the
15 bystanders answered, 'Who is their father?' Therefore it became a proverb,
16 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' When he had finished prophesying, he
17 went to the high place. Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, 'Where
18 did you go?' He said, 'To find the donkeys, and when we saw that they
19 were not found, we went to Samuel.' And Saul's uncle said, 'Tell me what
20 Samuel said to you.' And Saul said to his uncle, 'He told us that the donkeys
21 were found.' But about the matter of the kingdom of which Samuel had
22 spoken, he told him nothing.

23 Samuel called the people together to Mizpah, and said to the Israelites,
24 'This is what the LORD the God of Israel says: I brought up Israel out of
25 Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of
26 the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you. But today you
27 rejected your God, who has been saving you from all your calamities and
28 your distresses. You have said to him, "No! You must set a king over us."
Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by
29 your clans.'

30 So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin
31 was picked by lot. He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their clans,
32 and the clan of the Matrites was picked by lot. He brought near the clan
33 of Matri man by man and Saul the son of Kish was picked, but when they
34 searched for him, him he could not be found. So they asked of the LORD
35 further, 'Did the man come here?' And the LORD answered 'See, he has hid
36 himself among the baggage.' Someone ran and brought him from there.
When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people
37 by a head. Said Samuel to the people, 'Have you seen this man whom the
38 LORD has chosen? For there is no one like him among all the people.' All
39 the people shouted loudly, 'Long live the king!'

40 In this way Samuel revealed to the people the manner of the kingdom,
41 and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD. Then Samuel sent
42 all the people away, each to their home. And Saul also went to his home at
43 Gibeah; and with him went the warriors whose hearts God had touched.
44 But there were some scoundrels who said, 'How can this man save us?'
They despised him, and brought him no presents.

Saul the king

- 1 About a month later Nahash the Ammonite came up and besieged Jabesh-gilead. All the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, 'Make terms with us and we will serve you.' But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, 'On this condition will I make terms with you: that I gouge out the right eye of each of you 2 and by this bring disgrace on all Israel.' The elders of Jabesh said to him, 'Give us seven days respite, so that we can send messengers through all the territory of Israel. Then if there be no one to save us we will surrender 3 to you.' So the messengers came to Gibeath of Saul and recounted the facts 4 in the hearing of the people, and all the people wept aloud.
- 5 Saul was just coming from the field, driving the oxen. He said, 'What is the trouble with the people? Why are they weeping?' Then they told him 6 the words of the men of Jabesh. The spirit of the LORD rushed upon Saul 7 when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly aroused. He took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hand of messengers, saying, 'Whoever does not come out after Saul and after Samuel, so will it be done to his oxen!' Then 8 a terror from the LORD fell upon the people, and they rallied as one man.
- He mustered them in Bezek. The Israelites were three hundred thousand, 9 and the men of Judah thirty thousand. They said to the messengers who came, 'Say this to the men of Jabesh-gilead: Tomorrow, by the time the sun becomes hot, deliverance will have come to you.' So the messengers came 10 and told the men of Jabesh. They rejoiced, and said to Nahash, 'Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you can do to us whatever you please.'
- 11 On the following day, Saul divided the people into three divisions. They came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and massacred the Ammonites, until the heat of the day. The survivors scattered, so that no two of them were left together.
- 12 The people said to Samuel, 'Who is he who said, "Saul will not reign over us?" Bring the men that we may put them to death!' But Saul said, 'Today no one will be put to death, because today the LORD has brought 13 deliverance to Israel.'
- 14 Then Samuel said to the people, 'Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.' All the people went to Gilgal. There they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal, and sacrificed peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel held a great celebration.

12 Samuel said to all Israel, ‘See, I have listened to you in all that you have
2 said to me and have appointed a king over you. From now on, behold the
king who will lead you. As for me, I am old and grey, but my sons are
3 with you. I have led you from my youth to this day. Here I am! Testify
against me before the LORD, and before his anointed. Whose ox have I
taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I oppressed? Whom have
I defrauded? From whose hand have I taken a bribe to turn a blind eye?
4 Testify and I will restore it to you.’ They said, ‘You have not oppressed us,
5 nor defrauded us, nor have you taken anything from anyone’s hand.’ So he
said to them, ‘The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness
this day, that you have not found anything in my hand.’ They said, ‘He is
witness.’
6 Then Samuel said to the people, ‘The LORD is witness, who appointed
Moses and Aaron and who brought your ancestors up out of the land of
7 Egypt. Now therefore take your stand so that I may declare to you before
the LORD all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to
8 your ancestors. When Jacob came to Egypt, and your ancestors cried to the
LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron to bring your ancestors out of
9 Egypt, and settled them in this place. But they forgot the LORD their God,
and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of King
Jabin of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the
10 king of Moab. They fought against them, and cried to the LORD and said,
‘We have sinned because we have forsaken the LORD and served the Baals
and the Astartes. Deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will
11 serve you.’ And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Barak, and Jephthah, and
Samson, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies surrounding
12 you so that you lived in safety. But when you saw that Nahash the king of
the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, “No, but a king must
13 reign over us,” although the LORD your God was your king. Now therefore
see the king whom you have chosen, for the LORD has now set a king over
14 you. If you will fear the LORD and serve him and listen to his voice, and
not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and both you and the
king who reigns over you follow the LORD your God, then it will be well.
15 But if you will not listen to the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the
commandment of the LORD, then will the hand of the LORD be against you
16 and your king. Now therefore take your stand and see this great thing that
17 the LORD is about to do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest today?
I will call upon the LORD to send thunder and rain. You will know and
see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the
18 LORD in asking for a king.’ So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD

sent thunder and rain that day. All the people were greatly afraid of the LORD and Samuel.

19 Then all the people said to Samuel, 'Intercede with the LORD your God in behalf of your servants so that we do not die, because we have added to 20 all our sins the crime of asking for a king.' But Samuel said to the people, 'Don't be afraid, you have indeed done all this evil, but do not turn aside 21 from following the LORD. Serve the LORD with all your heart, and do not turn aside after useless things which cannot profit or deliver, for they 22 are useless. For the LORD because of his great name will not cast away his 23 people, for the LORD has undertaken to make you his own people. Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to 24 pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. Only 25 fear the LORD and serve him in truth with all your heart, for you see the great things he has done for you. But if you persist in doing wrong, both 13 you and your king will be swept away. Saul was ... years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ... and two years over Israel.³

2 Saul chose three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and on the mountain of Bethel and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent to their 3 homes. Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the news reached the Philistines that the Hebrews were in revolt. But Saul had in the meantime caused the trumpet to be blown throughout all 4 the land, and all Israel heard the news that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had brought itself into ill odor with the Philistines. The people were called out to join Saul at Gilgal.

5 The Philistines were gathered together to fight with Israel – thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen and fighters as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They came up and encamped in Michmash, east 6 of Beth-aven. When the Israelites saw that they were in a strait (for the fighters were hard pressed), they hid themselves in caves, in holes, in rocks, 7 in tombs, and in pits. Also many people went over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. But Saul was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

8 He waited seven days for the appointed time which Samuel had set, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people scattered away from 9 him. So Saul said, 'Bring here to me the burnt-offering and the peaceofferings.' He offered the burnt-offering. Just as he had finished offering

³ 13:1 The numbers are missing from the text.

11 the burnt-offering, Samuel came, and Saul went out to greet him. Samuel said, 'What have you done?' And Saul said, 'Because I saw that the people were scattering away from me and you did not come within the appointed time, and the Philistines were gathering together at Michmash, I said, "Now the Philistines will come down to me at Gilgal, and I will not have appeased the LORD." So I felt compelled to offer the burnt-offering.' Samuel said to Saul, 'You have acted foolishly. If you had kept the command of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, then would the LORD have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom will not continue. The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has appointed him a leader over his people, because you have not kept that which the LORD commanded you.' Then Samuel arose and left Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul, going from Gilgal towards Gibeah of Benjamin.

Saul counted the people who were with him, about six hundred men.

16 Saul and Jonathan his son, together with the people who were with them, were staying in Gibeah of Benjamin, while the Philistines encamped in 17 Michmash. Raiding parties came out of the camp of the Philistines in three divisions: one division turned in the direction of Ophrah in the land of 18 Shual, and another division turned in the direction of Beth-horon, and another division turned in the direction of the hill that looks down over the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

19 Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel, for the 20 Philistines said, 'The Hebrews must not make swords or spears,' so all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen each his plowshare and 21 his sickle and his ax and his mattock. The charge was two thirds of a shekel for ploughshares and mattocks, and one third of a shekel for sharpening 22 the axes and setting the ox goads. So on the day of the battle, none of the people with Saul and Jonathan had a sword or spear; but Saul and Jonathan his son had them.

23 A garrison of the Philistines had gone out to the pass of Michmash, and 14 one day Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who bore his armour, 'Come – let's go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on the 2 other side.' But he did not tell his father. Saul was sitting in the outskirts of 3 Gibeah under the pomegranate tree at Mignon, and with him were about 4 six hundred men. Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest of the LORD at Shiloh, was in charge of an ephod. The people did not know that Jonathan had gone. Between the passes by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison there was a rocky crag on the one side, and a rocky crag on the other side;

- 5 and the name of the one was Boez, and the name of the other Seneh. One crag rose up on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.
- 6 Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armour, 'Come, let's go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised Philistines. Perhaps the LORD will act for us, for there is nothing that can prevent the LORD from saving
7 by many or by few.' His armour-bearer said to him, 'Do whatever your
8 judgment dictates. I am with you, your wish is mine.' Then Jonathan said,
9 'We will pass over to the men and show ourselves to them. If they say to us,
"Stand still until we can reach you," then we will stand still in our place,
10 and will not go up to them. But if they say, "Come up to us," then we
will go up; for the LORD has given them into our hand, and this will be
11 the sign to us.' When both of them showed themselves to the garrison of
12 the Philistines, the Philistines said, 'There are Hebrews coming out of the
holes where they have hidden themselves.' The men of the garrison cried
out to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, 'Come up to us so that we can tell
you something.' Then Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, 'Come up after
13 me, for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel.' And Jonathan
climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armour-bearer after him. The
Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer kept despatching
14 them after him. In the first attack Jonathan and his armour-bearer slew
15 about twenty men in an area of about half an acre. There was panic in the
camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison, and even the
raiders trembled and the earth quaked so that it produced a great panic.
- 16 The watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and saw the army
17 surging hither and thither. Saul said to the people who were with him,
'Investigate now and see who is gone from us.' When they had investigated
18 they found that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not there. And Saul
said to Ahijah, 'Bring the ephod here,' for at that time he had charge of the
19 ephod before Israel. While Saul was speaking to the priest, the tumult in
the camp of the Philistines kept on increasing. So Saul said to the priest,
20 'Draw back your hand.' And Saul and all the people that were with him
responded to the call, and came to the battle, and every man's sword was
21 turned upon his fellow and there was very great confusion. The Hebrews
who had gone over to the Philistines and joined their the camp, turned to
22 be with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. Likewise all the
Israelites who were in hiding in the hill-country of Ephraim, when they
heard that the Philistines were fleeing, pursued close after them in the
23 battle. So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle passed on beyond
Beth-aven.

24 Then Saul committed a great act of folly that day, for he laid an oath on
the people, saying, 'Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening
and until I avenge myself on my enemies.' So none of the people tasted
25 food. Now there was honeycomb in that country, and when the people
26 came to the honeycomb, the bees had just flown away, but no one put his
27 hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan had not
heard when his father charged the people. He put forth the end of the rod
that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb and put his hand
28 to his mouth, and his eyes were lightened. Then one of the fighters spoke
up, 'Your father charged the people saying, "Cursed be the man who eats
29 food this day." So the men are exhausted.' Then said Jonathan, 'My father
has brought disaster on the land. See how I have been refreshed, because I
30 tasted a little of this honey. If only the people had eaten freely today of the
spoil of their enemies which they found, how much greater would have
been the slaughter of the Philistines!'

31 But they struck at the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon,
32 and the people were very faint, and they rushed upon the spoil and took
sheep and oxen and calves and slaughtered them on the ground, and the
33 people ate them with the blood. When Saul was told that the people were
sinning against the LORD in eating with the blood, he said to those who
34 told him, 'Treason! Roll a great stone to me.' And Saul said, 'Go out among
the people and say to them, "Let each man bring to me his ox and his sheep,
and slay it here and eat; but do not sin against the LORD in eating the flesh
together with the blood."' All the people brought their oxen that night and
35 slew them there. So Saul built an altar to the LORD. That was the first altar
that he built to the LORD.

36 Then Saul said, 'Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder
among them until daybreak, and let us not spare a single man.' They said,
'Do whatever you think best,' but the priest said, 'Let us first consult God.'
37 So Saul asked of God, 'Should I go down after the Philistines? Will you
deliver them into the hand of Israel?' But there was no answer that day.
38 And Saul said, 'Come here, all you chiefs of the people and know and see
39 in whom is this guilt today. For as the Lord lives, who delivered Israel, even
if it be in Jonathan my son, that man will surely die.' But no one of all the
40 people answered him. Then he said to all Israel, 'You will on one side, and
I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side.' The people said to Saul,
41 'Do what seems good to you.' Therefore Saul asked the LORD, God of Israel,
'Why have you not answered your servant this day? If the guilt is in me or
in Jonathan my son, the LORD, God of Israel, give Urim, but if the guilt is
in your people Israel, give Thummim.' And the lot indicated Jonathan and

- 42 Saul, and the people were cleared. And Saul said, 'Cast the lot between me and Jonathan my son. He whom the LORD indicates, must die.' The people said to Saul, 'It must not be so!' But Saul overruled the people and they cast the lot between him and Jonathan his son. And Jonathan was indicated.
- 43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, 'Tell me what you have done.' And Jonathan told him, saying, 'I did indeed taste a little honey with the end of the staff that was in my hand, and here I am! I am ready to die.' And Saul said, 'May God do to me whatever he pleases, you must surely die, Jonathan!'
- 44 But the people said to Saul, 'Should Jonathan die who has wrought this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.' So the
- 45 people redeemed Jonathan, so that he did not die. Then Saul broke off from pursuing the Philistines and the Philistines went to their own country.
- 46 When Saul had taken the kingdom over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side: against Moab and the Ammonites and Edom and the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned he was
- 47 victorious. He did mighty deeds and struck the Amalekites and delivered Israel out of the hands of its plunderers.
- 48 Now the sons of Saul were: Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua. The names of his two daughters were: the eldest, Merab, the youngest, Michal. The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of
- 49 the commander of his army was Abner the son Saul's uncle Ner. Kish the father of Saul and Ner the father of Abner were sons of Abiel.
- 50 The war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul. Whenever Saul saw any valiant or efficient man, he would take him into his service.
- 51 Samuel said to Saul, 'The LORD sent me to anoint you to be king over his
- 52 people Israel. Now listen to the words of the LORD. This says the LORD of armies: "I have determined to punish the Amalekites for what they did to
- 53 Israel, in opposing them as they came up out of Egypt. Now go and attack Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have. Spare no one but slay both
- 54 man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey."
- 55 So Saul summoned the people and mustered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand from Judah. When Saul
- 56 came to the city of Amalek, he lay in wait in the valley. Saul said to the Kenites, 'Go away, withdraw from among the Amalekites, or I will destroy you with them, for you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they
- 57 came up from Egypt.' So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.
- 58 And Saul struck the Amalekites from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east
- 59 of Egypt. He took Agag the king of Amalek alive and completely destroyed
- 60 all the people with the sword. But Saul and his army spared Agag and

the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fat beasts, the lambs, and all that was good, and would not completely destroy them. But everything that was worthless and despised they completely destroyed.

- 10 Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel saying, 'I repent of making
11 Saul king, because he has turned from following me and has not carried
out my commands.' And Samuel was angry and cried to the LORD all night.
12 Early in the morning Samuel rose to meet Saul. Then Samuel was told,
'Saul came to Carmel and has just set up a monument to himself and has
13 turned and passed on and gone down to Gilgal.' When Samuel came to
Saul, Saul said to him, 'Blessed be you of the LORD! I have fulfilled the
14 command of the LORD.' And Samuel said, 'What then is this bleating of the
15 sheep in my ears and the lowing of the cattle which I hear?' And Saul said,
'They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the
best off the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the LORD your God, and
16 the rest we have completely destroyed.' Then Samuel said to 'Saul, Stop!
and let me tell you what the LORD has said to me this night.' He said to
him, 'Speak.'
- 17 Samuel said, 'Though you are little in your own sight, are you not the
18 head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel, and
the LORD sent you on an expedition and said, "Go, and completely destroy
the sinners of Amalek and fight against them until they are consumed."
19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD and why did you swoop
20 upon the spoil and displease the LORD?' And Saul said to Samuel, 'I have
obeyed the voice of the LORD and have gone on the expedition which the
LORD sent me on and have brought back Agag the king of the Amalekites
21 and have completely destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the
spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which were placed under the
22 ban, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.' And Samuel said, 'Does
the LORD delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obedience to the
voice of the LORD? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen
23 than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as bad as the sin of divination, and
obstinacy as idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he
24 has rejected you from being king.' And Saul said to Samuel, 'I have sinned,
for I have transgressed the command of the LORD and your words because
25 I feared the people and listened to their voice. Now therefore pardon for
26 my sin and turn back with me, that I may worship the LORD.' But Samuel
said to Saul, 'I will not turn back with you, for you have rejected the word
27 of the LORD and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.' As
28 Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, but it tore. Then
Samuel said to him, 'The LORD has today torn the kingdom of Israel from

- 29 you and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. Moreover the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent, for he is not a mortal that he should change his mind.' Then Saul said, 'I have sinned, yet honour me now at least before the elders of my people and before Israel, and turn back with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God.' So Samuel turned back and followed Saul, while Saul worshipped the LORD.
- 32 Then Samuel said, 'Bring here to me Agag the king of the Amalekites.'
- 33 And Agag came to him trembling and said, 'Surely death is bitter.' Samuel said, 'As your sword has bereaved women, so will your mother be the most bereaved of women.' Then Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.
- 34 Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, for Samuel grieved over Saul. Now the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

*Saul, Jonathan, and David**David at the court of Saul*

- 16 THE LORD said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul, when I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have chosen for myself a king among his sons.' And Samuel said, 'How can I go, since Saul will hear of it and kill me?' But the LORD said, 'Take a calf with you and say you have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do, and anoint the man whom I name.' So Samuel did that which the LORD had commanded. When he came to Bethlehem, the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and said, 'Do you come in peace?' He said 'Yes, I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and rejoiced with me in the sacrifice.' He purified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.
- 6 When they came and he saw Eliab, he said, 'Surely the LORD's anointed is now in presence.' But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Pay no attention to his appearance or to the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. The LORD does not see as humans see, for they look on the outward appearance, 8 but the LORD looks at the heart.' Then Jesse called Abinadab, and brought him before Samuel. But he said, 'Neither has the LORD chosen this one.'

9 Then Jesse brought forward Shammah. But he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this one. Then Jesse brought his seven sons before Samuel. But
10 Samuel said to Jesse, 'The LORD has not chosen these.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are these all your sons?' He said, 'There is still the youngest, but he
11 is a shepherd with the flock.' So Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and bring him,
12 for we will not sit down until he is brought here.' So he sent and brought him in. Now he was handsome, a youth with beautiful eyes and ruddy
13 cheeks. And the LORD said, 'Get up, anoint him, for this is the man.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers.
The spirit of the LORD came with power upon David from that day forward.
And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

14 Now the spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul and an evil spirit
15 from the LORD tormented him. And Saul's servants said to him, 'See now,
16 an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Command your servants who
are before and they will seek for our lord a man skilful in playing the
lyre. Then whenever the evil spirit comes upon you he will play with his
17 hand, and you will be better.' So Saul said to his servants, 'Provide me now
18 someone who plays well, and bring him to me.' One of the young men
answered, 'I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skilful in
playing and a valiant man, a good fighter, judicious in speech, a man of
19 good appearance, and the LORD is with him.' So Saul sent messengers to
20 Jesse and said, 'Send me David your son, who is with the flock.' And Jesse
took ten loaves of bread, and a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them to
21 Saul with David his son. So David came to Saul and entered his service.
22 Saul loved him so much that he became one of his armour-bearers, and
sent a message to Jesse, saying, 'Let David enter my service, for he has
23 found favour in my sight.' Whenever the evil spirit from God came upon
Saul, David would take the lyre and play with his hand and Saul would
breathe freely and would feel better and the evil spirit would depart from
him.

17 Now the Philistines mustered together their forces for war. They were
gathered together at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped be-
2 tween Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. Saul and the men of Israel
were gathered together and encamped in the valley of Elah, and they drew
3 up in battle-array against the Philistines. The Philistines were standing
on the mountain on the one side, and the Israelites were standing on the
4 mountain on the other side, and the valley was between them. A champion
came out from the camp of the Philistines. His name was Goliath of Gath
5 and he was over nine feet in height. He had a helmet of bronze on his head,
and he was clad with a bronze breastplate of scales, the weight of which

6 was about two hundred pounds. He had greaves of bronze on his legs and
7 a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was
like a weaver's beam, and the head of his iron spear weighed twenty-four
8 pounds. His shield-bearer went before him. He stood and cried out to the
ranks of Israel, 'Why have you come out to draw up the line of battle? Am
not I a Philistine and you Saul's servants? Choose a man for yourselves and
9 let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we
will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you
10 will be our servants and serve us.' The Philistine said, 'I have insulted the
11 ranks of Israel today! Give me a man that we may fight together.' When
Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were terrified
and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose
name was Jesse. Jesse had eight sons. The man was old in the days of Saul,
13 advanced in years among men. The three eldest sons of Jesse had gone after
Saul to the war. Their names were Eliab, the eldest, his second Abinadab,
14 and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. The three eldest had
15 followed Saul, while David went to and fro from Saul to feed his father's
sheep at Bethlehem.

16 The Philistine drew near morning and evening and took his stand for
forty days. One day Jesse said to David his son, 'Take now for your brothers
a bushel of this parched grain and these ten loaves and carry them quickly
18 to the camp to your brothers. But bring these ten cheeses to the commander
of their thousand and look after your brothers' welfare and bring back
some token of assurance from them.'

19 They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the valley of Elah fighting
with the Philistines.'

20 So David rose up early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper
and went, as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampments
just as the army was going forth to the battle-array, shouting the war cry.
21 Israel and the Philistines drew up the line of battle, army confronting army.
22 David left his vessels in the charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to
23 the line of battle and came and asked for the welfare of his brothers. Just
as he was talking with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath
by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same
words as before, and David heard them.

24 All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were
25 greatly afraid. 'Have you seen this man who has come up?' they said,
'Surely he has come up to insult Israel. Whoever kills him, the king will
greatly enrich and will give him his daughter and will make his father's

26 house free in Israel.' Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, 'What should be done for the man who strikes that Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he has
27 dared to insult the armies of the living God?' The people answered him in the words just given, 'This is what will be done to the man who kills him.'

28 Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, 'Why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know you well and the wickedness of your heart. You have come down to see the battle.'
29 David said, 'What have I done now? It was only a question.' Turning away
30 from him to another, he spoke as before, and the people answered him again as at the first time.

31 When the words were heard which David spoke, they reported them
32 to Saul. They took him and brought him before Saul. David said to Saul, 'Let not my lord's courage fail him. Your servant will go and fight with this
33 Philistine.' Saul answered, 'You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him. You are only a youth and he has been a warrior from
34 his youth.' But David said to Saul, 'Your servant was a shepherd with his father's flock, and when a lion or a bear would come and take a lamb out
35 of the flock, I would go out after him and kill him and rescue the lamb from his mouth. If he rose up against me, I would seize him by his jaw and
36 slay him with a blow. Your servant has killed both lion and bear. Now this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has insulted the
37 armies of the living God. The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion, and from the paw of the bear, will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.' So Saul said to David, 'Go, and may the LORD be with you.'

38 Saul clothed David with his armour, and put a helmet of bronze on his
39 head and clad him with a coat of mail. David girded his sword over his
40 coat and made a vain attempt to go, for he had not tried them. Then David said to Saul, 'I cannot go with these because I am not used to them. And he
41 took them off. He took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones
42 out of the brook and put them in his bag, and took his sling in his hand,
43 and he drew near to the Philistine.

44 The Philistine kept coming nearer to David, and the man who was bearing the shield went before him. When the Philistine looked and saw David,
45 he had nothing but disdain for him, because he was only a youth with ruddy cheeks, a young man of attractive appearance. The Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog that you come to me with a stick?' The Philistine cursed David by his gods, and said, 'Come to me so that I may give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the beasts of the field.' Then David

answered the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword and a spear and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of armies, and the God of the ranks of Israel whom you have insulted. Today the LORD will deliver you into my hands, that I may strike you and cut off your head. I will this day give the dead of the army of the Philistines to the birds of the heavens and to the wild beasts of the earth, so that all the world may know that there is a God in Israel, so that all this assembly may know that not with the sword and spear does the LORD save, for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hand.'

When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David quickly ran toward the line of battle to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag and took from it a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the earth.

So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone and struck down the Philistine, killing him, although there was no sword in David's hand. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, drawing it out of its sheath, and slew him, and cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. The men of Israel and Judah arose and raised the battle cry and pursued the Philistines to the entrance to Gath and to the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded of the Philistines fell down on the way from Shaaraim, as far as Gath and Ekron. When the Israelites returned from pursuing the Philistines, they plundered their camp, but David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; and he put his armour in his tent.

When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, 'Abner, whose son is this lad?' And Abner said, 'As you live, O king, I cannot tell.' The king said, 'Inquire whose son the young man is.' When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand. Saul said to him, 'Whose son are you, my lad?' And David answered, 'I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.' Now when David had finished speaking with Saul, the lives of Jonathan and David became bound together, and Jonathan loved him as his own life, and so Saul took David that day and would not let him return to his father's house. Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own life. He stripped himself of the cloak which he had on and gave it to David and his military coat, even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle. And David went out. On every task which Saul sent him, he acted wisely and

with success, so that Saul appointed him over the warriors. He was beloved alike by all the people and by the servants of Saul.

- 6 At the return home of the army and David's return from slaying the Philistine, the women came out dancing from all the cities of Israel to meet
7 King Saul with tambourines, with cries of rejoicing, and with cymbals. The women sang to each other as they danced, 'Saul has slain his thousands,
8 but David his ten thousands.' It made Saul very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, 'They ascribed to David ten thousands, while to me they ascribed but thousands, and what more can he have but the
9 kingdom?' And Saul kept his eye on David from that day forward.
10 The next day an evil spirit from God came powerfully on Saul, and he prophesied within his house. David played the lyre to him, as he did day
11 by day. Saul had his spear in his hand, and cast it, thinking, 'I will pin David to the wall.' But twice David dodged it.
12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him and had de-
13 parted from Saul. So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander over a thousand. David went out and came in at the head of
14 his men, and he acted wisely and prospered in all his ways, for the LORD
15 was with him. When Saul saw that David acted wisely and prospered, he
16 stood in dread of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in at the head of the army.
17 Then Saul said to David, 'See my oldest daughter, Merab. I will give her to you as wife, only be a valiant champion and fight the LORD's battles.' For Saul said to himself, 'I must not raise my hand against him, but let the hand
18 of the Philistines deal with him.' And David replied to Saul, 'Who am I, and what is my father's clan in Israel, that I should be the king's son-in-law?'
19 But when the time came that Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was instead given as wife to Adriel the Meholathite.
20 Michal, Saul's daughter, fell in love with David. When they told Saul, he
21 was pleased. He thought, 'I will give her to him, so that she becomes a snare to him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.' Therefore
22 Saul said to David a second time, 'You will this day be my son-in-law.' Saul commanded his servants, 'Communicate with David secretly and tell him that the king is pleased with him and all the servants love him, therefore
23 become the king's son-in-law.' And Saul's servants spoke these words in the ears of David. And David said, 'Is it an easy thing in your opinion to become the king's son-in-law, when I am a poor man and of no reputation?'
24 The servants of Saul reported back what David had said. And Saul said,
25 'Tell David: The king desires no bride-price, but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, in order to take vengeance on the king's enemies.' Saul thought

- 26 to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. When his servants told David these words, David was well pleased with the prospect of being the king's son-in-law. Before the appointed time, he arose and went together with his men and slew a hundred Philistines. He brought their foreskins and gave them in full to the king, in order to become the king's son-in-law.
- 27 So Saul gave him Michal his daughter as wife. When Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David and his daughter Michal loved him, Saul feared David still more, and from that time was David's enemy.
- 28 The Philistine commanders continued to come out to battle, and as often as they came out, David acted more wisely and with greater success than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was held in high repute.

David flees Saul

- 19 Saul commanded Jonathan his son and all his servants to put David to death. But Jonathan, Saul's son, was very fond of David, and told David, 'Saul my father is seeking to put you to death. Now, I beg you, take care in the morning and stay in concealment and hide yourself. I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you, and whatever I discover I will tell you.' Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, 'Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you and because his conduct toward you has been exceedingly good. He took his life in his hand and killed the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great deliverance for Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, in slaying David without a cause?' And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan and gave an oath, 'As the LORD lives, David will not be put to death.' And Jonathan called David, and told him all these words. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, so that he was again in his presence as before.
- 8 But when there was war again, David went out and fought against the Philistines, and slew great numbers of them, so that they fled before him.
- 9 Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul, while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing on the lyre.
- 10 And Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, so that Saul hurled the spear into the wall, and David fled and escaped.
- 11 That night Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, so as to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him, 'If you do

12 not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be slain.' Michal let David
13 down through the window; he fled away and escaped. Michal took the
household god and laid it in the bed, and put a cloth of goat's hair for its
14 head and covered it with the garment. When Saul sent messengers to take
15 David, she said, 'He is sick.' Then Saul sent the messengers to see David,
16 saying, 'Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may put him to death.' When
the messengers came in, there the household god was in the bed, with the
17 cloth of goat's hair for its pillow. And Saul said to Michal, 'Why have you
deceived me like this, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?' And
Michal answered Saul, 'He said to me: Let me go, why should I kill you?'

18 Now David fled and escaped and came to Samuel to Ramah and told
him all that Saul had done to him. He and Samuel went and stayed in
19 Naioth. When Saul was told that David was there at Naioth in Ramah, he
20 sent messengers to take David. But when they saw the company of the
prophets prophesying with Samuel standing as head over them, the spirit
of God came upon the messengers of Saul, so that they also prophesied.
21 When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied.
And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied.
22 Then Saul himself went to Ramah. When he came to the great cistern in
Secu, he asked, 'Where are Samuel and David?' Someone answered, 'They
23 are at Naioth in Ramah.' But on his journey to Naioth in Ramah, the spirit
of God also came upon him, and he went along prophesying, until he came
24 to Naioth in Ramah. He too stripped off his clothes and prophesied before
Samuel, and lay naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say,
'Is Saul also among the prophets?'

20 David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came to Jonathan and said, 'What
have I done? What is my guilt? What is my sin against your father, that
2 he is seeking my life?' He replied to him, 'Far from it! You will not die.
See, my father does nothing great or small, but that he discloses it to than
3 me; and why should my father hide this from me? It can't be true!' David
answered, 'Your father well knows that I have found favour in your eyes,
and he is saying to himself, "Let not Jonathan know this or he will be
pained." Nevertheless as surely as the LORD lives, and as you live, there is
4 but a step between me and death.' Then Jonathan said to David, 'What do
5 you want me to do for you?' And David answered Jonathan, 'Tomorrow
is the new moon and I should not fail to sit at the table with the king.
6 Therefore let me go and I will hide myself in the field until evening. If your
father misses me, then say, "David urgently asked leave of me to run to
7 Bethlehem his city; for the yearly sacrifice is there for all the family." If he
says "Good," then it is well with your servant, but if it arouses his anger,

8 then know that he intends evil on me. Now deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a sacred covenant with you. If there is guilt in me, slay me yourself, for why should you bring me to your
9 father?' And Jonathan said, 'No! For if I should learn that my father had
10 determined that evil should come upon you, I would tell you.' Then David
11 said to Jonathan, 'Who will tell me, if your father answers you harshly?'
12 And Jonathan replied to David, 'Come, and let us go out into the field.' So
13 the two of them went out into the field. And Jonathan said to David, 'The
14 LORD, the God of Israel, be witness that I will sound my father about this
15 time tomorrow or the next day, and if is well disposed toward David, then
16 I will send and disclose it to you. May God do to Jonathan whatever he
17 will, should my father be disposed to do you evil, and I disclose it not to
18 you and send you away that you may go in peace. May the LORD be with
19 you, as he has been with my father. If I am yet alive, show me the kindness
20 of the LORD! But if I should die, continue your kindness to my household
forever, even if the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the
21 face of the earth.' So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David,
22 saying, 'May the LORD seek out the enemies of David.' Jonathan took an
oath again with David, because of his love to him. With all his heart he
23 loved him. Then Jonathan said to him, 'Tomorrow is the new moon and
you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. On the third day you
will be greatly missed. Then you should go to the place where you hid
24 yourself the other time, and sit down there beside the heap of stones. I will
shoot three arrows on one side of it, as though I shot at a mark. Then I will
send the boy, saying, "Go, find the arrows." If I say to the boy, "See, the
arrows are on this side of you, pick them up!" – then come; for it is safe
for you, and, as the LORD lives, there is no danger. But if I say to the boy,
"See, the arrows are beyond you," go, for then the LORD sends you away.
25 As to the word which you and I have spoken, behold, the LORD is witness
between you and me forever.

26 So David hid himself in the field; and when the new moon came, the
king sat down at the table to eat. The king sat upon his seat as usual, on
the seat by the wall, with Jonathan opposite, and Abner sat by Saul's side;
27 but David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that
day, for he thought, "It is an accident, he is not ceremonially clean, for he
has not been cleansed." But when on the day following the new moon,
David's place was empty, Saul said to Jonathan his son, 'Why has not the
son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?' And Jonathan
28 answered Saul, 'David urgently asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem, for
he said, "Let me go, since our family has a sacrifice in the city; and my

brothers have commanded me. Now if I have found favour in your sight, let me slip away and see my brothers." Hence he has not come to the king's table.'

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, 'Son of a depraved woman! Don't I know that you are associated with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he is doomed to die.' Then Jonathan answered Saul his father 'Why should he be put to death? What has he done?' But Saul lifted up his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father had determined to put David to death. Jonathan rose from the table in hot anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father reviled him.

35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little boy with him. He said to his boy, 'Run, find and the arrows which I shoot.' As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37 When the boy came to the place where the arrow which Jonathan had shot lay, Jonathan cried after the boy, and said, 'Isn't the arrow beyond you?' 38 Jonathan cried after the boy, 'Hurry, quick, do not stop!' So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows, and brought them to his master. But the boy had no knowledge of anything. Only Jonathan and David understood what this 40 meant. Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy, and said to him, 'Go, carry 41 them to the city.' As soon as the lad had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap, and fell on his face to the ground and prostrated himself three 42 times, and they kissed each other and wept at length with each other. Then Jonathan said to David, 'Go in peace! As to what we two have sworn in the name of the LORD – the LORD will be between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.' Then David rose and departed and Jonathan went into the city.

21 David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech came trembling to meet David and said to him, 'Why are you alone and no one with you?' 2 David answered Ahimelech the priest, 'The king has entrusted me with a matter and has said to me, "Let no one know anything about the matter upon which I am sending you and which I have commanded you." I have 3 directed the young men to meet me at a certain place. Now if you have five loaves of bread at hand, or whatever can be found, give it to me.' 4 The priest answered David, 'There is no ordinary bread at hand. There is holy bread, but only if the young men have kept themselves from women.' 5 David answered the priest, 'Women have been kept from us, as always

when I set out on an expedition. The weapons of the young men were consecrated even on an ordinary journey; how much more then today will their weapons be holy!' So the priest gave him holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presense, that was taken from before the LORD in order to put hot bread there the day it was taken away.

7 (Now one of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen.)
8 David said to Ahimelech, 'Have you not here at hand a spear or sword? For I brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's matter required haste.' The priest said, 'The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you slew in the valley of Elah, is here, wrapped in a garment behind the ephod. If you wish to take that, take it, for there is no other except that here.' And David said, 'There is none like that, give it to me.' Then David rose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. The servants of Achish said to him, 'Isn't this David the king of the land? Was it not of him that they used to sing to each other in the dances, saying,

Saul has slain his thousands,
But David his ten thousands?'

12 David took these words to his heart and was greatly afraid of Achish the king of Gath. He pretended to be insane before them, and raved in their hands and drummed on the doors and let his spittle run down his beard. Achish said to his servants, 'You see plainly that the man is mad; why do you bring him to me? Do I lack madmen that you have brought this fellow to act the madman in my presence? Should this one come into my house?'
22 So David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's clan heard of it, they went down there to him. Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was embittered gathered about him, and he became their leader. There were about four hundred men with him. David went from there to Mizpeh in Moab. He said to the king of Moab, 'Let my father and my mother shelter with you, until I know what God will do for me.' He left them in the presences of the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the while that David was in the stronghold. Then the prophet Gad said to David, 'Do not remain in the stronghold. Depart and go to the land of Judah.' So David left and went into the forest of Hereth.
6 When Saul heard that David and the men with him were discovered, he was sitting in Gibeah, under the tamarisk tree on the high place, with

- 7 his spear in his hand, and all his servants standing about him. Saul said to his servants who were standing before him, 'Listen Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse give you all fields and vineyards? Will he make you all
8 commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? Is that why all of you have conspired against me, and no one discloses to me that my son has made a covenant with the son of Jesse, and none of you has pity on me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant to be an enemy
9 against me, as is now the case?' Then Doeg the Edomite, who was standing by the servants of Saul, answered, 'I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob,
10 to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. He inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine.'
- 11 Then the king summoned Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who were in Nob, and they came all of
12 them to the king. Saul said, 'Listen, son of Ahitub!' He answered, 'Here
13 am I, my lord!' And Saul said to him, 'Why have you conspired against me with the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he should rise against me as an
14 enemy, as is now the case?' Then Ahimelech answered the king, 'But who among all your servants is like David, trusted and the king's son-in-law
15 and captain over your retainers and honoured in your household? Is this the first time I have inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king impute anything to his servant nor to any one of my clan, for your
16 servant did not know the slightest thing about all this.' But the king said,
17 'You will surely die, Ahimelech, together with all your clan.' The king said to the runners who stood before him, 'Turn about and slay the priests of the LORD, for their hand also was with David, and, although they knew that he was fleeing, they did not disclose it to me.' But the servants of the king would not put forth their hands to strike down the priests of the LORD.
18 Then the king said to Doeg, 'Turn and strike down the priests.' And Doeg the Edomite turned and himself struck down the priests. So he slew on
19 that day eighty-five men who wore the ephod. The priestly city Nob he put to the sword, both men and women, children and infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep.
20 One of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to David. And Abiathar told David that Saul had slain the
21 priests of the LORD. David said to Abiathar, 'I knew that day, because Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I myself am guilty
22 of all the lives of your clan. Remain with me, fear not; for whoever seeks
23 your life must also seek mine. You will be safe with me.'

23 David was told that Philistines were fighting against Keilah and are
2 robbing the threshing floors. David inquired of the LORD, 'Should I go
3 and attack these Philistines?' And the LORD said to David, 'Go, attack the
4 Philistines, and save Keilah.' But David's men said to him, 'Behold we are
5 afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the
6 armies of the Philistines?' Then David inquired of the LORD yet again. And
7 the LORD answered him, 'Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the
8 Philistines into your hand.' So David and his men went to Keilah, and
9 fought with the Philistines and drove away their cattle, inflicting heavy
10 losses on them. In this way David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah.

11 When Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he came
12 down with the ephod in his hand. When Saul was told that David had
13 come to Keilah, Saul said, 'God has sold him into my hand, for he has
14 entrapped himself in entering into a town that has doors and bars.' And
15 Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege
16 David and his men. When David knew that Saul was devising evil against
17 him, he said to Abiathar the priest, 'Bring here the ephod.' And David said,
18 'LORD, God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul is seeking to
19 come to Keilah, to destroy the city because of me. Will Saul come down,
20 as your servant has heard? LORD, God of Israel, I beseech you, tell your
servant.' And the LORD said, 'He will come down.' Then David said, 'Will
the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?' And the
LORD said, 'They will deliver you up.' Then David and his men, who were
about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah, and moving from
place to place. When it was reported to Saul that David had escaped from
Keilah, he abandoned his expedition. So David stayed in the wilderness
in the strongholds and remained in the hill-country in the Wilderness of
Ziph. Saul sought him continually, but the LORD did not deliver him into
his hand.

21 Now David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. At that time, he
22 was in the Wilderness of Ziph in Horesha. And Jonathan, Saul's son, came
23 to David in Horesha and strengthened his hand in God. He said to him,
'Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be
king over Israel and I will be next to you. This Saul my father well knows.'

24 The two of them made a covenant before the LORD, and David stayed in
Horesha, and Jonathan returned home.

25 Then the Ziphites came up to Saul to Gibeah, saying, 'Is not David hiding
himself with us in the strongholds in Horesha, in the hill of Hachilah, which
26 is to the south of Jeshimon? Now therefore, O king, according to all your
heart's desire, come down, and it will be our part to deliver him into the

21 king's hand.' Then Saul said, 'Blessed may you be of the LORD, for you
22 have had compassion on me. Go, I pray, make yet more sure, and know
and see the place where his haunt is and who has seen him there, for I am
23 told that he is very cunning. See therefore, and gain knowledge of all the
lurking-places where he hides, and return to me, with sure information,
and I will go with you, and, if he be in the land, I will search him out of all
the thousands of Judah.'

24 So they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men were
25 in the Wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. When
Saul and his men went to seek him, David found out and he went down to
the rock which is in the Wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard, he pursued
26 after David in the Wilderness of Maon. Saul went on the one side of the
mountain and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. David
was anxiously trying to escape from Saul, for Saul and his men were about
27 to surround David and his men, to seize them, when a messenger came to
Saul, saying, 'Come quickly, for the Philistines have made a raid upon the
28 land.' So Saul returned from pursuing after David and went against the
29 Philistines. This is why they call that place the Rock of Divisions. David
went up from there, and stayed in the strongholds of En-gedi.

24 When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, 'David
2 is in the Wilderness of En-gedi.' So Saul took three thousand men chosen
from all Israel and went to seek David and his men upon the Wild Goats'
3 Crags. He came to the sheepfolds by the way, and there was a cave. And
Saul went in to relieve himself, while David and his men were staying in
4 the recesses of the cave. The men of David said to him, 'See this is the day
of which the LORD said to you, "Behold, I give your enemy into your hand
and you will do to him as you please." ' Then David arose, and secretly cut
5 off the skirt of Saul's robe. But afterward David was seized with remorse
6 because he had cut off Saul's robe. He said to his men, 'The LORD forbid
that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to lift my hand
7 against him, since he is the Lord's anointed.' So David upbraided his men
with these words, and did not permit them to attack Saul. When Saul rose
8 from the cave and went on his way, David also rose after him and went
from the cave and cried after Saul, saying, 'My lord the king.' When Saul
looked behind him, David bowed his face to the earth, and did obeisance.
9 And David said to Saul, 'Why did you listen to the words of the men who
10 said, "See, David seeks to harm you?" Today your eyes see that the LORD
gave you into my hand in the cave, but I refused to kill you and had pity
on you, and I said, "I will not lift my hand against my lord, for he is the
11 LORD's anointed." Moreover, my father, see the corner of your robe in my

hand, for in that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, know
and see that there is neither evil nor guilt on my hands, and I have not
12 sinned against you, though you are aiming to take my life. May the LORD
13 judge between me and you, but my hand will not be against you. As runs
the proverb of the ancients,

Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness.

14 But my hand will not be raised against you. After whom is the king of
Israel come out? After whom are you pursuing? After a dead dog? After
15 a flea? The LORD therefore be judge and decide between me and you and
see and plead my cause and obtain justice for me from you.'

16 Now when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said,
'Is this not your voice, my son David?' Then Saul lifted up his voice and
17 wept. He said to David, 'You are more righteous than I, for you have done
18 to me that which is good, while I have done to you that which is evil. You
have done great good to me in that today, when the LORD had shut me up
19 in your hand, you did not kill me. For when a man finds his enemy, does
he send him on his way safe and sound? Therefore may the LORD reward
20 you richly for what you have done to me this day. Now see, I know that
you will surely be king, and that through you the kingdom of Israel will
21 be established. Swear now therefore to me by the LORD, that you will not
cut off my descendants after me and that you will not destroy my name
22 from my father's house.' So David took oath to Saul. And Saul went to his
home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

25 Samuel died; and all Israel gathered themselves together, and lamented
him, and buried him in his house at Ramah.

2 Then David arose and went into the Wilderness of Maon. There was a
man in Maon, whose business was in Carmel. The man was very rich, and
he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats, and he was shearing
3 his sheep in Carmel. The man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was
Abigail. The woman was sensible and beautiful, but the man was rough
4 and ill-mannered. He was a Calebite. David heard in the wilderness that
5 Nabal was shearing his sheep. So he sent ten young men, saying, 'Go up
6 to Carmel and enter Nabal's house and greet him in my name, and say
to him and to his clan, "Peace be to you and your house and all that you
7 have. Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with
us, and we did not jeer at them, and nothing of theirs was missing all the
8 while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men and they will tell you.
Therefore let the young men find favour in your eyes, for we have come on

a feast day. Give, therefore, whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.”

9 When David’s young men came, they spoke to Nabal in the name of
10 David and waited as directed. But Nabal answered David’s servants, ‘Who
11 is David? Who is the son of Jesse? Many are the slaves these days who
12 break away, each from his master! Should I then take my bread and my
13 water and my meat that I have butchered for my shearers, and give it to
14 men of whom I know not where they came from?’ So David’s young men
15 turned back on their way, and came and reported all these words to him.
16 And David said to his men, ‘Let every man buckle on his sword.’ Each
17 man buckled on his sword. And David also buckled on his sword, and
18 there went up after David about four hundred men while two hundred
19 remained with the baggage.

20 But one of the young men had told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, ‘David has just
21 sent messengers from the wilderness to salute our master, and he railed at
22 them. But the men have been very good to us and we have not been jeered
23 at nor have we missed anything, as long as we went with them, when we
24 were in the fields. They were a wall about us both by night and by day all
25 the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and
consider what you will do, for evil is determined against our master and
against all his house, for he is such a base scoundrel that no one speak to
him.’

26 Then Abigail quickly took two hundred loaves of bread and two skins
27 of wine and five roasted sheep and five measures of parched grain and a
28 hundred bunches of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs and laid them
29 on donkeys. She said to her young men, ‘Go on before me, I am coming
30 after you.’ But she said nothing about it to her husband Nabal. Just as she
31 was riding on the donkey and coming down under cover of the mountain,
32 David and his men were also coming down toward her, so that she met
33 them. Now David had said, ‘Surely for nothing did I guard all that belongs
34 to this fellow in the wilderness, so that nothing of all that belongs to him
35 was missing, for he has returned me evil for good. God do whatever he
36 will to David, if I leave by daybreak of all who belong to him as much as a
single man.’

37 When Abigail saw David, she alighted quickly from her donkey and fell
38 on her face before David and bowed to the ground. She fell at his feet and
39 said, ‘Upon me, my lord, upon me be the guilt. Only let your maid-servant
40 speak in your ears, and heed the words of your servant. Let not my lord
41 pay any attention to that base scoundrel, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he,

"Reckless Fool," is his name and folly is his master, but your maid-servant didn't see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

26 Now my lord, as the LORD lives and as you live, since the LORD has kept you from committing an act of bloodshed and from delivering yourself by your own hand – and may your enemies and those who seek to do evil to 27 my lord be as Nabal – let this present, which your servant has brought to 28 my lord, be given to the young men who follow my lord Forgive, I pray the trespass of your servant, for the LORD will certainly make for my lord a secure house, for my lord is fighting the wars of the LORD, and no evil 29 will be found in you as long as you live. Should a man rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord will be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the LORD your God, but the lives of your enemies 30 will he sling out as from the hollow of a sling. When the LORD has done to my lord all the good that he has promised you and has made you prince 31 over Israel, then this will not be a qualm or a burden on the conscience of my lord, that you have shed blood without cause or that my lord has delivered himself by his own hand. When the LORD gives prosperity to my lord, then remember your servant.'

32 David said to Abigail, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent 33 you this day to meet me, and blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you yourself, who have kept me this day from committing an act of bloodshed 34 and from avenging myself by my own hand. For as sure as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from doing you harm, except you had quickly come to meet me, surely there would not have been left to 35 Nabal by daybreak so much as one man.' So David received from her hand that which she had brought him, and to her he said, 'Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your advice, and granted your request.'

36 But when Abigail came to Nabal, he was just having a banquet in his house, like a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was 37 very drunk, so that she did not tell him anything at all until day break. But then in the morning when the effects of the wine were gone from Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him and he became a 38 stone. At the end of about ten days the LORD struck Nabal, so that he died.

39 Now when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, 'Blessed be the LORD who has avenged the case of my insult at the hand of Nabal and has kept back his servant from evil. The evil-doing of Nabal the LORD brought back upon his own head.' Then David sent and wooed Abigail to take her to him to be his wife.

40 When the servants of David came to Abigail at Carmel and said to her, 41 'David has sent us to you to take you to him to be his wife,' She rose

42 and bowed with her face to the earth and said, 'See, your slave is willing
to be a servant to wash the feet of my lord's servants.' Abigail quickly
arose and mounted an donkey, and five maids followed as servants. So she
accompanied the messengers of David and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they both became his wives.
44 But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of
Laish to Gallim.

26 Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, 'David is hiding in the
2 hill of Hachilah, which is east of the desert.' Accordingly Saul arose, and
went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, with three thousand men of Israel,
3 to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul encamped beside the road
on the hill of Hachilah overlooking Jeshimon. But David remained in the
wilderness. When he saw that Saul was pursuing him into the wilderness,
4 David sent out spies and learned that Saul had come there after him, so he
5 arose and came to the place where Saul had encamped. And David saw
the place where Saul lay, with Abner the son of Ner, the commander of
his army. Saul lay within the barricade, and the people were encamped
around about him.

6 Then David spoke to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son
Zeruiyah, Joab's brother, saying, 'Who will go down with me into the camp
7 to Saul?' And Abishai said, 'I will go down with you.' So David and Abishai
went to the army by night. Saul was lying there asleep within the barricade,
with his spear stuck into the earth at his head, with Abner and the people
8 lying around about him. Abishai said to David, 'God has delivered your
enemy into your hand today. Now therefore let me strike him with his
spear to the earth at one stroke, and I will not need to strike him twice!'
9 But David said to Abishai, 'Do not destroy him, for who can lay his hand
10 upon the LORD's anointed and be innocent?' David said, 'As the LORD lives,
either the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go
11 down into battle and be destroyed. The LORD forbid that I should lift my
hand against the LORD's anointed, but now take the spear that is at his
12 head and the jug of water and let us go.' So David took the spear and the
jug of water from Saul's head and they departed. No man saw it of knew it
neither did any awake, for they were all asleep because a deep sleep from
the LORD had fallen upon them.

13 Then David went over to the other side and stood on the top of a moun-
tain at a distance, a great space being between them. And David cried to
the army and to Abner, the son of Ner, 'Do you make no answer Abner?'
15 Then Abner answered, 'Who are you that calls to the king?' And David
said to Abner, 'Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then

have you not kept guard over your lord the king? For one of the people
16 came to destroy your lord. This that you have done is not good. As the
LORD lives, you are deserving death, because you have not kept watch over
your lord, the LORD's anointed. Now see where the king's spear is and the
17 jug of water that was at his head.' Then Saul recognised David's voice and
said, 'Is this your voice, my son David?' And David said, 'It is my voice,
18 my lord the king.' He said, 'Why is my lord pursuing his servant? For what
19 have I done? Or of what kind of evil have I been guilty? Now therefore
let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD has stirred
you up against me, let him accept an offering, but if it was men, cursed be
they before the LORD, for they have driven me out today, so that I have no
20 part in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, "Go serve other gods." Now
therefore, may my blood not fall to the earth far away from the presence
of the LORD, for the king of Israel has come out to look for a flea, as one
hunts a partridge on the mountains.'

21 Then Saul said, 'I have done wrong. Return, my son David, for I will do
you no more harm, because my life was regarded as sacred by you today.
22 I have acted foolishly and have erred exceedingly.' And David answered,
'There is the king's spear! Let one of the young men come over and take it.
23 And the LORD will reward each man's righteousness and fidelity, for the
LORD delivered you into my hand today, but I would not raise my hand
24 against the LORD's anointed. Just as your life was today of great value in
my sight, so may my life be of great value in the Lord's sight, and let him
25 deliver me out of all affliction.' Then Saul said to David, 'Be blessed, my
son David; you will do great things and will surely succeed!' So David
went his way, but Saul returned to his place.

David among the Philistines

27 Then David said to himself, 'I will be destroyed some day by the hand of
Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape into the land
of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer in all
2 the territory of Israel, and I will escape from his hand.' So David set out,
together with the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son
3 of Maoch, king of Gath. David stayed with Achish at Gath, together with
his men, each with his household and David with his two wives, Ahinoam
4 the Jezreelite and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's widow. When Saul was
informed that David had fled to Gath, he sought him no more.

- 5 David Said to Achish, 'If now I have found favour in your sight, let a place in one of the towns in the open country be given me, that I may
6 live there, for why should your servant live in the royal city with you?' So Achish gave him Ziklag at that time, therefore Ziklag belongs to the kings
7 of Judah to this day. The length of the time that David lived in the open country of the Philistines was a year and four months.
- 8 David and his men went up, and made a raid upon the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these tribes live in the land which extends
9 from Telem as far as Shur, all the way down to Egypt. As often as David struck the land, he did not leave alive man or woman, but taking the sheep,
the oxen, the asses, the camels, and the clothing, he returned and came to
10 Achish. When Achish said, 'Where have you made a raid today?' David answered, 'Against the Negreb of Judah', or 'against the Negreb of the
11 Jerahmeelites', or 'against the Negreb of the Kenites.' But David never left alive man or woman, to bring them to Gath, for he thought, 'They might give information against us and say, "David has done this, or that." Such was his custom all the while he lived in the open country of the Philistines.
12 And Achish trusted David, thinking, 'He has brought himself into ill odour with his people Israel, therefore he will be my servant forever.'
- 28 Now in those days the Philistines assembled their forces to make a campaign against Israel. Achish said to David, 'You know that you must, together with your men, go with me along with the forces.' David said to Achish, 'Good, you will now know what your servant can do.' And Achish said to David, 'I will make you my bodyguard from this time on.'
- 3 Now Samuel had died and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. And Saul had banished the mediums and
4 magicians out of the land. When the Philistines assembled and came and encamped in Shunem, Saul assembled all Israel, and they encamped in
5 Gilboa. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid and his
6 heart was filled with apprehension. Saul inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.
7 Then Saul said to his servants, 'Find for me a woman who is a medium so that I may go to her and inquire through her.' His servants said to him, 'Behold, there is a medium at Endor.'
- 8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes and went, taking two men with him, and they came to the woman by night. He said, 'Tell my future by consulting the dead, call up for me the one whom I name to
9 you.' The woman said to him, 'Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has banished the mediums and the magicians from the land. Why then
10 are you laying a snare for my life, to put me to death?' And Saul swore

to her by the LORD, saying, 'As the LORD lives, no guilt will come upon
11 you for this.' Then the woman said, 'Whom should I bring up to you?' He
12 said, 'Bring up Samuel.' When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed. The
13 woman said to Saul, 'Why have you deceived me, for you are Saul?' The
14 king said to her, 'Do not be afraid! What do you see?' The woman said to
Saul, 'I see a god coming up out of the earth.' He said to her, 'What is his
appearance?' She said, 'An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped in a
robe.' Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to
the earth in respect.

15 Samuel said to Saul, 'Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?'
And Saul answered, 'I am in great trouble, for the Philistines are making
war against me and God has turned from me and answers me no more,
either by prophets or by dreams; so I have called you to tell me what I
16 should do.' And Samuel said, 'Why do you ask of me when the LORD has
17 turned from you and become your adversary? The LORD has done to you
as he declared by me, and the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand,
18 and given it to your neighbour, David. Because you did not heed the voice
of the LORD, and did not execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek, the LORD
19 has done this thing to you today. The LORD will deliver Israel into the power
of the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me, and the
LORD will deliver the army of Israel into the power of the Philistines.'

20 Then Saul fell at once at full length upon the earth and was greatly afraid,
because of the words of Samuel, and he had no strength in him, for he
21 had not eaten bread during all the day and all the night. When the woman
came to Saul and saw that he was greatly troubled, she said to him, 'Your
servant has heeded your voice, and I have taken my life in my hand and
22 have listened to your words which you spoke to me. Now therefore, listen
also to the advice of your servant and let me set before you a morsel of
23 meat, and eat that you may have strength when you go on your way.' But
he refused, and said, 'I will not eat.' But his servants, together with the
woman urged him, until he listened to their advice. So he rose from the
24 earth and sat upon the couch. The woman had a fatted calf in the house,
and she quickly killed it, and took flour and kneaded it and baked from
25 it unleavened bread. She set it before Saul and his servants and they ate.
Then they rose and went away that night.

29 The Philistines had assembled their forces at Aphek, and the Israelites
2 encamped by the fountain in Jezreel. The lords of the Philistines were
marching past, with hundreds and with thousands, and David and his
3 men marched in the rear guard with Achish. Then the commanders of the
Philistines said, 'What are these Hebrews doing here?' And Achish said

- to the commanders of the Philistines, 'This is David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has now been with me two years, and I have found
- 4 no fault in him from the time that he came over to me to the present.' But the commanders of the Philistines were enraged against him, and said, 'Send back the man so that he may return to the place where you have stationed him. Don't let him go down with us to battle – he might become an adversary to us. How could this fellow better ingratiate himself with
- 5 his master than with the heads of our men? Is this not the David of whom they sang responsively in the dances, saying,

Saul has slain his thousands,
But David his ten thousands?'

- 6 Then Achish called to David and said to him, 'As the LORD lives, you are upright, and it is my desire that you should go out and fight with me, for I have found no evil in you from the time that you came to me to
- 7 the present, but you are not regarded favourably by the lords. Therefore now return and go in peace, so that you do nothing to displease the lords
- 8 of the Philistines.' David said to Achish, 'But what have I done? What have you found in your servant fromt the day that I entered into your service to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of
- 9 my lord the king?' And Achish answered David, 'I know that you are as good in my sight as a Messenger of God, but the commanders of the
- 10 Philistines have said, "He must not go up with us to the battle." Therefore now rise early in the morning, with the servants of your lord who came with you, and go to the place where I have stationed you, and do not entertain any evil design in your heart, for you are good in my sight, but
- 11 rise early in the morning and as soon as it is light, depart.' So David rose early, together with his men, to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. The Philistines went up to Jezreel.

David returns

- 30 Now when David and his men on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid on the South Country and on Ziklag, and had attacked Ziklag and
- 2 burnt it down, and had carried away captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great. They did not kill anyone, but carried
- 3 them off and went on their way. When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned down, and their wives and their sons and their
- 4 daughters taken captive. Then David and the people who were with him

- 5 wept aloud until they were no longer able to weep. David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the wife of Nabal
6 the Carmelite. David was in great trouble, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the spirit of all the people was embittered, each for his sons and for his daughters.
7 David strengthened himself in reliance on the LORD his God, and said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, 'Bring here to me the ephod.'
8 And Abiathar brought the ephod to David. David inquired of the LORD, saying,

Should I pursue this marauding band?
Should I overtake them?'

He answered him,

'Pursue,
For you will surely overtake,
You will surely rescue.'

- 9 So David went, together with the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the Wadi Besor, where those who were left behind remained.
10 But David pursued together with four hundred men, while two hundred remained behind, who were too faint to cross the Wadi Besor.
11 They found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David and gave
12 him food to eat and water to drink, and they gave him a piece of fig cake, and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, his spirit revived, for he
13 had eaten no bread and drunk no water for three days and nights. David
14 said to him, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you from?' He said 'I am
an Egyptian lad, an Amalekite's servant, and my master abandoned me
15 because three days ago I fell sick. We made a raid upon the South Country
of the Cherethites and on that which belongs to Judah and upon the South
Country of Caleb, and Ziklag we burned down.' And David said to him,
'Will you bring me down to this band?' He said, 'Swear to me by God, that
you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I
will bring you down to this band.'
- 16 When he had brought him down, there they were spread over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, on account of all the great spoil
17 that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land
of Judah. And David struck them from twilight to the following evening
18 in order to destroy them completely. None escaped except four hundred
19 young men, who rode on camels and fled. David recovered all the people
whom the Amalekites had taken, and David rescued his two wives. There

was nothing missing, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that they had taken to themselves – David brought it all back.

20 He took all the flocks and the herds and drove those animals before the people, and they said, 'This is David's spoil.'

21 Now when David came to the two hundred men, who had been too faint to follow him, so that he had to leave them behind at the Wadi Besor, they went out to meet David, and the people who were with him. When they 22 came near to the people, he saluted them. Then all the wicked and base scoundrels among the men who went with David began to say, 'Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except to each, his wife and his children, that he may take 23 them away and depart.' But David said, No! My brothers, you must not do this with that which the LORD has given us – after he has preserved us and 24 delivered the marauding band that came against us into our hand. Who will give heed to you in this matter? For:

As is the share of him who goes down into battle,
So is the share of him who remains with the baggage.
They must share alike.'

25 From that time on he made it a statute and precedent in Israel to this day.

26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, his friends, saying, 'See! a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of 27 the LORD, to them who were in Bethel, in Ramoth in the South Country, in 28 Jattir, in Aroer, in Siphmoth, and to them who were in Eshtemoa, in Carmel, 29 in the cities of Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites, in Hormah, Bor- 30 ashon, in Athach, in Hebron, and to those in all the places where David 31 and his men had stayed.

31 Now the Philistines fought against Israel, and the Israelites fled from 2 before the Philistines and fell down slain on Mount Gilboa. The Philistines followed close after Saul and his sons, and the Philistines slew Jonathan 3 and Abinadab and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. They pressed hard upon 4 Saul, and the archers found him, and he was wounded by the archers. Then said Saul to his armourbearer, 'Draw your sword and run me through with it, lest these uncircumcised Philistines come and make sport of me.' But his armourbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took 5 his own sword and fell upon it. When his armourbearer saw that Saul 6 was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him. So Saul and his 7 three sons and his armourbearer died together on the same day. When the Israelites who were in the cities of the valley and in the cities of the Jordan

saw that the Israelites had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they also left the cities and fled, and the Philistines came and occupied them.

- 8 When on the following day the Philistines came to strip the slain, they
- 9 found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head and stripped off his armour and sent throughout the land of the
- 10 Philistines to bring the good news to their idols and to the people. They put his armour in the temple of Ashtarte, and they fastened his body on
- 11 the wall of Beth-shan. When the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead heard what
- 12 the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose and marched all night and took the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beths-han.
- 13 They returned to Jabesh and burned them there. They took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

The Follies of a Despot

- 1 These events happened in the time of Ahasuerus, who ruled over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia from his royal throne in the fortified palace of Susa.
- 2 In the third year of his reign, the king gave a feast for all his officers and courtiers. The commanders of the military forces of Persia and Media,
- 3 the nobles and provincial rulers were present while for one hundred and eighty days he showed them the glorious riches of his kingdom and the costliness of his magnificent regalia.
- 4 When these days were ended, the king held a banquet for all the people who were present in the royal palace at Susa, high and low alike. It
- 5 was a seven days' feast in the enclosed garden of the royal palace. There were white and violet cotton curtains fastened to silver rings and pillars of marble with cords of fine purple wool and linen. The couches were of gold and silver placed upon a mosaic pavement of alabaster, white marble,
- 6 mother-of-pearl, and dark stone. Drink was brought in vessels of gold – which were all different – and the king's wine was provided with royal
- 7 liberality. The drinking was unrestricted, for the king had directed all the
- 8 officers of his household to let each man do as he pleased. Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the King Ahasuerus' royal palace.
- 9 On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he commanded
- 10 Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zathar and Carkas, his seven
- 11 eunuch attendants to bring Queen Vashti before him with the royal diadem on her head, to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she
- 12 was very beautiful. But Queen Vashti refused to come as the king commanded through the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his fury burned within him.
- 13 The king turned to the wise men who knew the precedents, for it was his
- 14 custom to confer with those wise in law. Those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, seven officials of Persia and Media who had access to the king and were highest in the

- 15 kingdom. ‘Queen Vashti’, the king said, ‘has failed to obey my royal command – the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed through the eunuchs! What does the law say should be done to her?’
- 16 Memucan replied before the king and the officials, ‘Queen Vashti has done wrong not only to the king but also to all the officials and to all the peoples in all of the king’s provinces. The refusal of the queen will be reported to all the women with the result that it will make them despise their husbands. They will say, “King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti 17 to be brought in before him, but she did not come!” This very day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the refusal of the queen will tell it 18 to all the king’s officials, and there will be contempt and strife! If it seems best to the king, let him send out a royal edict. Let it be written among the laws of Persia and Media, never to be repealed, that Vashti may never again come before King Ahasuerus. Let the king give her place as queen 19 to another who is more worthy than she. When the king’s decree which he makes is heard throughout his kingdom – great as it is – the wives of 20 all classes will give honour to their husbands.’
- 21 The proposal pleased the king and the officials, and the king did as 22 Memucan advised. He sent letters to all the provinces, to every province in its own system of writing and to every people in their language, that every man should be master in his own house!

Choosing a Queen

- 2 Some time later, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus had subsided, he remembered what Vashti had done and what had been decreed against her.
- 2 Then the king’s servants who waited upon him said, ‘Let beautiful young 3 virgins be sought for the king, and let the king appoint commissioners to all the provinces of his kingdom to gather them all to Susa the royal residence. Let them be brought into the women’s quarters under the custody of Hegai, the king’s eunuch, who has charge of the women. Then give them what is 4 needed to make them beautiful, and let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti.’ The proposal pleased the king so he put it into action.
- 5 In Susa the royal residence lived a Jew named Mordecai. He was son of 6 Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite. (Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the exiles who were deported with Jeconiah king of 7 Judah, whom Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon took captive.) Mordecai had adopted Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle’s daughter, since she had

neither father nor mother. The girl was shapely and beautiful; and after her father and mother died, Mordecai raised her as if she was his own daughter.

- 8 When the king's command and decree were known, many girls were gathered together to Susa the capital under the custody of Hegai. Esther was also taken into the king's palace and placed under the custody of
9 Hegai, who had charge of the women. The girl pleased him and gained his favour, so that he quickly gave her the cosmetics she needed to enhance her beauty and her allowance of food and the seven maids selected from the king's household. He also transferred her and her maids to the best place in
10 the harem. Esther had not revealed her people nor her family background
11 because Mordecai had ordered her not to. Every day Mordecai would walk in front of the courtyard of the harem and ask after Esther's health and what was happening to her.
12 The girls were prepared for meeting King Ahasuerus for twelve months: six months being treated with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes
13 and cosmetics. After the twelve months, each girl went in to the king. She was allowed to take with her whatever she wished from the women's
14 quarters, and would enter the palace in the evening and return the next morning to another part of the harem under the care of the king's eunuch Shaashgaz who was in charge of concubines. She would not go to the king
15 again unless he desired her and summoned her by name. When it was the turn of Esther (the girl adopted by Mordecai, daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go in to the king, she only took with her those things that Hegai, the king's eunuch in charge of the women, had advised her to take. Esther
16 was liked by all who saw her. Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in the royal palace in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of
17 his reign. And the king loved her more than all the other women, and she became his favourite and won his affection. He placed the royal diadem on
18 her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. Then the king gave a great feast to all his officials and courtiers in honour of Esther, and he remitted the taxes of the provinces and distributed gifts with royal liberality.
19 All the time the virgins were assembled again, Mordecai was sitting as
20 an offical at the king's gate. Esther had not revealed her people or family background because she still obeyed him as she had when he was bringing her up.

Hatred without Pity

- 21 In those days while Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate, two of the royal court attendants, Bigthan and Teresh, who guarded the entrance of 22 the palace, became enraged and attempted to kill King Ahasuerus. But Mordecai learned of the conspiracy and disclosed it to Queen Esther, and 23 she told the king on Mordecai's behalf. When the affair was investigated and the facts discovered, the conspirators were both hanged on the gallows. The incident was recorded in the presence of the king in the daily record of events.
- 3 After these events King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him to a place above all the officials who 2 were with him. All the king's courtiers who were in the king's gate used to bow down before Haman, for so the king had commanded, but Mordecai did not bow down nor prostrate himself.
- 3 Then the king's courtiers, who were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, 4 'Why do you disobey the king's command?' When they had spoken to him day after day without his listening to them, they informed Haman, to see whether Mordecai's acts would be tolerated, for he had told them that 5 he was a Jew. When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down nor 6 prostrate himself before him, he was furious. But it seemed to him beneath his dignity to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him who Mordecai's people were. Instead Haman sought to destroy all the people of Mordecai, all the Jews throughout the kingdom of Ahasuerus.
- 7 In the first month (the month of Nisan) in the twelfth year of the reign of King Ahasuerus, Haman had "pur" (which means "lot") cast before him to determine the best day and best month for his actions. The lot fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month – the month of Adar.
- 8 So Haman said to King Ahasuerus, 'There is a certain people scattered among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom, whose laws differ from those of every other and who do not keep the king's laws. Therefore 9 it is not right for the king to tolerate them. If it seems best to the king, let an order be given to destroy them, and I will pay ten thousand silver coins 10 into the royal treasury.' So the king took off his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the 11 Jews. 'The money is yours,' the king said to Haman, 'and the people also 12 to do with them as you wish.' And so, on the thirteenth day of the first month, the king's secretaries were summoned and as Haman instructed an edict was issued to the king's satraps and provincial governors and the rulers of each of the peoples in their own script and their own language.

The edict was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with his ring. Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces, saying: Destroy, kill, put an end to all the Jews, young and old, little children and women, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and plunder their possessions. A copy of the edict was to be published as a decree in every province – publicly displayed so that everyone might be ready for that day. By command of the king the couriers raced off, and the edict was published in Susa itself.

Then the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was in turmoil.

A Queen's Efforts to Save Her People

When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and strewed ashes on his head, and went out into the city and raised a loud and bitter cry of lamentation. He went as far as the king's gate, but no one could enter the gate clothed with sackcloth. In every province, wherever the king's command and decree went, there was great mourning, fasting, weeping, and wailing among the Jews. Many of them sat in sackcloth and ashes.

When Esther's maids and attendants told her about Mordecai's behaviour, she was greatly troubled. She sent garments for Mordecai to put on, so that he could take off his sack-cloth, but he would not accept them. So Esther called Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what it all meant and the reason for it.

So Hathach went out to Mordecai, to the city square in front of the king's gate. Mordecai told him all that had happened to him and the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasury for the destruction of the Jews. Also he gave him a copy of the decree to destroy them, that had been published in Susa, to show to Esther for her information. He also told her to go to the king and implore his mercy and to plead with him on behalf of her people.

When Hathach came and told Esther what Mordecai had said, she instructed Hathach to go and say to Mordecai, 'All the king's courtiers and the people of the king's provinces know that for every man or woman who goes to the king into the inner court without being called there is one penalty, death, unless the king holds out the golden sceptre signifying that

they may live. It has been thirty days since I have been called to go in to the king.'

12 When Mordecai was told what Esther had said, he sent back this reply
13 to Esther, 'Don't imagine that you alone of all the Jews will escape because
14 you belong to the king's household. If you persist in remaining silent at this time, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, but you and your family will perish. Who knows? Maybe you have been raised to the throne for a time like this!'

15 Then Esther sent this message to Mordecai: 'Go, gather all the Jews in
16 Susa and fast for me. Don't eat nor drink anything for three days and nights. My maids and I will fast as well. Then I will go in to the king, although it
17 is contrary to the law, and if I die, I die.' Mordecai did everything Esther had directed.

5 On the third day, Esther put on her regalia and stood in the inner court of the royal palace opposite the king's house. The king was sitting on his
2 throne in the palace, opposite the entrance. When he saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she won his favour, and he held out to her the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the top of
3 the sceptre. Then the king said to her, 'What is it, Queen Esther? Whatever your request is, it will be granted, even if it is the half of the kingdom.'

4 'If it seems best to the king,' Esther said, 'let the king and Haman come
5 today to the banquet that I have prepared for him.' Then the king ordered,
'Bring Haman quickly, so that Esther's wish may be gratified.'

So the king and Haman went to the banquet that Esther had prepared.
6 While they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, 'Whatever your petition is, it will be granted. Your request, it will be done – even if it takes
7 half of my kingdom.' Esther answered, 'If I have won the king's favour
8 and if it seems best to the king to grant my petition and to accede to my request, my petition and my request are that the king and Haman come to the banquet which I will prepare for them. Tomorrow I will answer the king's question as he wishes.'

9 Haman went out that day joyful and elated, but when he saw Mordecai in the king's gate and noticed that he neither stood up nor moved for him,
10 he was furiously angry with Mordecai. Nevertheless Haman restrained himself and went home. He called together his friends and Zeresh his wife
11 and recounted to them the greatness of his wealth, how many children he had, and all the ways in which the king had honoured him, and how
12 he had promoted him above the officials and the royal courtiers. 'What is more,' Haman said, 'Queen Esther brought no one in with the king to the banquet which she had prepared except me, and tomorrow also I am

- 13 invited by her along with the king. Yet all this does not satisfy me as long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.'
- 14 Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, 'Let a gallows seventy-five feet high be erected, and in the morning speak to the king and let Mordecai be hanged on it. Then go merrily with the king to the banquet.' The advice pleased Haman, and so he had the gallows erected.

Downfall of a Conspirator

- 6 On that night the king was unable to sleep, so he gave orders to bring the books that recorded memorable deeds, and they were read before the king.
- 2 It was found recorded how Mordecai had furnished information regarding Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's attendants who guarded the entrance
- 3 of the palace, who had attempted to kill King Ahasuerus. 'What honour and dignity have been conferred on Mordecai for this?' the king asked. When the king's pages who waited on him replied 'Nothing has been done
- 4 for him,' the king said, 'Who is in the court?' Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's house to speak to the king about hanging
- 5 Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. So the king's pages said to him, 'Haman is standing there, in the court.' The king said, 'Let
- 6 him enter.' So Haman entered, and the king said to him, 'What should be done for the man whom the king wishes to honour?' Haman said to
- 7 himself, 'Whom besides me could the king wish to honour?' So he said to
- 8 the king, 'For the man whom the king wishes to honour let a royal garment be brought, which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king
- 9 has ridden and on whose head a royal diadem has been placed. Then let the garment and the horse be placed in charge of one of the king's noble officials. Let him clothe the man whom the king wishes to honour and let him lead that man on the horse through the city square, proclaiming before him, "This is what is done for the man whom the king wishes to honour."
- 10 Then the king said to Haman, 'Make haste and take the garment and the horse, as you have said, and do this to Mordecai the Jew, who sits in
- 11 the king's gate. Omit nothing of all you have said.' So Haman took the garment and the horse and clothed Mordecai, and made him ride through the city square and proclaimed before him, 'This is what is done for the man whom the king wishes to honour.'
- 12 Mordecai returned to the king's gate, but Haman hurried to his house,
- 13 mourning, with his head covered. Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife

and to all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, 'If Mordecai before whom you have already been humiliated is of the Jewish people, you can do nothing against him but will surely fall before him.'

14 While they were still talking with him, the king's attendants came and quickly took Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 So the king and Haman went to drink with Queen Esther. As they were 2 drinking wine on that second day, the king again said to Esther, 'Whatever 3 your petition is, Queen Esther, it will be granted to you. Whatever you request it will be done, even if it takes half of the kingdom.' Then Queen Esther answered, 'Your Majesty, if I have won your favour, and if it seems best to Your Majesty, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people 4 as my request, for I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed, and completely annihilated! If we had been merely sold into slavery I would not have disturbed your peace, because such a fate would not have affected the interests of the king.'

5 Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, 'Who is he and where is he whose heart has impelled him to do this?'

6 'A foe, an enemy: this wicked Haman.' Esther answered. Haman shrank 7 in terror before the king and the queen. In his wrath the king rose from the place where he was drinking wine and went into the palace garden. Haman stayed to beg Queen Esther for his life, for he saw that the king 8 was fully determined to bring calamity upon him. As the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman had flung himself on Esther's couch. The king cried, 'Is he going to rape my queen while I am present in my own house?'

As the king spoke these words, the attendants covered Haman's face 9 and Harbonah, one of those who waited on the king, said, 'There are the gallows, seventy-five feet high, which Hainan erected for Mordecai, who spoke a good word in behalf of the king, standing in the house of 10 Haman!' The king said 'Hang him on them.' So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the wrath of the king was pacified.

Deliverance of the Jews

8 At that time King Ahasuerus gave the property of Haman the Jews' enemy to Queen Esther. Mordecai was made one of the king's personal advisers, 2 for Esther had disclosed his relationship to her. The king also drew off his

signet ring, which he had taken from Haman. He gave it to Mordecai, and Esther placed Mordecai in charge of Haman's property.

- 3 Then Esther sought another audience with the king and fell at his feet and with tears begged him to avert the evil planned by Haman the Agagite
4 and to frustrate his designs against the Jews. The king held out to her the golden sceptre, and she arose and stood before him. 'If it seems best to the king,' she said, 'and if I have won his favour and he thinks it right, and if I please him, let written orders be given to revoke the dispatches devised by Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote ordering the
6 destruction of the Jews who are in all the king's provinces. For how can I bear to look upon the evil that will come to my people? How can I bear to
7 see their destruction?' Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, 'See, I have given Esther the property of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows, because he laid hands upon the
8 Jews. Now you write on behalf of the Jews, as seems best to you, in the king's name and seal it with the king's signet ring. For a document that is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring cannot be revoked.'
- 9 On the twenty-third day of the third month (that is the month of Sivan), the king's secretaries were summoned and as Mordecai instructed an edict was issued to the Jews, to the satraps and provincial governors and the rulers of each of the one hundred twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia in their own script and their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language.
- 10 Mordecai wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus. He sealed it with the king's signet ring. Dispatches were sent by mounted couriers who rode the swift, noble steeds, bred of the royal studs. In this way the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and make a stand for their life, to destroy, to kill, and annihilate all the armed forces of any people or province that might be hostile to them, including their children and
12 women, and to take their goods as plunder throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus on that thirteenth day of the twelfth month (which is called Adar). A copy of the edict was to be published as a decree in every province – publicly displayed so that the Jews might be ready for that day
14 and avenge themselves. So the couriers who rode the swift, noble steeds went out, hastened and impelled by the king's commands!
- 15 Meantime the decree had been given out in the royal palace at Susa; and Mordecai had gone out from the presence of the king in royal garments of violet and white and with a great crown of gold and with a robe of
16 fine linen and purple. The people of Susa shouted and were glad. To the

- 17 Jews there came light and gladness and joy and honour. And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, there was gladness and joy among the Jews and a holiday. Many of the peoples of the earth professed to be Jews, for fear of the Jews took possession of them.
- 9 Now in the twelfth month (that is the month of Adar), on the thirteenth day, when the king's command and his decree was about to put into execution, on the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, then the tables were turned so that the Jews had the mastery over
- 2 those who hated them. The Jews gathered together in the cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, to attack anyone who tried to harm them. No one could withstand them, for the fear of them had fallen
- 3 on all the peoples. All the princes of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and they who attended to the king's business, helped the
- 4 Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them. For Mordecai was great in the king's palace, and as his power increased his fame spread
- 5 throughout all the provinces. The Jews put all their enemies to the sword and, with slaughter and destruction, they did what they wanted to those
- 6 who hated them. In Susa the capital the Jews killed five hundred people.
- 7 They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,
- 8 Parmashta, Arisia, Aridai, and Vaizatha, the ten sons of Haman the son of
- 9 Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not take any plunder.
- 10 On that day the number of those who were slain in Susa was brought
- 12 before the king, and the king said to Queen Esther, 'The Jews have slain five hundred people in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It will be granted to you. What is your request? It will be done.'
- 13 'If it please the king,' Esther said, 'let it be granted to the Jews who are in Susa to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree. Let the bodies
- 14 of Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows.' And the king commanded it to be done. A decree was given out in Susa and they hung the bodies
- 15 of Haman's ten sons on the gallows. The Jews who were in Susa gathered themselves together again on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar. They killed three hundred people in Susa. But they did not take any plunder.
- 16 And the other Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together and fought for their lives and overcame their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand who hated them. But they did not take any plunder.
- 17 This was on the thirteenth day of Adar.

- On the fourteenth day of the month Adar the Jews rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing. (But the Jews in Susa gathered on both the thirteenth and fourteenth day – and rested on the fifteenth day of the same month and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.)
- This is why the Jews who live in the country villages keep the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day of rejoicing and feasting and a holiday, and a day in which they send gifts of food to each other.

The Establishment of Purim

- Mordecai had these things recorded. He sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus, both near and far. He told them to keep the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and also the fifteenth day every year, as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned from sorrow to gladness and from mourning into a feast day. They should make them days of feasting and gladness and of sending gifts of food to each other and of gifts to the poor.
- So what the Jews had begun to do they adopted as a custom, just as Mordecai had written to them. For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted to destroy them. He had cast "Pur", that is the lot, intending to consume them and to destroy them.
- But when the matter came before the king, he gave written orders that his wicked plot, which he had planned against the Jews, should come upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.
- This is why these days are called Purim, after the word Pur. Therefore because of all the words of this letter, as well as all they had seen, and all they had experienced, the Jews established and made it a custom for them, for their descendants, and for all who should join them, so that it might not be repealed, that they should continue to observe these two days as feasts each year, and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city. And these days of Purim should not pass away from among the Jews nor the remembrance of them disappear among their descendants.
- Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, gave Mordecai the Jew all authority in writing to confirm this second letter of Purim. He sent letters to all the Jews, to the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, wishing them peace and security, to confirm these days of Purim in their proper times, to be observed as Mordecai the Jew and Queen

Esther had directed and as the Jews had proscribed for themselves and their descendants, in the matter of the fastings and their cry of lamentation.

- 32 And the commands of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the records.

- 10 King Ahasuerus imposed a tribute on the land and the coasts. All the
2 acts of his power and of his might, and the full account of the greatness of
3 Mordecai to which the king advanced him, are they not recorded in the
book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the
Jew was next in rank to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and
loved by them all. He sought the good of his people and promoted the
welfare of their descendants.

THE PSALMS

Book One

Psalm 1 – The Way of Happiness

- 1 HAPPY ARE THOSE
who do not follow the counsel of the wicked,
not halting in ways frequented by sinners,
nor taking a seat in a gathering of scoffers.
- 2 But the law of the LORD is their joy,
they study it day and night.
- 3 They are like trees
planted by runlets of water,
yielding fruit in due season,
leaves never fading.
In all that they do, they prosper.
- 4 Not so fare the wicked, not so;
like chaff are they, blown by the wind.
- 5 So the wicked will not stand firm in the judgment,
nor sinners appear, when the righteous are gathered.
- 6 For the way of the righteous is dear to the LORD,
but the way of the wicked will end in ruin.

Psalm 2 – The Lord's Chosen King

- 2 Why this turmoil of nations,
this futile plotting of peoples,
- 2 with kings of the earth conspiring,
and rulers consulting together,
against the LORD and against his anointed,

- 3 to snap their bonds
and fling their cords away?
- 4 He whose throne is in heaven laughs,
the LORD mocks them.
- 5 Then he speaks to them in his wrath,
and in his hot anger confounds them.
- 6 ‘This my king is installed by me,
on Zion my holy mountain.’
- 7 I will tell of the LORD’s decree.
He said to me: ‘You are my son,
this day I became your father.
- 8 Only ask, and I make you the heir of the nations,
and lord of the world to its utmost bounds.
- 9 You will break them with sceptre of iron,
shatter them like pottery.’
- 10 So now, you kings, be wise:
be warned, you rulers of earth.
- 11 Serve the LORD in awe,
kiss his feet with trembling,
- 12 lest, angry, he hurl you to ruin;
for soon will his fury blaze.
Happy all who take refuge in him.

Psalm 3 – A Morning Prayer for Protection

- 3 How many, LORD, are my foes!
Those who rise up against me are many.
- 2 Many are those who say of me,
‘There is no help for him in his God.’ *Selah*
- 3 But you, LORD, are shield about me,
my glory, who lifts up my head.
- 4 When loudly I call to the LORD,
from his holy hill he gives answer. *Selah*
- 5 I laid down and slept:
now I wake, for the LORD sustains me.

- 6 I fear not the myriads of people
 who beset me on every side.
- 7 Arise, LORD: save me, my God,
 who strikes all my foes on the cheek,
 and shatters the teeth of the wicked.
- 8 Victory belongs to the LORD:
 let your blessing descend on your people. *Selah*

Psalm 4 – An Evening Prayer

- 4 Answer my cry,
 God, my defender.
Often from straits you have brought me
 to spacious places.
So now show me your favour
 and hear my prayer.
- 2 How long, you proud people,
 will my honour be stained
by the slanders you love,
 and the lies that you follow? *Selah*
- 3 See! The LORD has shown me
 his wonderful kindness:
the LORD hears,
 when I call to him.
- 4 Sin not in your anger:
 but speak in your heart
 on your bed, and be still. *Selah*
- 5 Offer true sacrifice,
 trust in the LORD.
- 6 Many are longing
 for fortune to smile.
Lift upon us
 the light of your face.
- 7 You have put in my heart, LORD,
 a deeper joy
than was theirs who had corn

and wine in abundance.

- 8 So in peace I will
 lie down and sleep;
for you, LORD, keep me
 safe.

Psalm 5 – A Prayer for Guidance

- 5 Hear my words, LORD:
 give heed to my whisper.
2 Attend to my loud cry for help,
 my king and my God.
3 When I pray to you, LORD, in the morning,
 hear my voice.
I make ready for you in the morning,
 and look for a sign.
4 For you are no God who takes pleasure in wickedness:
 no one of evil can be your guest.
5 No braggarts can stand in your presence,
 you hate all workers of wrong.
6 You destroy all speakers of lies,
 people of blood and deceit you abhor.
7 But I, through your kindness abundant,
 may enter your house,
and towards the shrine of your temple
 may reverently bow.
8 Lead me, LORD, in your righteousness
 because of my enemies.
 Make your way level before me.
9 For their mouth is a stranger to truth,
 their heart is a pit of destruction.
Their throat is a wide open grave,
 their tongue the smooth tongue of the hypocrite.
10 Condemn them, God;
 let their schemes bring them down to the ground.
For their numberless crimes thrust them down

- for playing the rebel against you.
11 But let all who take refuge in you
ring out their gladness forever.
Protect those who love your name,
so they may exult in you.
12 For you give your blessing, LORD, to the godly,
and the shield of your favour protects them.

Psalm 6 – A Cry for Help in Time of Trouble

- 6 Rebuke me not, LORD, in your anger,
punish me not in your wrath.
2 LORD, be gracious to me
in my weakness.
Heal me LORD,
for racked is my body;
3 all of me utterly racked.
Why do you wait so long, LORD?

4 Turn, LORD, rescue me;
save me, because of your love.
5 For in death none can call you to mind;
in Sheol who can praise you?

6 I am so weary of sighing.
All the night I make my bed swim,
and wet my couch with my tears.
7 My eyes swollen with grief;
from weeping caused by my foes.

8 Begone, workers of wrong,
for the LORD has heard my loud weeping,
9 the LORD has heard my entreaty,
the LORD accepts my prayer.
10 My foes will be stricken with terror,
brought to shame and dismay in a moment.

Psalm 7 – A Prayer to the God of Justice

7 LORD about Cush, the Benjamite.

LORD my God, I take refuge in you.
Deliver me, save me from all who pursue me;
2 or like lions they will tear me to pieces,
and rend me, past hope of rescue.

3 LORD , my God, if my life has been such
if my hands have been stained with guilt,
4 if friends I paid back with evil,
if I plundered my foes without cause,
5 may the enemy chase and find me,
trample my life to the ground,
my honour leave in the dirt! *Selah*

6 Arise, LORD, in anger,
against my foes rise in fury.

Awake for my help:
let justice be done.

7 Gather the nations about you,
and sit on your lofty throne,
8 as the LORD, the judge of the peoples.

Judge me, LORD, in my innocence
and according to my integrity.

9 Put an end to the wrong of the wicked,
protect the righteous.

Searcher of hearts and minds,
righteous God.

10 God is my shield:
he saves the upright in heart.

11 God is a just judge,
constant in righteous anger.

12 He will sharpen his sword without fail,
his bow is bent and ready,
13 his deadly weapons are ready,
his arrows he makes of flame.

14 The enemy who conceives evil;

pregnant with mischief,
giving birth to lies,
15 a pit they have made and dug;
but into the hole that they made they will fall.
16 On their own heads their mischief comes back;
on their own skulls their violence comes down.
17 I will give thanks to the LORD for his justice,
and sing to the name of the LORD Most High.

Psalm 8 – God's Glory in Nature

8 LORD our God!
How glorious in all the earth is your name!
Your praise reaches as high as the heavens,
2 from the mouths of children and infants.

You have built a fortress
against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the rebel.

3 When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set there,
4 what are mortals,
that you think of them,
humans,
that you visit them?

5 Yet you made them little less than divine,
crowned them with glory and majesty,
6 made them lord of the works of your hands,
put all things under their feet –
7 sheep and oxen,
all of them;
and the wild beasts also:
8 birds of the air,
and fish of the sea,
and all that crosses the paths of the ocean.

9 LORD our God!
 How glorious in all the earth is your name!

Psalm 9 – A Song of Praise the Lord’s Justice

- 9 With all my heart I will praise the LORD,
 all your wonders I will rehearse.
- 2 I will rejoice and exult in you,
 singing praise to your name, Most High;
- 3 because backward my foes were turned,
 they stumbled and perished before you.
- 4 My right and my claim you have upheld,
 you did sit on the throne as a fair judge,
- 5 rebuking the nations, destroying the wicked,
 and blotting their name out forever and ever.
- 6 The foe is vanished, ruined forever,
 their cities destroyed, their memory perished.
- 7 See! The LORD is seated forever
 on the throne he established for judgment,
- 8 ruling the world with justice,
 and judging the nations with equity.
- 9 So the LORD proves a haven to the oppressed,
 a haven in times of trouble.
- 10 Well may they trust you who know your name,
 for those who seek you, you never abandon.
- 11 Sing praise to the LORD, whose home is in Zion,
 declare his deeds among the nations.
- 12 As avenger of blood, he keeps them in mind,
 he does not forget the cry of the wretched.
- 13 Show me favour, LORD,
 see how my foes afflict me,
 lift me up from the gates of death;
- 14 so I may, in your help exulting,
 tell forth your praise at the gates of Zion.

- 15 The nations are sunk in the pit which they made,
in the net that they hid, their own foot is entangled.
- 16 The LORD is revealed in the judgment he wrought,
the wicked are snared in their own handiwork. *Selah*
- 17 Let the wicked depart to Sheol,
all the nations that live forgetful of God.
- 18 For the needy will not be always forgotten,
nor the hope of the helpless be lost forever.
- 19 Arise, LORD; don't let them triumph:
before your face let the nations be judged.
- 20 Strike them with fear, LORD:
show the nations how frail they are. *Selah*

Psalm 10 – A Prayer for Help

- 10 Why do you stand, LORD, so far away,
hiding yourself in times of trouble?
- 2 The wicked, in their pride, are pursuing the helpless:
let them be caught in the schemes they have plotted.
- 3 For the wicked boasts of their wanton greed;
the robber despises the LORD, and curses him,
- 4 in wicked pride, thinks:
God doesn't care,
God doesn't call to account.
- 5 Never a season that they do not prosper;
your judgments are far above out of their sight:
they scoff at their foes.
- 6 Each says in their heart,
'I will never be shaken;
I will live for all time
untouched by misfortune.'
- 7 Their mouths are full of deceit and oppression:
under their tongues lurks mischief and wrong.
- 8 Lying in secret in some village ambush,

and stealthily watching, they murder the innocent.

- 9 Like a lion that lurks in a secret lair
 they lurk intending to catch the defenceless;
 to seize them, to drag them away in their net.

- 10 Their victims are crushed,
 sink down to the ground.

Under their claws
 the hapless fall.

- 11 The wicked say in their hearts
 that God has forgotten,
has hidden his face,
 will see nothing.

- 12 Arise, LORD, lift up your hand,
 do not forget the cry of the wretched.

- 13 Why do the wicked treat God with contempt,
 and say in their hearts, ‘God doesn’t care’?

- 14 You have seen the trouble and sorrow;
 you mark it all, and will take it in hand.
The hapless can count on you,
 helper of orphans.

- 15 Break the arm of the wicked and evil:
 search out their sin, till no more be found.

- 16 The LORD is king forever and ever:
 the nations will vanish from his land.

- 17 LORD , you have heard the desire of the humble,
 inclining your ear, strengthening their hearts,
18 rights you have won for the crushed and the orphan,
 so no one on earth may strike terror again.

Psalm 11 – Trust in the Lord

- 11 In the LORD I take refuge.
 How can you tell me
 to flee like a bird to the mountains?

- 2 'See! The wicked are bending the bow,
their arrow is set on the string,
to shoot from the shadows at the upright in heart.
- 3 In this tearing down of foundations
what good can a good person do?'
- 4 The LORD in his holy temple,
the LORD in heaven, enthroned.
His eyes watch the world,
they see everyone.
- 5 The LORD examines the righteous and wicked,
and the lover of violence he hates.
- 6 On the wicked he rains coals of fire and brimstone,
and their drink will be scorching wind.
- 7 For the LORD is just, and justice he loves;
so the upright will see his face.

Psalm 12 – A Prayer for the Faithful in a False World

- 12 Help, LORD, for the good are all gone,
faithful people have vanished.
- 2 One lies to another, speaking empty lies,
with flattering lips and false hearts they speak.
- 3 May the LORD cut off all the flattering lips,
and the tongue that utters arrogance,
- 4 they declare, 'Our tongue is our strength,
our allies our lips: who is lord over us?'
- 5 'The poor are despoiled, and the needy are sighing;
so now I will act,' the LORD declares
'And place them in the safety they long for.'
- 6 The words of the LORD are words that are pure,
silver smelted, seven times refined.
- 7 You will keep us, LORD,
and guard us from this generation forever,
- 8 in a world where the wicked prowl,
and worthless people exalted.

Psalm 13 – A Prayer for Help in Trouble

- 13 How long, LORD, will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 How long must I nurse grief inside me,
and in my heart a daily sorrow?
How long are my foes to exult over me?
- 3 Look at me, answer me, LORD my God.
Fill my eyes with your light,
lest I sleep in death,
- 4 lest my enemies claim to have triumphed,
lest my foes rejoice at my downfall.
- 5 But I trust in your kindness:
my heart will rejoice in your help.
- 6 I will sing to the LORD who was good to me.

Psalm 14 – The Folly of Denying God

- 14 Fools say in their heart,
'There is no God.'
- Vile, hateful their life is;
not one does good.
- 2 From heaven the LORD looks out
on humans, to see
if any are wise,
and care for God.
- 3 But all have turned bad,
the taint is on all;
not one does good,
no, not one.
- 4 Have they learned their lesson,
those workers of evil?
Who ate up my people,
eating, devouring,

never calling to the LORD.

5 Sore afraid will they be;
 for God is among
 those who are righteous,
6 you may mock the plans of the poor,
 but the LORD is their refuge.

7 If only help from Zion
 would come for Israel!
When the LORD brings his people
 a change of fortune,
how glad will be Jacob,
 and Israel how joyful!

Psalm 15 – Standing Firm

15 LORD , who can be guest in your tent?
 Who may live on your holy mountain?

2 The person whose walk is blameless,
 whose conduct is right,
whose words are true and sincere;
3 on whose tongue there sits no slander,
who will not harm a friend,
 nor cruelly insult a neighbour,
4 who regards with contempt those rejected by God;
 but honours those who obey the LORD,
who keeps an oath, whatever the cost,
5 whose money is lent without interest,
and never takes a bribe to hurt the innocent.

The person who does these things will always stand firm.

Psalm 16 – The Joy of Fellowship with God

16 Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
2 I said to the LORD, 'You are my LORD,
my happiness rests in you alone.

- 3 Those who are holy in the land,
they, they alone, are the noble ones;
all my delight is in them.'
- 4 Those who choose other gods
find endless sorrow.
In their offerings of blood I will have no part
nor take their name on my lips.
- 5 The LORD is my share and my portion,
my fate is in your strong hands.
- 6 The boundary lines of my life
mark out delightful country,
my heritage pleases me well.
- 7 I praise the LORD for his counsel,
which so stirs my heart in the night.
- 8 I keep the LORD always in mind:
with him at my hand, I can never be moved.
- 9 So my heart is glad, there is joy inside me;
and in safety of body I live.
- 10 For you will not give me up to Sheol
nor let any who love you see the pit.
- 11 You will show me the path that leads to life,
to that fulness of joy which is in your presence,
and the pleasures dispensed by your hand evermore.

Psalm 17 – A Prayer for Deliverance

- 17 Listen, O LORD, to my innocence;
attend to my piercing cry.
Give heed to my prayer
out of lips unfeigned.
- 2 Let my vindication come from you,
your eyes see the truth.
- 3 When you test my heart when you visit at night,
and assay me like silver – you can find no evil.
I am determined that my mouth should not lie.
- 4 I gave earnest heed to the words of your lips.

- 5 My steps have held fast to the paths of your precepts
and in your tracks have my feet never stumbled.
- 6 So I call you, O God, with assurance of answer;
bend down your ear to me, hear what I say.
- 7 Show your marvellous love, you who save from enemies
those who take refuge at your right hand.
- 8 Keep me as the apple of the eye,
hide me in the shelter of your wings.
- 9 From wicked people who do me violence,
from deadly foes who crowd around me.
- 10 They have closed their hearts to pity,
the words of their mouths are haughty.
- 11 Now they dog us at every step,
keenly watching, to hurl us to the ground,
- 12 like a lion, longing to tear,
like a young lion, lurking in secret.
- 13 Arise, LORD, face them and fell them.
By your sword set me free from the wicked,
- 14 by your hand, O LORD, from those –
whose portion of life is but of this world.
But let your treasured ones have food in plenty
may their children be full and their children satisfied.
- 15 In my innocence I will see your face,
awake I am filled with a vision of you.

Psalm 18 – A King's Song of Gratitude

- 18 *LORD , who recited the words of this song to the LORD after the LORD had saved him from the power of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said:*
- I love you, O LORD, my strength.
- 2 The LORD is my rock, my fortress, deliverer,
my God, my rock, where I take refuge,
my shield, my defender, my tower.
- 3 Worthy of praise is the Lord whom I call on,
he rescues me from all my foes.

- 4 The waves of death broke about me,
 fearful floods of chaos.
- 5 Sheol threw cords around me,
 snares of death came to meet me.
- 6 In distress I cried to the LORD,
 and shouted for help to my God;
in his temple he heard my voice,
into his ears came my cry.
- 7 Then the earth shook and quaked,
 mountains trembled to their foundations,
 and quaked because of his wrath.
- 8 Smoke went up from his nostrils,
 devouring fire from his mouth,
 coals were kindled by it.
- 9 Then he bent the sky and came down,
 thick darkness was under his feet.
- 10 He rode on a cherub and flew,
 darting on wings of wind,
- 11 with his screen of darkness about him,
 in thick dark clouds of water.
- 12 At the radiance before him there passed
 hailstones and coals of fire.
- 13 The LORD thundered from heaven,
 the Most High uttered his voice.
- 14 He shot his arrows and scattered them,
 flashed lightnings, and routed them.
- 15 The channels of the sea were revealed,
 the world was laid bare to its base,
at your rebuke, O LORD,
 at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.
- 16 He stretched from on high, he seized me,
 drew me up from the mighty waters,
- 17 and saved me from those who hated me –
 fierce foes, too mighty for me.
- 18 In my day of distress they assailed me,
 but the LORD proved my support.
- 19 To a spacious place he brought me,

and, for love of me, he saved me.

- 20 The LORD repays my innocence,
 he rewards my cleanness of hands.
- 21 For I kept the ways of the LORD,
 nor have wickedly strayed from my God.
- 22 His commandments were all before me,
 his statutes I put not away.
- 23 And I was blameless before him,
 guarding myself from sin.
- 24 So the LORD repaid my innocence,
 my cleanness of hands in his sight.
- 25 With the loyal you are loyal,
 and with the blameless blameless.
- 26 With the pure you show yourself pure,
 but shrewd with the devious.
- 27 For the lowly people you save,
 but haughty eyes you abase.
- 28 You are my lamp, LORD,
 my God who enlightens my darkness.
- 29 With you I can storm a rampart,
 with my God I can leap a wall.
- 30 As for God, his way is perfect;
 the word of the LORD is pure.
 He is shield to all who take refuge in him.
- 31 For who is God but the LORD?
 And who is a rock but our God?
- 32 The God who arms me with strength,
 who cleared and smoothed my way.
- 33 He made my feet like hinds' feet,
 and set me up on the heights.
- 34 He taught my hands how to fight,
 and my arms how to bend a bronze bow.
- 35 The shield of your help you gave me,
 your right hand supports me,
 you stoop down to make me great.
- 36 In your strength I took giant strides,
 and my feet never slipped.

- 37 So I chased the foe till I caught them,
and turned not, till I made an end of them.
- 38 I smashed them, they could not rise,
they fell beneath my feet.
- 39 You did arm me with strength for war,
you did bow my assailants beneath me.
- 40 You made my foes turn their back to me,
and those who did hate me I finished.
- 41 They cried for help, but none saved them;
to the LORD, but he answered them not.
- 42 I beat them like dust of the market-place,
stamped them like mud of the streets.
- 43 From the strife of the peoples you saved me,
you made me head of the nations,
peoples I knew not did serve me.
- 44 On the instant they hear, they obey me,
foreigners come to me cringing.
- 45 Foreigners lose courage,
and come out of their strongholds trembling.
- 46 The LORD is alive! Blest be my rock!
Exalted be God, my protector!
- 47 The God who gave me revenge,
and brought down nations beneath me,
- 48 who saved me from angry foes,
and set me above my assailants,
safe from the violent.
- 49 For this I will praise you among the nations,
making music, O LORD, to your name:
for great triumphs he grants to his king,
and faithful love he shows his anointed,
to David and his seed evermore.

Psalm 19 – The Glory of God in the Heavens

- 19 The heavens declare God's glory,
the sky tells what his hands have done.

2 Day tells it to day,
 night reveals it to night,
3 without speaking, without words;
 without the sound of voices.
4 But through all the world their voice carries
 their words to the ends of the earth.

He has pitched a tent for the sun in the sky,
5 it comes out like a bridegroom from his bridal chamber,
it joyfully runs its course like a hero.
6 From one end of the heavens it rises,
and round it runs to the other,
and nothing hides from its heat.

In Praise of the Law

- 7 The law of the LORD is perfect,
 renewing life.
The decrees of the LORD are trusty,
 making the simple wise.
- 8 The behests of the LORD are right,
 rejoicing the heart.
The command of the LORD is pure,
 giving light to the eyes.
- 9 The fear of the LORD is clean,
 it endures forever.
The LORD's judgments are true
 and right altogether.
- 10 More precious are they than gold -
 than fine gold in plenty,
and sweeter they are than honey,
 that drops from the comb.
- 11 By them is your servant warned;
 who keeps them has rich reward.
- 12 Who can know their flaws?
 Absolve me from those I know not.

- 13 Keep your servant from wilful sins –
from falling under their sway:
then blameless and clear will I be
from great offence.
- 14 May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart
be pleasing to you, LORD,
my rock and redeemer.

Psalm 20 – A Prayer for Victory

- 20 The LORD answer you in the day of distress,
the name of the Jacob's God protect you,
2 sending you help from the temple,
out of Zion supporting you.
- 3 All your meal-offerings may he remember,
your burnt-offerings look on with favour. *Selah*
- 4 May he grant you your heart's desire,
and bring all your plans to pass.
- 5 We will shout then for joy at your victory,
and rejoice in the name of our God.
May the LORD grant your every request.
- 6 Now I am sure that the LORD
will help his anointed.
From his temple in heaven he will answer
by his mighty triumphant right hand.
- 7 Some in chariots are strong, some in horses;
but our strength is the LORD our God.
- 8 They will totter and fall,
while we rise and stand firm.
- 9 Give victory, LORD, to the king,
and answer us when we call.

Psalm 21 – A Prayer after a Victory

- 21 The king rejoices, LORD, in your might,

how he exults because of your help!
2 You have granted to him his heart’s desire,
you have not withheld his lips’ request. *Selah*

3 You came to meet him with rich blessings,
you set on his head a golden crown.

4 He asked you for life, you gave it –
many long days, forever and ever.

5 Great is his glory because of your help,
honour and majesty you lay upon him.

6 For you make him most blessed forever,
you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

7 For the king puts always his trust in the LORD;
the Most High, in his love, will preserve him unshaken.

8 Your hand will reach all your foes,
your right hand, all who hate you.

9 You will make them like a furnace of fire,
when you appear, LORD.
The LORD will swallow them up in his wrath.
The fire will devour them.

10 You will sweep their offspring from the earth,
their children from humanity.

11 When they scheme against you
and hatch evil plots – they will fail.

12 For you aim your bow at their faces,
make them turn in flight.

13 Be exalted, LORD, in your strength,
to your might we shall sing and make music.

Psalm 22 – The Sufferer’s Triumph

22 My God, my God, why have you left me,
my rescue so far from the words of my roaring?
2 I cry in the day, you do not answer,
I cry in the night but find no rest.

3 You are the Holy One,

- throned on the praises of Israel.
- 4 In you our ancestors trusted,
they trusted and you delivered them.
- 5 They cried to you, and found safety,
in you did they trust and were not put to shame.
- 6 But I am a worm, not a person;
insulted by others, despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me,
with mouths wide open and wagging heads:
- 8 'He relies on the LORD; let him save him.
Let him rescue the one he holds dear!'
- 9 But you drew me from the womb,
laid me safely on my mother's breasts.
- 10 On your care was I cast from my very birth,
you are my God from my mother's womb.
- 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is nigh,
and there is none to help.
- 12 I am circled by many bulls,
beset by the mighty of Bashan,
- 13 who face me with gaping jaws,
like ravening roaring lions.
- 14 Poured out am I like water,
and all my bones are loosened.
- My heart is become like wax,
melted within me.
- 15 My palate is dry as a sherd,
my tongue sticks to my jaws;
in the dust of death you lay me.
- 16 For dogs are round about me,
a band of knaves encircles me,
gnawing my hands and my feet.
- 17 I can count my bones, every one.
As for them, they feast their eyes on me.
- 18 They divide my garments among them,
and over my raiment cast lots.
- 19 But you, O LORD, be not far,

- O my strength, hasten to help me.
20 Deliver my life from the sword
my life from the power of the dogs.
21 Save me from the jaws of the lion,
from the horns of the wild oxen help me.
- I will tell of your fame to my kindred,
and in the assembly will praise you.
23 Praise the LORD, you who fear him.
All Jacob's seed, give him glory.
All Israel's seed, stand in awe of him.
- 24 For he has not despised nor abhorred
the sorrow of the sorrowful.
He hid not his face from me,
but he listened to my cry for help.
- 25 Of you is my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
26 The afflicted will eat to their heart's desire,
and those who seek after the LORD will praise him.
Lift up your hearts forever.
- 27 All will call it to mind, to the ends of the earth,
and turn to the LORD;
and all tribes of the nations will bow down before you.
- 28 For the kingdom belongs to the LORD:
he is the LORD of the nations.
- 29 To him will bow down all who sleep in the earth,
and before him bend all who go down to the dust,
and those who could not preserve their lives.
- 30 My descendants will tell of the LORD
to the next generation;
31 they will declare his righteousness
to people yet to be born:
He has done it.

Psalm 23 – The Good Shepherd

- 23 The LORD is my shepherd: I am never in need.

- 2 He lays me down in green pastures.
He gently leads me to waters of rest,
3 he refreshes my life.
He guides me along paths that are straight,
 true to his name.
- 4 And when my way lies through a valley of gloom,
 I fear no evil, for you are with me.
Your rod and your staff comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table for me
 in face of my foes;
with oil you anoint my head,
 and my cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and love will pursue me –
 all the days of my life.
In the house of the LORD I will live
 through the length of the days.

Psalm 24 – The True Worshipper

- 24 The earth is the LORD's and all that it holds,
 the world and those who live in it.
2 For he founded it on the seas,
 and on the floods he sustains it.
- 3 Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?
 Who may stand in his holy place?
- 4 The clean of hands, the pure of heart,
 who sets not their heart upon sinful things,
 nor swears with intent to deceive:
5 they win from the LORD a blessing:
 God is their champion and saviour.
6 Such must be those who resort to him,
 and seek the face of the God of Jacob. *Selah*

The Lord's Triumphal Entry into the Sanctuary

- 7 Lift high your heads, you gates –

Higher, you ancient doors;
welcome the glorious king.

- 8 ‘Who is the glorious king?’
 ‘The LORD strong and heroic,
 the LORD heroic in battle.’

- 9 Lift high your heads, you gates –
 Higher, you ancient doors;
 welcome the glorious king.
10 ‘Who is the glorious king?’
 ‘The LORD, the God of hosts,
 he is the glorious king.’ *Selah*

Psalm 25 – A Prayer for Forgiveness and Protection

- 25 To you, O LORD, I lift up my heart:
 all the day I wait for you.
2 In you I trust, put me not to shame;
 let not my foes exult over me.
3 None will be shamed who wait for you,
 but shame will fall upon wanton traitors.
4 Make me, O LORD, to know your ways:
 teach me your paths.
5 In your faithfulness guide me and teach me,
 for you are my God and my saviour.
6 Remember your pity, O LORD, and your kindness,
 for they have been ever of old.
7 Do not remember the sins of my youth;
 remember me in kindness,
 because of your goodness, LORD.
8 Good is the Lord and upright,
 so he teaches sinners the way.
9 The humble he guides in the right,
 he teaches the humble his way.
10 All his ways are loving and loyal
 to those who observe his charges and covenant.
11 Be true to your name LORD,
 forgive my many sins.
12 Who then is the person who fears the LORD?

- He will teach them the way to choose.
13 They will live in prosperity,
their children will inherit the land.
14 The LORD gives guidance to those who fear him,
and with his covenant he makes them acquainted.
15 My eyes are ever toward the LORD,
for out of the net he brings my foot.
16 Turn to me with your favour,
for I am lonely and crushed
17 In my heart are strain and storm;
bring me out of my distresses.
18 Look on my misery and trouble,
and pardon all my sins,
19 look on my foes oh, so many!
And their cruel hatred towards me.
20 Deliver me, keep me, and shame not
one who takes refuge in you.
21 May integrity and innocence preserve me,
for I wait for you, O LORD.
22 Redeem Israel, O God,
from all its distresses.

Psalm 26 – Prayer of a Devout Worshipper

- 26 Defend me, O LORD, for my walk has been blameless;
in the LORD have I trusted unswervingly:
2 Examine me, LORD, and test me;
test my heart and my mind.
3 For your love is before my eyes,
and your faithfulness governs my way.
4 I never sat down with the worthless,
nor companied with dissemblers.
5 I hate the assembly of knaves,
I would never sit down with the wicked;
6 but, with hands washed in innocence,
I would march round your altar, O LORD,
7 singing loud songs of thanks,

and telling of all your wonders.
8 O LORD, I love your house,
the place where your glory lives.
9 Do not gather me up with sinners;
slay me not with people of blood,
10 whose hands are stained with villainy,
and whose right hand is filled with bribes.
11 But my walk is blameless!
O redeem me, be gracious to me.
12 My foot stands on even ground,
in the choirs I will bless the LORD.

Psalm 27 – If God is for Me

27 The LORD is my light and my saviour;
whom then should I fear?
The LORD protects my life;
whom then should I dread?
2 When the wicked drew near to assail me
and eat up my flesh,
it was those who distressed and opposed me
who stumbled and fell.
3 Though against me a host should encamp,
yet my heart would be fearless:
though battle should rise up against me,
still would I be trustful.
4 One thing have I asked of the LORD,
and that do I long for –
To live in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the grace of the LORD
and inquire in his temple.
5 For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of misfortune.
In his sheltering tent he hides me:

he lifts me up on a rock.

- 6 And now that my head he has lifted
above my encircling foes,
I will march round the altar and sacrifice,
shouting with joy, in his tent,
making music and song to the LORD.

The Serenity of Faith

- 7 Hear, O LORD, my loud cry,
and graciously answer me.
8 My heart has said to you,
'Your face, O LORD, I seek.'
9 Hide not your face from me,
reject not your servant in anger:
for you have been my help.
Abandon me not, nor forsake me,
O God of my help:
10 for father and mother have left me;
but the LORD will take me up.
11 Teach me your way, O LORD:
lead me in an even path,
because of my enemies.
12 Give me not up, O LORD,
unto the rage of my foes;
for against me have risen false witnesses,
breathing out cruelty.
13 Firm is the faith I cherish,
that I, in the land of the living,
will yet see the goodness of God.
14 Let your heart be courageous and strong,
and wait on the LORD.

Psalm 28 – An Answered Prayer for Help

- 28 Unto you, O LORD, do I cry;
 my rock, be not deaf to me:
lest, through holding your peace, I become
 like those who go down to the pit.
- 2 Hear my loud entreaty,
 as I cry for help to you,
lifting my hands, O LORD,
 towards your holy chancel.
- 3 Take me not off with the wicked,
 nor with the workers of wrong,
whose speech to their neighbours is friendly,
 while evil is in their heart.
- 4 Give them as they have done,
 as their wicked deeds deserve.
As their hands have wrought, so give to them:
 requite to them their deserts.
- 5 They are blind to all that the LORD does,
 to all that his hands have wrought;
and so he will tear them down,
 to build them up no more.
- 6 Blest be the LORD, who has heard
 my voice as I plead for mercy.
- 7 The LORD is my strength and my shield;
 my heart trusts in him.
I was helped: so my heart is exultant,
 and in my song I will praise him.
- 8 The LORD is the strength of his people,
 the fortress who saves his anointed.
- 9 O save your people,
 and bless your inheritance.
Be their shepherd
 and carry them forever.

Psalm 29 – The Lord's Glory in the Storm

- 29 Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings,
 ascribe to the LORD glory and power
2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory he manifests:
 bow to the LORD in holy array.

3 The LORD's voice peals on the waters.
 The God of glory has thundered.
 He peals o'er the mighty waters.
4 The LORD's voice sounds with strength,
 the LORD's voice sounds with majesty.

5 The LORD's voice breaks the cedars,
 he breaks the cedars of Lebanon,
6 making Lebanon dance like a calf,
 Sirion like a young wild ox.

7 The LORD's voice hews out flames of fire.
8 The LORD's voice rends the desert,
 he rends the desert of Kadesh.

9 The LORD's voice whirls the oaks,
 and strips the forests bare;
 and all in his temple say 'Glory.'

10 The LORD was king at the flood,
 the LORD sits throned forever.
11 The LORD gives strength to his people,
 he blesses his people with peace.

Psalm 30 – A Song of Thanksgiving for Deliverance

- 30 I will extol you, O LORD,
 because you have lifted me up,
and not suffered my foes to rejoice over me.

2 I cried to you for help,
 O LORD my God, and you healed me.
3 You have brought me up, LORD, from Sheol,
 from my way to the pit back to life you have called me.

- 4 Sing praise to the LORD, faithful people;
 give thanks to his holy name.
- 5 For his anger lasts only a moment,
 his favour endures for a lifetime.
- Weeping may lodge for the night,
 but the morning brings shouts of joy.
- 6 When all went well, I imagined
 that never should I be shaken.
- 7 For by your favour, O LORD,
 you had set me on mountains strong:
but you hide your face,
 and I was confounded.
- 8 Then to you, LORD, I cried,
 to the LORD I begged for mercy,
- 9 'What profit is there in my blood,
 if I go down to the pit?
Can you be praised by dust?
 Can it tell of your faithfulness?
- 10 Hear, LORD, and show me your favour,
 LORD be a helper to me.'
- 11 You have turned my mourning to dancing;
 my sackcloth you have unloosed,
 and clothed me with joy:
- 12 that unceasingly I should sing your praise,
 and give thanks to you, LORD my God, forever.

Psalm 31 – A Prayer for Deliverance from Troubles

- 31 In you, O LORD, I take refuge;
 let me never be put to shame.
Rescue me in your faithfulness;
- 2 incline to me your ear.
Deliver me speedily.
 Be to me a rock of defence,
a fortified house, to save me.
- 3 For my rock and my fortress are you;

lead me and guide me so your name will be honoured.

4 Draw me out of the net they have hid for me,
for you yourself are my refuge.

5 Into your hand I commend my spirit:
you ransom me, LORD, faithful God.

6 I hate those devoted to worthless idols;
I trust in the LORD.

7 I will rejoice and be glad in your love,
because you have looked on my misery,
and cared for me in my distress.

8 You have not given me into the enemy's hand,
you have set my feet in a spacious place.

9 Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am distressed;
my eye is wasted away with sorrow.

10 For my life is consumed with grief,
and my years with sighing.

My strength is broken with misery,
my bones waste away.

11 The scorn of all my foes,
the butt of my neighbours am I,
a terror to my acquaintance.

At the sight of me in the street
people turn quickly away.

12 I am clean forgotten like the dead,
am become like a ruined vessel.

13 I hear the whispers of many –
terror on every side –
scheming together against me,
plotting to take my life.

14 But my trust is in you, LORD.
'You are my God,' I say;
15 my times are in your hand, save me
from the hand of the foes who pursue me.

16 Make your face to shine on your servant,
save me in your love.

17 Put me not, O LORD, to shame,
for I have called upon you.
Let the wicked be put to shame

- silent in Sheol.
- 18 Strike the false lips dumb,
that speak proudly against the righteous
with haughtiness and contempt.
- 19 How great is the goodness
you have treasured for those who fear you,
and wrought for those who take refuge in you,
in plain sight of all!
- 20 In your sheltering wings you hide them
from plottings of people,
you keep them safe in a bower
from the chiding of tongues.
- 21 Blest be the LORD
for the wonderful love he has shown me
in time of distress.
- 22 For I had said in panic,
'I am driven clean out of your sight.'
But you heard my plea,
when I cried to you for help.
- 23 Love the LORD, all you faithful;
the LORD protects the loyal,
but repays the haughty in full.
- 24 Let your hearts be courageous and strong,
all you who wait on the LORD.

Psalm 32 – A Prayer of Confession and Joy

- 32 Happy those whose transgression is pardoned,
whose sin is covered.
- 2 Happy are those, free from falseness of spirit,
to whom the LORD reckons no debt of guilt.
- 3 When I held my peace, my bones wore away
with my endless groaning;
- 4 for day and night did your hand
lie heavy upon me.
The sap of my life was dried up

as with fierce summer-heat. *Selah*

- 5 I began to acknowledge my sin,
not concealing my guilt;
and the moment I vowed to confess
to the LORD my transgression,
then you yourself did pardon
the guilt of my sin. *Selah*
- 6 For this cause let all who are faithful
pray to you in the time of distress;
then, when the great waters rush,
they will not reach to him.
- 7 For you are my shelter,
you protect me from trouble,
and surround me with deliverance. *Selah*
- 8 ‘With my eye steadfastly upon you,
I will instruct and teach you
The way you should go.
- 9 Do not be like the horse or the mule,
that have no understanding,
but need bridle and halter to curb them,
else they will not come near to you.’
- 10 The godless have many sorrows,
but those who trust in the LORD
will be compassed about by his kindness.
- 11 Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, you righteous;
and ring out your joy, all you upright in heart.

Psalm 33 – A Hymn of Thanksgiving

- 33 Shout for joy in the LORD, you righteous:
praise for the upright is seemly.
- 2 Give thanks to the LORD on the lyre,
play to him on a ten-stringed harp.
- 3 Sing to him a new song,
play skilfully and shout merrily.
- 4 For the LORD is straight in his promise;

and all that he does is in faithfulness.

5 Justice and right he loves;
the earth is full of his kindness.

6 By his word the heavens were made,
all their host by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathers the sea in a bottle,
the ocean he puts into store-houses.

8 Let the whole world honour the LORD,
let all who live on earth be in awe.

9 For at his word it came into being,
at his command it stood forth.

10 The LORD frustrates the designs of the nations,
what the peoples have purposed, he brings to nought,
11 but the LORD's own design will stand forever,
and what his heart has purposed, through all generations.

12 Happy the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people he chose for himself as his own.

13 The LORD looks down from heaven,
he sees all of humanity;

14 from where he rules he gazes
on all who inhabit the earth.

15 He fashions the hearts of them all,
and gives heed to all that they do.

16 It is not by great armies that kings are victorious,
it is not by great strength that a warrior saves himself;
17 false hope is the war-horse to usher in victory,
for all its great might it can provide no escape.

18 See! The eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his kindness;
19 to deliver their life from death,
and to keep them alive in famine.

20 We wait for the LORD:
he is our help and our shield.
21 For in him our heart is glad,
we trust in his holy name.

- 22 Let your kindness, O LORD, be upon us,
as is our hope in you.

Psalm 34 – The Lord is Mindful of His Own

- 34 I will bless the LORD at all times,
 in my mouth will his praise be forever.
2 In the LORD will my heart make her boast,
 the humble will hear and be glad.
3 O magnify the LORD with me
 and let us extol his name together.
4 I sought the LORD, and, in answer,
 he saved me from all my terrors.
5 Look to him and you will be radiant,
 with faces unashamed.
6 Here is one who was crushed,
 but cried and was heard by the LORD,
 and brought safe out of every trouble.
7 The LORD's angel encamps
 about those who fear him, and rescues them.
8 O taste and see that the LORD is good,
 happy those who take refuge in him.
9 Fear the LORD, all his people,
 for they who fear him lack nothing.
10 Even young lions may be poor and hungry,
 but those who seek the LORD
 will not lack any good thing.
11 Come, children, listen to me.
 I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
12 Which of you is desirous of life,
 loves many and happy days?
13 Then guard your tongue from evil,
 and your lips from speaking deceit.
14 Depart from evil, and do good;
 seek peace, and pursue it.
15 The eyes of the LORD are towards the righteous,
 his ears are towards their cry for help.
16 The LORD sets his face against those who do evil,

- to root their memory out of the earth.
- 17 When righteous cry, they are heard by the LORD,
and he saves them from all their distresses.
- 18 The LORD is near to the broken-hearted,
he helps those whose spirit is crushed.
- 19 Many misfortunes befall the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them out of them all.
- 20 He guards all their bones,
none are broken.
- 21 Misfortune will slay the ungodly;
those who hate the righteous are doomed.
- 22 The LORD ransoms the life of his servants,
and none will be doomed who takes refuge in him.

Psalm 35 – A Prayer for Deliverance from Malicious Foes

- 35 Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me,
do battle with those who do battle with me.
- 2 Grasp shield and buckler,
and rise up as my help.
- 3 Draw spear and battle-axe,
confront those who pursue me.
Assure me that you will help me.
- 4 Dishonour and shame be on those
who are seeking my life!
- Defeat and confusion on those
who are planning my hurt!
- 5 As chaff before wind may they be,
with the LORD's angel pursuing them.
- 6 Slippery and dark be their way,
with his angel thrusting them on.
- 7 For they wantonly hid their net for me,
and dug a pit to destroy me.
- 8 Upon them may ruin come unawares;
may the net which they hid catch themselves,
and into the pit may they fall.
- 9 Then I will exult in the LORD,
and be joyful because of his help;

- 10 and all my being will say,
 ‘Who, O LORD, is like you,
who save the helpless from those too strong for them,
 the poor and the helpless from those who despoil them?’
- 11 Violent witnesses rise,
 and ask of me things that I know not.
- 12 Evil for good they requite me,
 leaving me inwardly comfortless.
- 13 But when *they* were sick, I put on sackcloth,
 and chastened myself with fasting.
I prayed with head bowed low,
 as if for my friend or my brother.
- 14 I went about bowed and in mourning,
 as one who laments his mother.
- 15 When I stumbled, they gleefully gathered,
 strangers gathered around me,
 and tore at me without ceasing,
- 16 impiously mocking and mocking,
 bearing their teeth at me.
- 17 How long, LORD, will you look on?
 Rescue me from their roaring,
 my precious life from the lions.
- 18 I will then give you thanks in the great congregation,
 and praise you before many people.
- 19 Suffer not those to rejoice over me
 who are falsely my foes,
suffer not those who without cause abhor me
 to wink with the eye.
- 20 For it is not peace that they speak
 of those who are quiet in the land;
but treacherous charges they plot.
- 21 With wide open mouths they shout,
‘Hurrah! Hurrah!
 With our own eyes we saw it.’
- 22 But you have seen, too, O LORD,

- keep not silence, O LORD,
be not far from me.
- 23 Bestir you, awake, for my right
my God, my LORD, for my cause.
- 24 You are just, LORD: win for me justice,
let them not rejoice over me,
25 inwardly saying, 'Hurrah!
The desire of our hearts at last!
Now we have swallowed him up.'
- 26 Shame and confusion together
on those who rejoice at my hurt!
Clothed with shame and dishonour
be those who are haughty to me!
- 27 Let such as delight in my cause
ring out their gladness,
and say evermore,
'Great is the LORD whose delight
is the well-being of his servant.'
- 28 Then my tongue will tell of your justice,
and all the day long of your praise.

Psalm 36 – The Triumphant Power of God's Love

- 36 LORD , of David.
- Sin whispers within the heart of the wicked,
who have no dread of God before their eyes.
- 2 It flatters them in their eyes
that their sin will not be found out.
- 3 First, their speech becomes wicked and false,
they give up acting wisely and well.
- 4 Then they plot deliberate wrong,
take their stand on the wicked way,
without the least shrinking from evil.
- 5 Your love, O LORD, touches the heavens,
your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

- 6 Your justice is like the great mountains,
your judgments are like the broad sea.
 LORD, you save people and animals.
- 7 How precious your love, O God!
 All may seek shelter in the shadow of your wings.
- 8 They feast on the fat of your house,
 they drink of your brook of delights.
- 9 For with you is the fountain of life,
 in the light that is yours we see light.
- 10 O continue your grace to the faithful,
 your love to the upright in heart.
- 11 Let no arrogant foot tread upon me,
 no wicked hand drive me to exile.
- 12 There the workers of wrong lie prostrate,
 thrust down to rise up no more.

Psalm 37 – Trust in the Lord and Do Good

- 37 Be not kindled to wrath at the wicked,
 nor envious of those who work wrong;
- 2 for, like grass, they will speedily wither,
 and fade like the green of young grass.
- 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
 remain in the land, and deal faithfully:
- 4 then the LORD will be your delight,
 he will grant you your heart's petitions.
- 5 Commit your way to the LORD;
 trust in him, and he will act,
- 6 making clear as the light your right,
 and your just cause clear as the noon-day.
- 7 In silence and patience wait on the LORD.
 Be not kindled to anger at those who prosper.
 At those who execute evil devices.
- 8 Desist from anger, abandon wrath:

- be not kindled to anger it leads but to evil:
9 for evildoers will be cut off,
but the land will be theirs, who wait on the LORD.
- 10 Yet but a little, and the wicked vanish:
look at their place: they are there no more.
11 But the humble will have the land,
and the rapture of peace in abundance.
- 12 The wicked plots against the righteous,
snarls like a wild animal;
13 the LORD laughs,
for he sees that his day is coming.
- 14 The wicked have drawn the sword, and bent the bow,
to fell the poor, to slay those who walk uprightly;
15 but their sword will pierce their own heart,
and their bows will be broken in pieces.
- 16 Better is the righteous person's little
than the wealth of many wicked.
17 For the arms of the wicked will be broken,
but the LORD upholds the righteous.
- 18 The LORD watches over the days of the blameless,
their heritage will continue forever.
19 They will not be shamed in the evil time,
in the days of famine they will be satisfied.
- 20 Because the wicked will perish:
but the foes of the LORD, like a brand in the oven,
will vanish, like smoke they will vanish.
- 21 The wicked must borrow and cannot pay back,
but the righteous is lavish and gives.
22 For those blest by the LORD inherit the land,
while those whom he curses will be cut off.
- 23 The LORD supports the steps
of those with whom he is pleased.
24 Though they fall, they will not be cast headlong,
for the LORD holds their hands.

- 25 Never, from youth to age,
have I seen the righteous forsaken,
or their children begging bread.
- 26 They are ever lavishly lending,
and their children are fountains of blessing.
- 27 Turn away from evil and do good
and you will live in the land forever.
- 28 For the LORD loves justice,
he does not forsake his friends.
- The unrighteous will be destroyed forever,
and the seed of the wicked will be cut off.
- 29 But the land will belong to the righteous,
they will live upon it forever,
- 30 The mouth of the righteous murmurs wisdom,
and words of justice are on their tongues.
- 31 The law of their God is in their heart,
their steps are never unsteady.
- 32 The wicked watches the righteous,
and seeks to put them to death.
- 33 But the LORD leaves them not in their hand:
at their trial they will not be held guilty.
- 34 Wait on the LORD, and observe his way:
he will lift you to honour the land will be yours,
you will feast your eyes on the doom of the wicked.
- 35 I have seen the wicked exultant,
lifting themselves like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 36 But the moment I passed, they vanished!
I sought for them, but they could not be found.
- 37 Preserve your honour and practise uprightness,
for such a person fares well in the end.
- 38 But transgressors will perish together.
Cut off are the wicked forever.
- 39 The righteous are saved by the LORD,
who in time of distress is their refuge:

40 the LORD helps and rescue them,
from the wicked he rescues and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

Psalm 38 – A Confession and Prayer for Deliverance

38 Reprove me not, LORD, in your anger,
and chasten me not in your wrath;
2 for your arrows have sunk into me,
and your hand lies heavy upon me.

3 In my flesh is no soundness
because of your anger,
no health in my bones,
because of my sin.

4 For that my guilt
is gone over my head:
it weighs like a burden
too heavy for me.

5 My wounds stink and fester,
for my foolishness I am tormented.

6 Bent and bowed am I utterly,
all the day going in mourning.

7 My loins are filled with burning,
and in my flesh is no soundness.

8 I am utterly crushed and numb;
I cry louder than lion roars.

9 LORD , you know all that I long for,
my groans are not hidden from you.

10 My heart is throbbing,
my strength has failed me.
The light of my eyes –
even it is gone from me.

11 My dear ones and friends keep aloof,
and my neighbours stand afar off.
12 They who aim at my life lay their snares,

they who seek my hurt speak of ruin,
nursing treachery all the day long.

13 But I turn a deaf ear and hear not;
 like the dumb I open not my mouth.

14 I am like one without hearing,
 with no arguments in my mouth.

15 For my hope, O LORD, is in you.
 You will answer, O LORD my God,
16 when I utter the hope that those
 who made scorn of my tottering feet
 may not rejoice over me.

17 For I am ready to fall,
 my pain forsakes me never.

18 I acknowledge my guilt,
 I am anxious because of my sin:

19 My wanton assailants are strong,
 those who wrongfully hate me are many,
20 who render me evil for good,
 and oppose me, because I make good my goal.

21 Do not forsake me, O LORD;
 my God, be not far from me.

22 Hasten to help me,
 O LORD my saviour.

Psalm 39 – The Pathos of Life

39 I vowed to watch my words,
 and sin not with my tongue,
but to put on my mouth a muzzle,
 while the wicked were in my presence.

2 I was silent and dumb,
 speechless:
 but my pain was stirred up.

3 My heart grew hot within me;
 as I mused, the fire was kindled,

till at last the words came to my tongue.

- 4 ‘Teach me, O LORD, my end,
 and the sum of my days what it is.
 Let me know how transient I am.
- 5 See! My days you have made but a span,
 and my life is as nothing before you.
It is but as a breath that everyone stands: *Selah*
- 6 it is but in mere semblance we walk to and fro,
and all our noise is for nothing.
We heap up, and know not who will gather.’
- 7 And now, what wait I for, LORD?
 My hope is in you.
- 8 From all my transgressions deliver me;
 make me not the scorn of the fool.
- 9 I am dumb, never opening my mouth,
 for this is your own doing.
- 10 Remove your stroke from off me:
 by the might of your hand I am spent.
- 11 When you rebuke someone to punish their sins,
 you consume, like a moth, what they treasures.
Everyone is only a breath. *Selah*
- 12 Hear my prayer, O LORD;
 attend to my cry for help.
 Hold not your peace at my tears.
- For I am but a guest of yours,
 a stranger visiting, like all my ancestors.
- 13 Look away from me, let me smile again,
 before I die and am gone.

Psalm 40 – Thanksgiving and Petition

- 40 For the LORD I waited and waited,
 till, inclining to me,
 he heard my cry.
- 2 From the horrible pit he drew me,
 up out of the miry clay;

- he set my feet on a rock,
and my steps he made firm.
- 3 He put a new song in my mouth,
of praise to our God.
Many see it, and, filled with awe,
put their trust in the LORD.
- 4 Happy the person who has put
in the LORD their trust,
not looking to false gods
or turning to idols.
- 5 With us you have wrought in rich measure,
O LORD our God,
your marvels and purposes for us –
none may compare with you –
were I to declare or to tell them,
past counting are they.
- 6 In offerings bloody or bloodless
you have no delight,
but with open ears you have made me.
Burnt-offering and offering for sin
are not what you ask.
- 7 Then said I, ‘Here I am,
as the roll of the book has enjoined.
- 8 My delight, O God, is to do your will,
and your law is within my heart.’
- 9 Well, O LORD, you know
that, with lips unrestrained,
your righteousness I told
in the great congregation,
not hiding it in my heart.
- 10 I have told of your steadfast help,
from the great congregation I hid not
your love and your faithfulness.
- 11 So do not restrain, LORD,
your pity from us.
Your love and your faithfulness – ever
may they be our shield.
- 12 For evils that cannot be numbered

have compassed me round.
My transgressions have followed me up –
 I can bear it no more.
They are more than the hairs of my head,
 and my heart has forsaken me.
13 O LORD, be pleased to deliver me,
 haste to my help, O LORD.
14 May those who are seeking my life
 be ashamed and confounded together;
may those who delight in my hurt
 be defeated and brought to dishonour.
15 May those who hurrah over me
 be dumbfounded because of their shame.
16 But may all who seek after you
 rejoice and be glad in you.
May all those eager for your aid,
 say, ‘Great is the LORD’ evermore.
17 I am weak and needy,
 yet the LORD cares for me.
You are my help and deliverer;
 don’t delay, my God.

Psalm 41 – A Prayer for Healing and Vindication

41 Happy are those who consider the weak;
 in the day of misfortune the LORD will deliver them.
2 He will keep them safe, happy, and long in the land,
 and not give them up to the rage of their foes.
3 The LORD will sustain them on bed of languishing;
 tending their sickness, as long as they lie.
4 For this cause I say, ‘LORD, show me your favour;
 heal me, because I have sinned against you.’
5 My enemies speak of me nothing but evil,
 ‘When will he die, and his name pass away?’
6 When one comes to see me, their words ring hollow;
 their heart keeps gathering mischief the while;
 and when they go out, they give it speech.
7 In secret they whisper together against me,

all those who hate me plot evil against me.

8 'Some fatal disease has fastened upon him;
 and now that he lies, he will rise up no more.'

9 My most trusted friend, on whom I relied,
 who ate of my bread, has turned against me.

10 But do you, LORD, graciously raise me up,
 that I may pay them their due reward.

11 By this will I know you delight in me:
 if my foes may not shout over me in triumph.

12 For my innocence you uphold me,
 and set me forever before your face.

13 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
 from everlasting to everlasting,
 Amen and Amen.*

Book Two

Psalm 42 – Yearning for God

42 LIKE THE HART WHICH LONGS
 for brooks of water,
I long
 for you, God.

2 I thirst for God,
 for my living God.
When shall I enter in,
 and see the face of God?

3 My tears have been my food
 by day and by night;
for they say to me all the day long,
 'Where is your God?'

4 My heart floods with sorrow,
 as I call to mind:
how I used to pass on with the throng,
 at their head, to the house of God,

with glad shouts and giving of thanks,
in the throng who kept festival.

- 5 Why am I downcast?
 Why this moaning within me?
Hope in God;
 for yet will I praise him,
 my help, my God.
- 6 I am sunk in my misery;
 I will therefore call you to mind
from the land of Jordan and Hermon,
 the mountain Mizar.
- 7 Flood is calling to flood
 at the noise of your cataracts;
all your waves and your breakers
 have passed over me.
- 8 In the day I cry to the Lord
 to summon his kindness;
and the song that I sing in the night
 is a prayer to the living God.
- 9 I say to God my rock,
 ‘Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk so sadly,
 so hard pressed by the foe?’
- 10 It pierces me to the heart
 to hear the enemy’s taunts,
as all the day long they say to me,
 ‘Where is your God?’
- 11 Why am I downcast?
 Why this moaning within me?
Hope in God;
 for yet will I praise him,
 my help, my God.

Psalm 43 – Plea for Help

- 43 Right me, defend my cause

against a pitiless people.
From the crafty and crooked,
 O God, deliver me.
2 For you are God my protector:
 why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk so sadly,
 so hard pressed by the foe?
3 Send forth your light and your truth,
 let them be my guides:
to your holy hill let them bring me,
 to the place where you live.
4 Then will I go to God's altar,
 to God my rejoicing;
and with joy on the lyre I will praise you,
 O God, my God.
5 Why am I downcast?
 Why this moaning within me?
Hope in God;
 for yet will I praise him,
my help, my God.

Psalm 44 – A Lament in Defeat

44 O God, we have heard with our ears,
 all our ancestors have told us
of the work that you wrought in their day,
 your wonders in days of old,
2 uprooting and crushing the nations,
 then planting and settling them.
For it wasn't their own sword that won them the land,
3 it was not their own arm that brought them the victory.
Yours was the hand and the arm,
 yours was the face that shone on them with favour.
4 It was you, my king and my God,
 that ordained the victories of Jacob.
5 Through you we can thrust back our foes,
 and by your name tread down our assailants:

- 6 for not in my bow do I trust,
 nor can my sword win me the victory.
- 7 Our victory comes from you,
 and confusion to those who hate us.
- 8 In God we boast all the day long,
 and your name will we praise forever. *Selah*
- 9 Yet you have spurned and disgraced us,
 in not going forth with our armies,
- 10 and in making us flee from the foe,
 so that those who hated us plundered us.
- 11 You have let us be eaten like sheep,
 you have scattered us over the world,
- 12 sold your people for a pittance,
 and getting no gain from their price.
- 13 You have made us the butt of our neighbours,
 the derision and scorn of all round us.
- 14 O'er the world you have made us a byword,
 the nations at us shake their heads.
- 15 My disgrace is forever before me,
 my face is covered with shame,
- 16 at the words of blasphemer and scoffer,
 at the sight of the foe and the vengeful.
- 17 All this has come upon us,
 yet we have not forgotten you
 nor falsely dealt with your covenant.
- 18 Our heart has not turned back,
 nor our steps declined from your way,
- 19 that you thus should have crushed us down,
 and covered us over with gloom,
 in the place where the jackals roam.
- 20 Had we forgotten the name of our God,
 or stretched out our hands to a god that was strange,
- 21 would God not have searched this out?
 For he knows the heart and its secrets.
- 22 But in your cause it is we are killed all the day,
 and counted as sheep for the slaughter.
- 23 Rouse yourself, why do you sleep Lord?
 Awake, cast us not off forever.

- 24 Why do you hide your face,
forgetting our stress and our misery?
25 For we have sunk down to the dust,
our bodies cling to the ground.
26 Arise, come to our help:
for your love's sake, ransom us.

Psalm 45 – Song for the Marriage of a King

- 45 My heart is astir with beautiful words:
I will sing a song, concerning the king,
with tongue like the pen of a ready writer.
- 2 Your beauty is more than mortal,
grace is shed over your lips:
therefore God has blessed you forever.
- 3 Warrior, strap your sword on your thigh.
What glory and splendour!
- 4 Good fortune attend you, as forth you ride
in the cause of good faith, and as champion of justice.
May your arm instruct you in deeds of dread.
- 5 Sharp are your arrows; nations fall under you:
pierced to the heart are the foes of the king.
- 6 Your throne shall endure for ever and ever
your royal sceptre a sceptre of equity.
- 7 Right you love and wrong you hate:
therefore the LORD your God anoints you
With oil of gladness above your fellows.
- 8 With myrrh, aloes, and cassia your robes are all fragrant,
you are gladdened by music of ivory harps.
- 9 King's daughters stand ready with jewels for you,
at your right hand the queen in gold of Ophir.
- 10 Listen, daughter, and see; and incline your ear:
forget your folk and your father's house.
- 11 And when the king desires your beauty,
bow to him, for he is your lord.

- 12 So shall the Tyrians come with gifts,
and the richest of people will do you homage.
- 13 The king's daughter is glorious altogether,
with dress of pearls inwrought with gold.
- 14 In many-coloured robes she is led to the king,
with the virgin companions she brought in her train.
- 15 The king's palace they enter with joy and rejoicing.
- 16 May sons of yours take the place of your fathers,
whom you will make princes in all the land.
- 17 Your name will I celebrate world without end,
so that nations shall praise you for ever and ever.

Psalm 46 – Our God is a Mighty Fortress

- 46 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
- 2 So we have no fear, though earth should change,
and the hills totter into the heart of the ocean.
- 3 Let its waters roar and foam,
let the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.
On our side is the LORD of hosts,
our sure defence is the God of Jacob. *Selah*
- 4 A river there is, whose streams make glad
God's city, the home the Most High has hallowed.
- 5 God is within her: she cannot be shaken.
God helps her at the turn of the morning.
- 6 Nations roared, kingdoms tottered:
he uttered his voice, earth melted away.
- 7 On our side is the LORD of hosts,
our sure defence is the God of Jacob.
- 8 Come and see what the LORD has done,
working appallingly in the earth.
- 9 He stills wars to the ends of the earth –
breaking the bow, snapping the spear,
burning the chariots in the fire.
- 10 'Refrain; and know surely that I am God,

high over the nations, high over the world.'
11 On our side is the LORD of Hosts,
our sure defence is the God of Jacob. *Selah*

Psalm 47 – The Lord’s Universal Sovereignty

- 47 Clap your hands, all you peoples:
shout to God in ringing cries.
2 For the LORD is most high and dread,
a great king over all the earth.
3 He subdues the peoples under us,
the nations under our feet;
4 he chooses our heritage for us,
the glory of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*
5 God is gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
6 Sing praise to our God, sing praises:
sing praise to our king, sing praises.
7 For king of all earth is he:
praise God in a skilful song.
8 God is king over all the nations,
God sits on his holy throne.
9 Princes of nations gather
with the people of Abraham’s God:
for the shields of the earth are God’s;
greatly exalted is he.

Psalm 48 – The Marvellous Deliverance of Zion

- 48 Great is the LORD and worthy all praise
in the city of our God.
2 His holy mountain, that rises so fair,
is the joy of all the world.
Like the mount of the gods is Mount Zion,
the city of the great king.

3 Once God made himself known
as the defence of her palaces.
4 For see! A concert of kings
passed over the frontier together.
5 But one glance, and they were astounded;
they hastened away in dismay.
6 Trembling took hold of them there,
like the pains of a woman in labour.
7 They were shattered, as east wind shatters
the giant ships in pieces.
8 What we heard, we now have seen
in the city of the LORD of hosts,
the city of our God.
God will uphold her forever. *Selah*
9 We think, O God, of your love,
in the midst of your temple.
10 Your fame, O God, like your name, shall extend
to the ends of the earth.
Victory fills your hand.
11 Let mount Zion be glad;
let the daughters of Judah rejoice
because of your judgments.
12 Walk about Zion, go round her;
count her towers.
13 Set your mind on her ramparts,
consider her palaces;
that you tell to the next generation
That such is God,
our God he it is who shall guide us
for ever and ever.

Psalm 49 – The Problem of the Prosperity of the Wicked

49 Hear this, you peoples all;
give ear, all you who live in the world
2 people of low degree and high,
the rich and the poor together.
3 My mouth shall utter wisdom,

- the thoughts of a seeing heart.
- 4 I incline my ear to a proverb,
on the lyre I will open my riddle.
- 5 Why should I be afraid in the days of misfortune,
when circled by wicked and cunning foes,
- 6 who put their trust in their wealth,
and boast of their boundless riches?
- 7 For assuredly no one can ransom themselves,
or give to God the price of their life,
- 8 for the ransom of a life is costly,
no payment is ever enough,
- 9 to keep them alive for ever and ever,
so as never to see the pit at all.
- 10 But see it they will. Even wise people die,
the fool and the brutish perish alike,
and abandon their wealth to others.
- 11 The grave is their everlasting home,
the place they shall live in for ever and ever,
though after their own names they called whole lands.
- 12 Despite their wealth,
they perish like dumb animals.
- 13 This is the fate of the confident fool,
and the end of those who are pleased with their portion. *Selah*
- 14 Like sheep they descend to Sheol
with Death for their shepherd;
down they go straight to the grave,
and their form wastes away in their home below.
- 15 But God will assuredly ransom my life
from the hand of Sheol;
for he will receive me. *Selah*
- 16 So be not afraid when someone grows rich,
when the wealth of their house increases.
- 17 Not a shred of it all can they take when they die,
wealth cannot follow them down.
- 18 Though they count themselves happy, when they are alive,
and win praise from many for faring so well,

- 19 they must join their ancestors,
 who see the light nevermore.
20 The wealthy are without understanding,
 they perish like dumb animals.

Psalm 50 – True Worship

- 50 The LORD God has spoken: He summons the earth
 from sunrise to sunset.
2 From Zion, perfection of beauty,
 God's glory shines forth.
3 Our God comes, he cannot keep silence,
 devouring fire is before him,
 and furious tempest around him.
4 He summons the heavens above
 and the earth to judge his people.
5 Gather to him his saints
 by covenant-sacrifice bound to him;
6 that the heavens may declare his justice,
 for a God of justice is he. *Selah*

7 'Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
 and protest to you, O Israel:
 I am the LORD, your God.
8 Not for your sacrifices will I reprove you
 your burnt-offerings are ever before me
9 Not a bullock will I take from your house,
 nor he-goats out of your folds;
10 for all beasts of the forest are mine,
 and the kine on a thousand hills.
11 I know all the birds of the air,
 all that moves on the fields is mine.
12 Were I hungry, I would not tell you,
 for the world and its fulness are mine.
13 Am I such as to eat bulls' flesh,
 or drink the blood of goats?
14 Offer to God a thank-offering,
 pay the Most High your vows.
15 Summon me in the day of distress,

I will rescue you, so will you honour me.'

- 16 But to the wicked God says:
 'What right have you to talk of my statutes,
 or take my covenant into your mouth
17 while you yourself hate correction,
 and cast my words behind you?
18 When you see a thief, you run with them;
 with adulterers you keep company.
19 You let your mouth loose for evil,
 your tongue contrives deceit.
20 You shamefully speak of your kin,
 and slander your own mother's son.
21 And because I kept silence at this,
 you did take me for one like yourself.
 But I will convict you and show you plainly.
22 'Now you who forget God, mark this,
 lest I rend you, past hope of deliverance.
23 Those who bring a thank-offering honour me;
 but to those: who follows my way,
 I will show the salvation of God.'

Psalm 51 – God be Merciful to Me, the Sinner

- 51 In your kindness, O God, be gracious to me,
 in your own great pity blot out my transgressions.
2 Wash me clean of my guilt,
 make me pure of my sin.
3 For well I know my transgressions,
 my sin is ever before me.
4 Against you, only you, have I sinned,
 and done that which is wrong in your sight:
you therefore are just when you speak,
 and clear when you utter judgment.
5 See! In guilt was I brought to the birth,
 and in sin did my mother conceive me.
6 It's the innermost truth you desire,

give me therefore true wisdom of heart.

- 7 Purge me clean with hyssop,
wash me whiter than snow.
- 8 Fill me with joy and gladness,
let the bones you have broken rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out my guilt altogether.
- 10 Create me a clean heart, O God,
put a new steadfast spirit within me.
- 11 Cast me not forth from your presence,
withdraw not your holy spirit.
- 12 Give me back the joy of your help,
with a willing spirit sustain me.
- 13 I will teach your ways to transgressors,
and sinners shall turn to you.
- 14 Save me from blood, O God,
and my tongue shall ring out your faithfulness.
- 15 Open my lips, O LORD,
and my mouth shall declare your praise.
- 16 For in sacrifice you have no pleasure,
in gifts of burnt-offering no delight.
- 17 The sacrifice pleasing to God
is a spirit that is broken;
a heart that is crushed, O God,
you will not despise.
- 18 Do good in your pleasure to Zion,
build the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then will you welcome the due forms of sacrifice,
then on your altars shall bullocks be offered.

Psalm 52 – The Doom of Arrogance

- 52 Why glory in mischief, you hero?
God's kindness is all the day.
- 2 Engulfing ruin you plot,

your tongue like a razor sharpened,
you practiser of deceit.

3 Evil, not good, you love,
and falsehood, not words of truth. *Selah*

4 But you love all words that devour,
and a tongue that is given to deceit.

5 But God, on his part, shall destroy you forever,
grasp you and pluck you out of your tent,
and root you out of the land of the living. *Selah*

6 Smitten with awe at the sight,
the righteous shall laugh at you.

7 'Look' (they will say) 'at the hero
who did not make God his stronghold,
but trusted in his great wealth
and in the strength of his riches.'

8 But I am like a fresh olive-tree
in the house of God.

I trust in the kindness of God
for ever and evermore.

9 I will render you thanks for ever
for what you have done.

I will tell how good you are
in the presence of those who love you.

Psalm 53 – The Folly of Denying God

53 Fools say in their heart,
'There is no God.'

Vile, hateful their life is;
not one does good.

2 From heaven God looks out
on humans, to see
if any are wise,
and care for God.

3 But all have turned bad,
the taint is on all;

not one does good,
no, not one.

- 4 Have they learned their lesson,
those workers of evil?
Who ate up my people,
eating, devouring,
never calling to the LORD.
- 5 Sore afraid will they be,
where no fear was;
when God scatters the bones
of the godless people.
They will be put to shame,
when God rejects them.
- 6 If only help from Zion
would come for Israel!
When God brings his people
a change of fortune,
how glad will be Jacob,
and Israel how joyful!

Psalm 54 – A Prayer for Deliverance from Oppression

- 54 Save me, O God, by your name,
by your power secure for me justice.
- 2 Listen, O God, to my prayer,
give ear to the words of my mouth.
- 3 For proud men have risen against me,
and terrible men seek my life,
men who do not set God before them. *Selah*
- 4 But see! God is my helper,
the LORD is sustaining my life.
- 5 Let their evil fall back on my foes:
cut them off in your faithfulness, LORD.
- 6 Then will I bring you glad sacrifice,
praising your gracious name;

- 7 for from all distress you have saved me,
and feasted my eyes on my foes.

Psalm 55 – Betrayed by a Friend

- 55 Listen, God, to my prayer.
 Don't hide yourself from my pleading.
2 Hear me, and answer;
 for bitter is my lament.
3 I am wild with the noise of the foe,
 with the clamour of the ungodly;
for they hurl disaster upon me,
 and attack me with fury.
4 My heart shudders within me,
 terrors of death press on me,
5 fear and trembling attack me,
 and horror wraps me round.
6 O for the wings of a dove:
 I would fly away and rest.
7 I would wander far away,
 find refuge in the wilderness. *Selah*
8 I would find myself a shelter
 from raging wind and tempest.
9 Confuse them, LORD, upset their plans;
 for I see violence and strife in the city.
10 By day and by night they make their rounds
 on the city walls,
while within is crime and trouble,
 within is ruin.
11 Her market-place is never free
 of deceit and tyranny.

The Treacherous Friend

- 12 The taunts were not those of a foe
 that I could have borne;
the disdain was not that of an enemy

- I could have shunned them:
13 but it was you, my equal,
my dear and familiar friend.
- We used to be so close,
14 together we walked in God's house with the crowd.
- May death suddenly take them,
15 may they go down to Sheol alive,
for evil lives in their homes and their hearts.
- But I will call on God,
16 the LORD will save me.
- Evening and morning and noon
17 I lament and moan.
He will hear my voice;
- though I am attacked by many
18 he will rescue me,
unharmed from the war.
- God, who sits on his ancient throne
19 will hear and will humble them,
for they never change,
they never fear God. *Selah*
- My friend turned against me,
20 betrayed his word.
- His mouth was smoother than butter,
21 but war filled his heart.
His words were softer than oil,
but sharper than swords.
- Cast your burden on the LORD,
22 and he will sustain you.
He will never let the righteous
be shaken.
- But you, God, will hurl them down
23 to the deepest pit.
Bloody and treacherous people
will not live out half their days;
but I will trust you.

Psalm 56 – A Prayer of Trust in God

- 56 O God, be gracious to me,
 for people trample upon me,
 all the day righting and pressing me.
- 2 All the day enemies trample me;
 many there be
 who contend with me bitterly.
- 3 In the day of my terror
 I trust in you.
- 4 In God I maintain my cause,
 in God I fearlessly trust.
 What can flesh do to me?
- 5 They torture me all the day,
 they ceaselessly plan to hurt me,
- 6 banded together in secret,
 watching my every step,
 as those who hope for my death.
- 7 Pay them out for their sin, O God,
 hurl down the strong in your anger.
- 8 You yourself count my wanderings.
 Put in your bottle my tears
 are they not in your book?
- 9 Then shall my foes be turned back
 in the day that I call.
Of this I am sure,
 because God is for me.
- 10 In God I maintain my cause,
 in the LORD I maintain my cause.
- 11 In God I fearlessly trust,
 what can people do to me?
- 12 Your vows are upon me, O God,
 I will render thank-offerings to you;
- 13 because you have saved me from death,
 my feet from stumbling,
to the end that I walk before God
 in the light of the living.

Psalm 57 – A Prayer for Protection from Persecution

- 57 Be gracious, O God, be gracious to me,
for in you I take shelter.
In your sheltering wings I take refuge,
till ruin be over past.
- 2 I cry to the Most High God,
to the God who accomplishes for me.
- 3 He will send me his succour from heaven,
he will thrust away those who would trample me. *Selah*
- 4 In the midst of lions I lie,
who devour human prey.
Their teeth are spears and arrows,
and their tongue is a sharpened sword.
- 5 Be exalted, God, o'er the heavens,
and your glory o'er all the earth.
- 6 They set a net for my feet,
but in it was their own foot caught.
Before me they dug a pit,
but they fell into it themselves. *Selah*
- 7 My heart is steadfast, O God,
my heart is steadfast.
I would sing, I would make music;
- 8 awake, my soul.
Awake, harp and lyre;
I would wake the dawn.
- 9 I would praise you among the peoples, O LORD,
and make music among the nations to you;
- 10 for great to heaven is your love,
and your faithfulness to the clouds.
- 11 Be exalted, God, o'er the heavens,
and your glory o'er all the earth.

Psalm 58 – A Prayer for Vengeance on Unjust Judges

- 58 Do you speak what is right, you gods?
With equity judge you your people?

- 2 In the land you practise iniquity – all of you;
 violence do you dispense with your hands.
- 3 The wicked go astray from the womb
 liars take the wrong path from their birth.
- 4 Venom have they like the venom of snakes,
 they are like the deaf adder that stops her ears,
- 5 and refuses to listen to the voice of the charmer,
 or binder of spells, no matter how cunning.
- 6 O God, break to pieces the teeth in their mouth,
 tear out the great teeth of the young lions, LORD.
- 7 May they melt away like running water!
 Like tender grass, cut down may they be!
- 8 Like the snail that dissolves on its crawling path,
 like the birth untimely which sees not the sunlight.
- 9 Faster than a thorn-fire heats your pots,
 he will come with his tempest and sweep them away.
- 10 The sight of such vengeance will gladden the righteous;
 their feet they will wash in the blood of the wicked.
- 11 People will say, 'Yes, the just are rewarded:
 yes, on the earth is a God who is Judge.'

Psalm 59 – A Prayer for Safety

- 59 Save me, O God, from my enemies;
 secure me from my assailants.
- 2 Save me from those who do wrong,
 save me from the bloodthirsty.
- 3 For see! They lay ambush for me,
 strong men are banded against me
not for sin or transgression of mine,
 for no guilt of mine, O LORD,
- 4 they run and make ready. Awake!
 Come forth to meet me, and see!
- 5 You, O LORD of hosts,
 God of Israel, awake!
And punish the proud, every one;
 spare none of the traitors vile. *Selah*

- 6 At evening they come,
 and, howling like dogs,
 make their round in the city.
- 7 Look at their venomous mouths,
 tongues like swords,
they think no one
 hears them.
- 8 But you, LORD, laugh at them,
 you mock all the insolent.
- 9 My strength, I will sing to you,
 for God is my sure retreat.
- 10 My God with his love will meet me,
 and feast my eyes on my foes.
- 11 Slay them not, lest my people forget,
 let your hosts keep them roaming and wandering.
- 12 In their sinful speech snare them, O LORD;
 and may they be trapped in their pride,
for the curses and lies that they utter.
- 13 In your wrath make a clean end of them,
that people, to the ends of the earth,
 may know that God rules in Jacob. *Selah*
- 14 At evening they come,
 and, howling like dogs,
 make their round in the city.
- 15 They roam about for a feast,
 and snarl, if they get not their fill.
- 16 But I will sing of your might;
 I will ring out your love in the morning.
For to me you have been a sure refuge,
 a retreat in the day of my trouble.
- 17 My strength, I will sing praise to you,
 for God is my sure retreat,
my faithful God.

routing us in your wrath – restore us!

2 You have shaken the land and cleft it;
 heal its tottering breaches.

3 You have made your people drink hardship,
 and given us wine of reeling.

4 You have given those who fear you a banner,
 a rallying-place from the bow, *Selah*
5 for the rescue of your beloved.
 Save by your right hand and answer us.

6 God did solemnly swear:
 'As victor will I divide Shechem,
 and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Mine is Gilead, mine is Manasseh,
 Ephraim is the defence of my head,
 Judah my sceptre of rule,

8 Moab the pot that I wash in,
 Edom – I cast my shoe over it,
 I shout o'er Philistia in triumph.'

9 O to be brought to the fortified city!
 O to be led into Edom!

10 Have you not spurned us, O God?
 You do not march forth with our armies.

11 Grant us help from the foe,
 for human help is worthless.

12 With God we shall yet do bravely:
 he himself will tread down our foes.

Psalm 61 – Our God is a Strong Tower

61 Hear my cry, O God,
 be attentive to my prayer.

2 From the ends of the earth I call
 unto you, when my heart is faint:
lead me to the rock
 that is high above me.

3 For you are a refuge to me,

a strong tower in face of the foe.

- 4 O to be guest in your tent forever,
 hiding beneath your sheltering wings! *Selah*
5 For you, O God, do hear my vows,
 and grant the desires of those who fear you.
6 Add many days to the life of the king;
 may his years endure throughout all generations.
7 In the presence of God be he throned forever;
 may kindness and faithfulness watch over him.
8 And I will sing praise to your name forever,
 paying my vows day after day.

Psalm 62 – Quietness and Confidence

- 62 I wait alone in silence for God;
 From him comes my help.
2 Yes, he is my rock, my help, my retreat,
 I shall not be shaken too sorely.
3 How long will you, all of you, batter a man,
 as one might a leaning wall?
4 From his height
 they are planning to topple him.
They take pleasure in falsehood; they bless with their mouth,
 but inwardly they curse. *Selah*
- 5 I wait alone in silence for God;
 for from him comes my hope.
6 Yes, he is my rock, my help, my retreat,
 I shall not be shaken too sorely.
7 On God rests my honour and safety,
 in God is my strong rock, my refuge.
8 Trust in him, all you people assembled,
 pour out your heart in his presence;
 God is a refuge for us. *Selah*
- 9 The lowly are nought but a breath,
 the lofty are but an illusion:
 in the balances up they go,

they are lighter than breath altogether.

10 Trust not in gain of extortion,
set no vain hopes in robbery.
As for wealth, if it bears fruit,
set not your heart upon it.

11 One thing God has uttered,
two things there are which I heard
that power belongs to God,
12 and to you, too, O LORD, belongs kindness;
for you requite each person
according to what they have done.

Psalm 63 – Athirst for God

63 O God, my God, you, you do I seek:
my heart thirsts for you,
my body faints for you
in a parched and waterless land.

2 As I in the temple have seen you,
beholding your power and your glory,
3 for better than life is your kindness:
my lips shall utter your praise.

4 So, while I live, I will bless you,
and lift up my hands in your name.
5 As with marrow and fat am I feasted;
with joyful lips I will praise you.

6 I call you to mind on my bed,
and muse on you in the night watches;
7 for you have been my help,
I joyfully sing in the shadow of your wings.
8 I cling close after you,
your right hand holds me up.

9 But those who seek after my life
shall go down to the depths of the earth,
10 given o'er to the power of the sword,

or as prey for jackals to devour.

- 11 But the king shall rejoice in God:
 all who own his allegiance will glory.
 For the mouth of the false shall be stopped.

Psalm 64 – A Prayer for Deliverance from Malicious Foes

- 64 Hear, O my God, the voice of my lament:
 guard my life from the foe who affrights me.
2 Hide me from villains who secretly plot,
 from the blustering throng of the workers of evil,
3 who have sharpened their tongue like a sword,
 and aimed bitter words like arrows,
4 which from ambush they launch at the blameless,
 shooting swiftly and unafraid.

5 They strengthen their wicked purpose,
 they tell of the snares they have hidden,
 they say to themselves, 'Who can see?'
6 They think out their crimes full cunningly
 hidden deep in their crafty hearts.

7 But God with his arrow will shoot them,
 swiftly shall they be smitten.
8 For their tongue he will bring them to ruin,
 all will shudder with horror at the sight of them.

9 Then every person, touched to awe,
 as they ponder what God has wrought,
 will tell the tale of his deeds.
10 In the LORD shall the righteous rejoice,
 in him shall they take refuge;
 and all the true-hearted shall glory.

Psalm 65 – Hymn for a Thanksgiving Festival

- 65 It is seemly to praise you, O God, in Zion,
 and to you shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.

- 2 O you who hear prayer,
unto you shall all flesh come.
- 3 Our sins are too mighty for us,
our transgressions you only can cover them.
- 4 Happy the person who you choose
to live beside you in your courts.
- O may we be filled with the joys
of your house, of your holy temple.
- 5 In dread deeds you loyally answer us,
O God of our salvation,
whom all ends of the earth put their trust in,
and islands far away.
- 6 By your strength you establish the hills,
you are armed with might;
- 7 you still the roaring of seas,
and the turmoil of nations,
- 8 so that those who live at earth's bounds
are awed at your signs:
the lands of the sunrise and sunset
you make to ring with joy.
- 9 You visit and water the earth;
you greatly enrich her
with the river of God, which is full of water.
You prepare the corn thereof,
- 10 watering her furrows,
settling her ridges;
you make her soft with showers,
and bless what grows thereon.
- 11 You crown the year with your goodness,
your chariot-tracks drip with fatness.
- 12 The desert pastures are lush,
the hills greened with joy.
- 13 The meadows are clothed with flocks,
the valleys are covered with corn;
they shout to each other and sing.

Psalm 66 – Thanksgiving for National Deliverance

- 66 Shout to God, all the earth,
2 sing praise to his glorious name,
sing his glorious praise.
3 Say to God, ‘How dread are your works,
so great is your might that your enemies cringe to you.
4 All the earth does homage to you,
singing praises to you,
singing praise to your name.’ *Selah*
- 5 Come and see what God has done,
awe-inspiring is he in his works among people.
6 He turns the sea into dry land,
and people cross the river on foot.
Let us therefore rejoice in him,
7 the mighty Ruler eternal,
whose eyes keep watch on the nations,
that no rebel lift up his head. *Selah*
- 8 O bless our God, you peoples;
sound aloud his praise,
9 who keeps us in life,
and keeps our feet from slipping.
10 For you, God, have tested us,
have tried us, as silver is tried.
11 You did bring us into prison,
and put chains upon us,
12 you did let people ride over our head.
We went through fire and through water,
but you led us out to a spacious place.
- 13 I will enter your house with burnt-offerings,
I will pay to you my vows,
14 which my open lips have uttered,
arid my mouth has declared in my straits.
15 I will offer you offerings of fatlings,
with the odour of burning rams,
I will sacrifice bullocks with goats. *Selah*
- 16 Come and hear my story

all who fear God –
of what he has done for me.

17 For my mouth had no sooner invoked him
than his praise was under my tongue.

18 Had I cherished sin in my heart,
the LORD would never have listened.

19 But assuredly God has listened,
and attended to my loud prayer.

20 Blessed be God, who turned not aside
my prayer, nor withdrew his kindness from me.

Psalm 67 – A Harvest Thanksgiving

67 Bless us, O God, with your favour,
let the light of your face fall upon us; *Selah*
2 that the world may know your way,
and all nations your power to save.

3 Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let the peoples all of them praise you.

4 Let the nations ring out their joy;
for you govern the peoples with equity,
and guide the nations on earth. *Selah*

5 Let the peoples praise you, O God,
let the peoples, all of them, praise you.

6 The earth has yielded her increase
by the blessing of God, our God.

7 May this blessing of ours win people to him
to all the ends of the earth.

Psalm 68 – Victory

68 God arises, his enemies scatter:
they who hate him flee before him.

2 As smoke before wind is driven,
as wax melts before fire,

- so before God vanish the wicked.
- 3 But the righteous rejoice in God's presence,
they exult with exceeding joy.
- 4 Sing to God, make music to his name,
his name is the LORD, praise him who rides on the clouds,
and exult in his presence.
- 5 Father of orphans, defender of widows,
is God in his holy abode.
- 6 God brings home the lonely,
he leads forth the prisoner to comfort,
so that none but the rebel lives cheerless.
- 7 God, when you went in front of your people
in your march through the desert, *Selah*
- 8 earth shook, the heavens poured rain
at the presence of God, Sinai's God
at the presence of God, Israel's God.
- 9 Rain in abundance, God, you did sprinkle,
restoring the languishing land of your heritage.
- 10 A dwelling therein your people found:
in your goodness, O God, you did care for the poor.
- 11 The LORD spoke the glad tidings of victory,
a great army of women proclaim it:
- 12 'Kings of armies they flee, they flee,
and the housewife divides the spoil:
- 13 dove's wings covered with silver
and pinions with shimmer of gold,
set with stones, like snow upon Zalmon.'
- 15 A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan,
a mountain of peaks is the mountain of Bashan.
- 16 You high-peaked mountains, why look you askance
at the mountain which God has desired for his home
whereon the LORD will live forever?
- 17 The chariots of God are twice ten thousand:
the LORD came from Sinai, his holy place.
- 18 You did mount the height with trains of your captives,
and gifts that you had received from the people.
The rebels shall live with the LORD God.

- 19 Blest be the LORD who sustains us daily,
the God who is also our saviour. *Selah*
20 Our God is a God who is saviour.
The ways of escape from death
are known to the LORD God.
- 21 Yes, God will shatter the head of his foes
the rough scalp of those who strut on in their sins.
- 22 The LORD said: 'I will bring you home from Bashan,
home from the depths of the sea,
23 that your feet you may bathe in blood,
and your dogs lick their share of the foe.'
- 24 In the temple appear God's triumphal processions,
processions in praise of my king and my God,
25 with singers in front, and minstrels behind,
and maidens with timbrels between them, singing,
26 'You of the well-spring of Israel,
bless the LORD God in the dance.'
- 27 There, in front, is Benjamin the little,
the princes of Judah beside them,
the princes of Zebulon, princes of Naphtali.
- 28 God, show your strength,
your godlike might,
as you did in the past,
from your temple that crowns Jerusalem.
Kings shall bring tribute to you.
- 29 Rebuke the beast of the reed,
the herd of bulls, with the calves of the peoples.
Trample down the lovers of lies.
Scatter the nations whose joy is in war.
- 31 May they come from Egypt with gifts of oil,
Ethiopia haste with full hands to God.
- 32 Sing to God, O you kingdoms of earth,
make melody to the LORD. *Selah*
- 33 Praise him who rides on the ancient heavens.
See! He utters his voice, his mighty voice.
- 34 Ascribe strength to the God over Israel,
whose strength and majesty live in the skies.
35 Awe-inspiring is God in his holy place,

it is Israel's God
who gives strength and might to his people.
Blessed be God.

Psalm 69 – A Prayer for Deliverance and Vengeance

- 69 Save me, O God; for the waters
 are threatening my life.
- 2 I am sunk in depths of mire,
 where ground there is none.
I am come into deep deep waters,
 the flood overwhelms me.
- 3 I am weary of crying, my throat is parched,
 my eyes are wasted with waiting for God.
- 4 More than the hairs of my head
 are those who wantonly hate me.
More than my bones in number
 are those who are falsely my foes.
That which I never robbed,
 how am I then to restore?
- 5 O God, you know my folly,
 my guilt is not hidden from you.
- 6 Through me let not any be shamed,
 who wait for you, LORD God of hosts.
Through me let not those be confounded
 who seek you, O God of Israel.
- 7 It's in your cause that I have borne taunts,
 and my face has been covered with shame;
- 8 I became to my kindred a foreigner,
 to my mother's sons a stranger.
- 9 It was zeal for your house that consumed me,
 and the insults they hurled at you fell upon me.
- 10 When I chastened myself with fasting,
 they took occasion to taunt me.
- 11 When I put on a garment of sackcloth,
 they made me the theme of a taunt-song.
- 12 Those who sit in the gate make sport of me

in the music of drunken songs.

- 13 But I pray to you, LORD,
 for a time of favour.
In your great love answer me;
 with your loyal help, save me
14 from sinking down in the mire.
 Lift me out of the deep deep waters,
15 that the rushing flood may not drown me,
 that the deep may not swallow me up,
 nor the pit close her mouth upon me.
16 Answer me, LORD, in your gracious kindness,
 turn to me in your great compassion.
17 Hide not your face from your servant,
 for I am in trouble; O answer me speedily.
18 Draw near to me, redeem me;
 because of my enemies, ransom me.
19 You know how I am insulted;
 in your sight are all my foes.
20 Insult has broken my heart,
 past cure are my shame and confusion.
For pity I looked – there was none!
 And for comforters, but I found none.
21 Poison they gave me for food,
 and to slake my thirst they gave vinegar.
22 May their table, outspread, be a trap to them,
 and their peace-offerings be a snare.
23 May their eyes be darkened and blind,
 make them shake without ceasing.
24 Pour your indignation upon them,
 let your burning wrath overtake them.
25 May their camp be a desolation,
 in their tents be there none to live.
26 For those whom you struck, they persecute,
 and those whom you wounded, they pain yet more.
27 Charge them with sin upon sin,
 may they not be acquitted by you.
28 From the book of life be they blotted,
 may their names not be written with the righteous.

- 29 Lift me, O God, by your help
above my pain and misery.
- 30 Then will I praise God in song
and magnify him with thanksgiving,
- 31 which shall please the LORD better than ox,
or than bullock with horns and hoofs.
- 32 The oppressed shall rejoice at the sight.
You who seek after God, let your heart revive.
- 33 For the LORD listens to the poor,
he does not despise his prisoners.
- 34 Let the heavens and the earth sing his praises,
the seas, and all creatures that move in them.
- 35 For God will bring help to Zion,
and build up the cities of Judah,
his people shall live there in possession.
- 36 His servants' children shall have it for heritage,
and those who love him shall live therein.

Psalm 70 – A Cry for Help in Persecution

- 70 Quickly, God, deliver me,
hasten to help me, LORD.
- 2 May those who are seeking my life,
be ashamed and confounded.
- 3 May those who delight in my hurt
be defeated and brought to dishonour.
- 4 But may all who seek after you
rejoice and be glad in you.
May all who love your salvation
say, 'Glory to God,' evermore.
- 5 I am weak and needy:
make haste, God, to me.
You are my help and deliverer;
LORD, don't delay.

Psalm 71 – Forsake me not, when I am Old

- 1 In you, O LORD, I take refuge,
 let me never be put to shame.
- 2 In your faithfulness save me and rescue me,
 bend your ear to me and save me.
- 3 Be to me a rock of defence,
 a fortified house, to save me;
 for my rock and my fortress are you.
- 4 Save me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,
 from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
- 5 For you, LORD, are my hope,
 in whom from my youth I have trusted.
- 6 On you have I leaned from my birth;
 from my mother's womb it was you who did draw me.
 In you is my hope evermore.
- 7 I have been as a wonder to many,
 for you are my refuge and strength.
- 8 All the day long my mouth
 is filled with your praise and your glory.
- 9 Cast me not off in the time of old age;
 when my strength is spent, forsake me not.
- 10 For my foes whisper against me,
 they who watch me take counsel together;
- 11 'God has left him,' they say: 'pursue
 and seize him, for he is helpless.'
- 12 O God, be not far from me,
 haste, O my God, to my help.
- 13 Put my foes to shame and dishonour,
 with insult and shame be they covered.
- 14 But I will never stop hoping,
 and more and yet more will I praise you.
- 15 All the day long shall my mouth
 tell your faithfulness and your salvation,
 though I know not how they may be counted.
- 16 I will tell of the might of the LORD,
 and your faithfulness praise, you alone.

- 17 You have taught me, O God, from my youth,
and till now have I told of your wonders.
- 18 Even in old age and grey hair,
O God, do not forsake me.
Still would I tell of your might
unto all generations to come.
- 19 Your power and your justice, O God,
extend as far as the heavens:
for great are the things you have done.
Who is like you, O God?
- 20 You have caused us to see troubles many,
but you will revive us again.
From the depths of the earth
you will bring me up again.
- 21 You will multiply my greatness,
and comfort me again.
- 22 So with harp I will praise you,
and your faithfulness, O my God;
and make music to you on the lyre,
O you Holy One of Israel.
- 23 My lips shall ring out their joy,
my mouth shall sing praises to you;
all of me, which you have redeemed.
- 24 Yes, all the day long shall my tongue
utter your righteousness;
for ashamed and confounded are they
who were seeking my hurt.

Psalm 72 – A Prayer for a Just and Glorious Reign

- 72 Give the king, O God, your own spirit of justice
your spirit of right to the son of the king,
2 that with right he may judge your people,
and your downtrodden ones with justice.
- 3 May the mountains bear weal for the people,
and the hills yield fruits of justice.

- 4 The weak may he help to their rights,
may he save the sons of the needy
and crush the oppressor in pieces.
- 5 May he live as long as the sun,
while the moon shines – for ages and ages.
- 6 May he be like the rain on the meadow,
like showers that water the earth.
- 7 In his days may justice flourish,
and welfare abound, till the moon be no more.
- 8 May he reign from ocean to ocean,
from the river to the ends of the earth.
- 9 May his foes bow down before him,
his enemies lick the dust.
- 10 May tribute be rendered by kings
of the isles and of Tarshish;
may gifts be brought by the kings
of Sheba and Seba.
- 11 May all kings fall prostrate before him,
and all nations yield him their service.
- 12 For he saves the poor when he cries,
the helpless and the downtrodden.
- 13 He pities the weak and the poor,
he saves the lives of the poor.
- 14 He redeems them from wrong and from violence,
for dear is their blood in his sight.
- 15 Long may he live;
and may gold of Sheba be given him;
prayer, too, be made for him ceaselessly,
all the day long may men bless him.
- 16 May the land have abundance of corn,
to the tops of the hills may it wave.
May the fruit thereof flourish like Lebanon,
may men spring from the city like grass of the earth.
- 17 May his name be blessed forever,

may his fame endure as the sun.
 May all nations envy his blessedness,
 all tribes of the earth call him happy.

- 18 *Blest be the LORD God, Israel's God,
 who alone does wonders;
 And blest be forever his glorious name.
 Let all the earth be filled with his glory.
 Amen and Amen.*

20 Here end the prayers of David, son of Jesse.

Book Three

Psalm 73 – Fellowship with God Here and Hereafter

- 73 YES, God is good to the upright,
 the LORD to the pure in heart.
 2 But my feet were almost gone,
 my steps had nearly slipped,
 3 through envy of godless braggarts,
 when I saw how well they fared.
 4 For never a pang have they,
 their body is sound and sleek.
 5 They have no trouble like mortals,
 no share in human pain.
 6 So they wear their pride like a necklace,
 they put on the garment of wrong,
 7 their eyes stand out with fatness,
 their heart swells with riotous fancies.
 8 Their speech is mocking and evil,
 condescending and crooked their speech.
 9 They have set their mouth in the heavens,
 while their tongue struts about on the earth.
 10 Small wonder that people resort to them,
 and drink deep draughts of their lore.
 11 'How does God know?' they say,

'And has the Most High any knowledge?'

12 See! These are the godless,
with wealth and ease ever increasing.

13 Yes, in vain have I kept my heart pure,
and washed my hands in innocence;

14 for all the day long was I plagued
not a morning but I was chastised.

15 But to resolve to speak like they do
would be treachery to your children.

16 So I sought to understand it,
but a wearisome task it seemed:

17 till I entered the holy world of God
and saw clearly their destiny.

18 Yes, you set them on slippery places;
down to destruction you hurl them.

19 One moment and then what a horror of ruin!
They are finished and ended in terrors.

20 Like a dream, when one wakes, shall they be,
whose phantoms the waker despises.

21 So my bitterness of mind
and the pain that stabbed my heart
22 show how dull I was and stupid
just like a beast before you.

23 But I am always with you,
you have hold of my right hand.

24 By a plan of yours you guide me
and will afterward take me to glory.

25 Whom have I in the heavens but you?
And on earth there is none I desire beside you.

26 Though flesh and heart waste away,
yet God is the rock of my heart,
yet God is my portion forever.

27 For see! Those who are far from you must perish,
you destroy all who are false to you.

28 But I am happy when close to God;

the LORD my God I have made my refuge,
that I may recount all the things you have done.

Psalm 74 – Lament on the Devastation of the Temple

- 74 Why, O God, have you spurned us forever?
 Why smokes your wrath against the sheep of your pasture?
- 2 Remember the community you purchased of old
 to become by redemption the tribe of your heritage,
 Zion, the mountain you made your home.
- 3 Rouse yourself, visit its ruins complete.
 In the temple the foe has made havoc of all things.
- 4 Like lions your enemies roared through your house,
 replacing our symbols by signs of their own,
- 5 hacking, like woodsmen who lift
 axes on thickets of trees,
- 6 smashing with hatchets and hammers
 all of its carved work together.
- 7 They have set your temple on fire,
 to the very ground they have outraged
 the place where lives your name.
- 8 They have said in their heart, 'Let us utterly crush them.'
 They have burned all the houses of God in the land.
- 9 No symbol of ours do we see any more:
 no prophet is there any more,
 none is with us who knows how long.
- 10 How long, O God, is the foe to insult?
 Shall the enemy spurn your name forever?
- 11 Why, O LORD, do you hold back your hand,
 why keep your right hand in the folds of your robe?
- 12 Yet God is our king from the ancient days,
 in the midst of the earth working deeds of salvation.
- 13 It was you who did cleave the sea by your might,
 and shatter the heads of the ocean monsters.
- 14 It was you who did crush many-headed Leviathan,
 and give him as food to the beasts of the wilderness.

- 15 It was you who did cleave the fountains and torrents;
it was you who did dry the perennial streams.
- 16 Yours is the day; yours, too, is the night,
it was you who did establish the sun and the star.
- 17 It was you who did fix all the borders of earth:
summer and winter it's you who have made them.
- 18 Yet, for all this, the foe has insulted you, LORD,
and a nation of fools has reviled your name.
- 19 Do not give your dove to the beasts,
do not forget your afflicted forever.
- 20 Look to the sleek ones – how full they are:
the dark places of earth are the dwellings of violence.
- 21 O let not the downtrodden turn back ashamed:
let the poor and the needy sing praise to your name.
- 22 Arise, God, and defend your cause:
remember how fools all the day insult you.
- 23 Do not forget the uproar of your enemies,
the din of your foes that ascends evermore.

Psalm 75 – God the Judge

- 75 We praise you, God, we praise you:
we would call on your name and declare your wonders.
- 2 'At the time I choose,
I will judge fairly.
- 3 Though earth melt and all her inhabitants,
it is I who keep steady her pillars.' *Selah*
- 4 I say to the boasters, 'Boast not';
to the wicked, 'Lift not up your horn:
- 5 lift not your horn on high,
speak not boldly against the Rock.'
- 6 For not from east nor west,
not from desert nor mountains;
- 7 but God himself is the judge,
humbling one and exalting another.

- 8 In the hand of the LORD is a cup
 foaming wine, richly spiced.
Out of this he pours a draught,
 and all the wicked of earth
 must drain it down to the dregs.
- 9 But I will rejoice forever,
 singing praise to the God of Jacob.
10 I will hew all the horns of the wicked,
 but the horns of the just shall be lifted.

Psalm 76 – A Song of Victory

- 76 God has made himself known in Judah,
 his name is great in Israel.
2 His tent is in Salem,
 his dwelling in Zion.

3 There he broke the lightning arrows,
 shield, sword, and weapons of war. *Selah*
4 Terrible is your splendour
 on the everlasting mountains.

5 Despoiled were the stout of heart;
 in the sleep into which they had fallen,
none of the warriors
 could lift a hand.

6 At your rebuke, God of Jacob,
 sank chariot and horse to sleep.
7 Awful are you: who can stand
 before you, when once you are angry?

8 The judgment you gave from heaven
 frightened the earth into silence,
9 when God arose to judgment
 to save the oppressed of the earth. *Selah*

10 The fiercest will praise you,
 to you will the remnant hold festival.

- 11 Vow and pay to LORD your God,
and let all who are round him bring presents.
- 12 He lops off the courage of princes,
and with terror fills kings of the earth.

Psalm 77 – A Prayer for Preservation as in the Days of Old

- 77 Loudly will I lift my cry to God,
loudly to God, so he hears to me.
- 2 In the day of my trouble I seek the LORD;
in the night I lift my hands in prayer,
refusing all comfort.
- 3 When I think of God, I moan;
when I muse, my spirit is faint. *Selah*
- 4 When you hold my eyes awake,
and I am restless and speechless,
- 5 I think of the days of old,
call to mind distant years.
- 6 I commune with my heart in the night,
I muse with inquiring spirit.
- 7 'Will the LORD cast us off forever,
will he be gracious no more?
- 8 Has his love vanished forever?
Is his faithfulness utterly gone?
- 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious,
or in anger withheld his compassion?' *Selah*
- 10 Then I said, 'This it is that grieves me,
that the hand of the Most High has changed.'
- 11 I will think of the deeds of the LORD,
and remember your wonders of old.
- 12 I will muse on all you have wrought,
and meditate on your deeds.
- 13 Then your way, O God, was majestic:
what God was great as our God?
- 14 You were a God who did marvels,
you did show your power to the world

- 15 by your arm you rescued your people,
the children of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*
- 16 The waters saw you, O God.
The waters saw you and shivered;
to their depths they trembled.
- 17 Clouds poured torrents of water,
thunder rolled in the sky,
your arrows sped to and fro.
- 18 Loud was the roll of your thunder,
lightnings lit up the world.
Earth quaked and trembled.
- 19 In your way, LORD, through the sea,
in your path through the mighty waters,
your footsteps were all unseen.
- 20 You did guide your folk like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalm 78 – The Warnings of History

- 78 My people, give ear to my teaching;
bend your ears to the words of my mouth,
2 as I open my mouth in a poem
on the riddling story of the past.
- 3 What we have heard and known,
and what our ancestors have told us,
4 we will not hide from their children.
We will tell to the next generation
the praises and might of the LORD,
and the wonders that he has done.
- 5 He set up a testimony in Jacob,
a law he appointed in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to make known to their children,
6 that the next generation should know it,
that the children yet to be born
should arise and tell their children;

- 7 that in God they might put their confidence,
and not forget God's works;
 but that they might keep his commandments,
8 and not be like their ancestors,
 a generation defiant and stubborn,
a generation with heart unsteady,
 and spirit unfaithful towards God.
- 9 Ephraimites, armed bowmen,
 turned back in the day of battle.
10 They did not keep God's covenant,
 they refused to walk in his law.
11 They forgot what he had done,
 and the wonders he had shown them.
- 12 He did wonders before their ancestors
 in the country of Zoan in Egypt.
13 Through the sea which he split he brought them,
 making waters stand up like a heap;
14 he led them by day with a cloud,
 all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 From the rocks which he split in the wilderness,
 he gave them to drink as of ocean's abundance.
16 He brought streams out of the rock,
 and made water run down like rivers.
- 17 Yet they still went on sinning against him,
 they defied the Most High in the desert.
18 They wilfully challenged God,
 demanding the food that they longed for.
19 'Is God able,' such was their challenge,
 'to spread in the desert a table?
20 From the rock that he struck there gushed water,
 and torrents that overflowed;
but can he also give bread,
 or provide his people with meat?
- 21 When the LORD heard this, he was furious,
 and fire was kindled on Jacob,
anger flared up against Israel.

- 22 For they put no trust in God,
 no confidence in his help.
- 23 So he summoned the clouds above;
 and, opening the doors of heaven,
24 he rained manna upon them for food,
 and grain of heaven he gave them.
- 25 Everyone ate the bread of angels;
 he sent them food to the full.
- 26 He launched the east wind in the heavens,
 and guided the south by his power.
- 27 He rained meat upon them like dust,
 winged bird like the sand of the sea.
- 28 In the midst of their camp he dropped it,
 all around their tents.
- 29 They ate and were more than filled;
 he had brought them the thing they desired.
- 30 But the thing they desired became loathsome:
 while their food was still in their mouths,
- 31 the wrath of God rose against them.
 He slew the stoutest among them,
 and laid low the young men of Israel.
- 32 Yet for all this they sinned yet more,
 and refused to believe in his wonders.
- 33 So he ended their days in a breath,
 and their years in sudden dismay.
- 34 When he slew them, then they sought after him,
 they turned and sought God with diligence.
- 35 They remembered that God was their rock,
 and the Most High God their redeemer.
- 36 But they flattered him with their mouth,
 and lied to him with their tongue.
- 37 Their heart was not steady with him,
 they were faithless to his covenant.
- 38 But he is full of pity:
 he pardons sin and destroys not.
Often he turns his anger away,

- without stirring his wrath at all.
- 39 So he remembered that they were but flesh,
breath that passes and does not return.
- 40 But how often they rebelled in the desert,
and caused him grief in the wilderness,
41 tempting God again and again,
provoking the Holy One of Israel.
- 42 They did not remember his strength,
nor the day he redeemed from the foe,
43 how he set his signs in Egypt,
in the country of Zoan his wonders.
- 44 He turned their canals into blood,
their streams undrinkable.
- 45 He sent forth flies, which devoured them;
frogs, too, which destroyed them.
- 46 Their crops he gave to the caterpillar,
and the fruits of their toil to the locust.
- 47 He slew their vines with hail,
and their sycamore trees with frost.
- 48 He delivered their cattle to the hail,
and their flocks to bolts of fire.
- 49 He let loose his hot anger among them,
fury and wrath and distress,
a band of destroying angels.
- 50 He cleared a path for his anger,
did not spare them from death,
but gave them over to pestilence.
- 51 He struck down all the first-born in Egypt,
the first fruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.
- 52 He led forth his people like sheep,
he was guide to his flock in the desert.
- 53 Securely he led them, and free from fear,
while their foes were drowned in the sea.
- 54 To his holy realm he brought them,
to the mountain his right hand had purchased.
- 55 He drove out the nations before them,

and allotted their land for possession,
and their tents for Israel to live in.

- 56 Yet they tempted and angered the Most High God,
they did not observe his decrees.
57 They drew back, false like their ancestors;
they failed like a treacherous bow.
58 Their shrines stirred him to anger,
their idols moved him to jealousy.
59 When God heard of this, he was furious,
and he spurned Israel utterly.
60 He abandoned his home in Shiloh,
the tent he had pitched among people.
61 He gave his strength up to captivity,
his glory to the hands of the foe.
62 He gave his people to the sword,
he was furious with his own.
63 Fire devoured their young men,
and their maidens had no marriage-song.
64 Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows could not weep.
65 Then the LORD awoke as from sleep,
like a warrior flushed with wine;
66 and he beat back his foes,
putting them to perpetual scorn.
67 He disowned the tent of Joseph,
he rejected the tribe of Ephraim;
68 but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which he loves.
69 And he built like the heights his sanctuary,
like the earth which he founded forever.
70 And he chose David his servant,
taking him from the sheepfolds.
71 From the mother-ewes he brought him,
to be shepherd to Jacob his people,
and to Israel his inheritance.
72 With upright heart did he shepherd them,

and with skilful hands did he guide them.

Psalm 79 – A National Prayer for Deliverance

- 79 Heathen, O God, have come into your land,
 defiling your holy temple,
 and laying Jerusalem in ruins.
- 2 They have given the bodies of your dead servants
 to the birds of the air to devour,
 and the flesh of your faithful to the beasts of the field.
- 3 Round about Jerusalem
 they have poured out their blood like water;
 and there was no one to bury them.
- 4 On every side our neighbours
 revile us and mock us and jeer at us.
- 5 How long will you be angry, O LORD?
 Will your jealousy burn like fire forever?
- 6 Pour out your wrath on the nations that don't know you,
 on the kingdoms that do not call on your name.
- 7 For Jacob they devoured,
 they have desolated his home.
- 8 Do not remember against us our ancestors' sins;
 O meet us soon with your pity,
 for utterly weak are we.
- 9 Help us, O God our saviour,
 for the renown of your name:
for your reputation deliver us
 and cover over our sins.
- 10 Why should the nations say,
 'Where is their God?'
Let revenge for the outpoured blood of your servants
 be shown on the heathen before our eyes.
- 11 May the groans of the prisoner come before you;
 free the children of death by your mighty arm.
- 12 Pay our neighbours back sevenfold
 for the scorn they have heaped upon you, O LORD.
- 13 Then we, your people, the flock of your pasture,

will give thanks to you for evermore,
and tell your praise to all generations.

Psalm 80 – A Prayer for the Preservation of Israel

- 80 Listen, Shepherd of Israel,
 who leads Joseph like a flock of sheep;
from your throne on the cherubs shine forth
 before Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin.
2 Stir up your mighty power,
 come to our help.
3 God, restore us:
 show us the light of your face,
 so we may be saved.
4 O LORD of hosts,
 how long is your anger to smoke,
 despite the prayer of your people?
5 You have fed them with bread of tears,
 you have made them drink tears by the measure.
6 The scorn of our neighbours you make us,
 the laughing-stock of our foes.
7 God of hosts, restore us:
 show us the light of your face,
 so we may be saved.
8 A vine out of Egypt you brought;
 you did drive out the nations, and plant her;
9 in the ground you did clear she struck root,
 and she filled all the land.
10 The shade of her covered the mountains,
 her branches the cedars of God.
11 She sent forth her shoots to the sea,
 and her branches as far as the River.
12 Why have you torn down her fences, and left her
 to be plucked at by all who pass by,
13 to be gnawed by the boar from the forest,
 and devoured by the beasts of the field?
14 O God of hosts, return:

look down from heaven and see
and visit this vine, and restore her
15 the vine which your right hand has planted.
16 She is burned with fire and cut down
 before your stern face they are perishing.
17 Support the one you have chosen,
 the one you have raised for yourself;
18 then from you we will never draw back.
 Preserve us, and we will call on your name.
19 LORD , God of hosts, restore us:
 Show us the light of your face,
 so we may be saved.

Psalm 81 – For the Feast of Tabernacles

81 Sing aloud to God our strength,
 shout for joy to the God of Jacob.
2 Raise a song, sound the timbrel,
 sweet lyre and harp.
3 On the new moon blow the horn,
 at the full moon, the day of our festival.
4 For this is a statute for Israel,
 a ruling of the God of Jacob,
5 a witness he set up in Joseph,
 when he marched against Egypt's land,
 where he heard an unknown voice say:
6 'I removed from your shoulder the burden,
 and freed your hands from the basket.
7 At your call of distress I delivered you,
 from the thundercloud I answered you.
 At Meribah's waters I tested you. *Selah*
8 'Listen, my people, to my warning,
 O Israel, if you would but listen!
9 There must not be a strange god among you,
 you must bow to no foreign god.
10 I am the LORD your God
 who brought you up out of Egypt.

Open your mouth, that I fill it.

- 11 ‘But my people did not listen to my voice,
 Israel would have none of me.
12 So to their own hard hearts I left them,
 to follow their own devices.
13 O that my people would listen,
 that Israel would walk in my ways.
14 Soon would I humble their enemies,
 and turn my hand on their foes.
15 Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him
 in everlasting terror.
16 But you would I feed with the richest wheat,
 and with honey from the rock to your heart’s desire.’

Psalm 82 – God the Upholder of Justice

- 82 God has taken his stand
 in the divine assembly:
 in the midst of the gods he holds judgment.
2 ‘How long will you crookedly judge,
 and favour the wicked? *Selah*
3 Do right by the weak and the orphan,
 acquit the innocent poor.
4 Rescue the weak and the needy,
 save them from the hand of the wicked.
5 ‘They have neither knowledge nor insight,
 in darkness they walk to and fro,
 while the earth’s foundations totter.
6 It was I who appointed you gods,
 children of the Most High all of you.
7 Yet like mortals you will surely die,
 you will fall like any prince.’
8 Arise, O God, judge the earth,
 for all nations are yours by inheritance.

Psalm 83 – A Prayer for the Destruction of the Enemies of Judah

- 83 Do not keep silent, O God:
hold not your peace, be not still, God.
- 2 For see! Your enemies roar,
those who hate you lift up their heads,
- 3 laying crafty plans for your people,
and plotting against those you treasure.
- 4 'Come, let us wipe them out as a nation,
so Israel's name will be mentioned no more.'
- 5 For, conspiring with one accord,
they have made a league against you
- 6 Tents of Edom, and Ishmaelites,
Moab, and the Hagrites.
- 7 Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,
Philistia, with the people of Tyre;
- 8 Syria, too, is confederate,
they have strengthened the children of Lot. *Selah*
- 9 Deal with them as you dealt with Midian,
with Sisera, with Jabin, at the torrent of Kishon,
- 10 who at Endor were destroyed,
and became dung for the field.
- 11 Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
- 12 who said, 'Let us take for ourselves
the meadows of God.'
- 13 Whirl them, my God, like dust,
like stubble before the wind.
- 14 As the fire that kindles the forest,
as flame that sets mountains ablaze,
- 15 so with your tempest pursue them,
terrify them with your hurricane.
- 16 Make them blush with shame;
until they seek your name, O LORD.
- 17 Everlasting shame and confusion,
disgrace and destruction be theirs.
- 18 Teach those who you alone
are most high over all the earth.

Psalm 84 – The Song of the Pilgrims

- 84 How dearly loved is the place where you live,
LORD of hosts!
- 2 How I long and yearn
for the courts of the LORD.
Now heart and flesh cry for joy
to the living God.
- 3 Even the sparrow has found her a home
and the swallow a nest,
to lay her young,
near your altar,
LORD of hosts,
my king and my God.
- 4 Happy those who live in your house,
praising you evermore. *Selah*
- 5 Happy those whose strength is in you,
people with pilgrim hearts.
- 6 As they pass through the valley of tears,
they make it a place of fountains,
clothed with the blessings of early rain.
- 7 From rampart to rampart on they march,
till at last God reveals himself in Zion.
- 8 LORD , God of hosts, hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob. *Selah*
- 9 Behold, O God, our defender,
and look upon your anointed,
- 10 for better a single day in your courts
than a thousand in my own chambers:
better stand at the door of the house of my God
than live in the tents of ungodliness,
- 11 for the LORD is sun and shield,
the LORD gives grace and glory.
- He withholds no good thing from the life that is blameless.
- 12 LORD of hosts,
happy those whose trust is in you.

Psalm 85 – A Prayer for National Restoration

- 85 Once, LORD, you did favour your land,
granting change of fortune to Jacob,
2 forgiving the guilt of your people,
pardoning all their sin, *Selah*
3 withdrawing all your fury,
turning from your hot anger.
- 4 Restore us, O God our saviour,
put away your displeasure against us.
5 Will you cherish your anger against us forever,
prolonging your wrath to all generations?
6 Will you not revive us again,
that your people may be glad in you?
7 Show us your kindness, O LORD,
grant us your salvation.
- 8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak;
for he will speak of peace
to his people, to those who love him,
and turn their hearts to him.
9 Soon those who fear him shall see how he saves,
and glory shall live in our land.
- 10 Kindness and loyalty meet;
peace and righteousness kiss.
11 Loyalty springs from the earth;
righteousness looks from the sky.
12 The LORD shall give all that is good,
our land yielding its increase,
13 righteousness marching before him,
and peace on the path he treads.

Psalm 86 – A Prayer for Divine Guidance and Favour

- 86 Incline your ear, LORD, and answer me,
for I am afflicted and needy.

- 2 Guard me, for I am loyal:
 save your servant, who trusts in you.
- 3 LORD, be gracious to me, for you are my God;
 I cry to you all the day.
- 4 Gladden the heart of your servant;
 for to you, LORD, I set my hope.
- 5 For you, LORD, are good and forgiving,
 rich in love towards all who call on you.
- 6 Listen, O LORD, to my prayer;
 attend to my plea for mercy.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I call on you,
 with assurance that you will answer me.
- 8 None of the gods is like you, LORD,
 nor are any works like yours.
- 9 All the nations you have made
 will come and bow down before you,
 giving glory, O LORD, to your name.
- 10 For great are you, and a doer of wonders;
 you alone are God.
- 11 Teach me, O LORD, your way,
 that I may walk in your truth:
 so my heart shall rejoice in your name.
- 12 I will give you thanks, O LORD,
 with all my heart, my God,
 I will honour your name forever.
- 13 For great is your love towards me,
 from the depths of Sheol you have saved me.
- 14 Haughty men have risen up against me, O God,
 a band of the violent seeking my life,
 who think nothing of you.
- 15 But you are a God of pity and grace,
 patient and rich in kindness and faithfulness;
 turn to me with your grace, O LORD.
- 16 Grant your strength to your servant,
 and save the child of your handmaid.
- 17 Show me a sign of your favour,
 which those who hate me may see with confusion,
 since you, LORD, are my helper and comforter.

Psalm 87 – Zion, City of God

- 87 On the holy mountain stands
the city he founded.
- 2 The LORD loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3 Glorious things he is speaking of you,
you city of God. *Selah*
- 4 'Among those who are mine I name Rahab and Babylon,
Philistia, Tyre, Ethiopia,
their people will say I was born in Zion.'
- 5 As for Zion it will be said
each and all were born in her.'
The LORD will preserve her.
- 6 The LORD will count, when enrolling the peoples,
'This one was born there, and that one was born there.' *Selah*
- 7 Singers and dancers alike will say
'All my springs are in you.'

Psalm 88 – The Prayer of Despair

- 88 O LORD my God,
I cry for help in the day-time,
in the night my cry is before you;
- 2 let my prayer come into your presence,
incline your ear to my cry.
- 3 For I am sated with sorrow,
my life draws near to Sheol.
- 4 I am counted with those who go down to the pit;
without strength am I.
- 5 My home is among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
whom you remember no more
cut off as they are from your hand.

- 6 In the deepest pit you have put me,
 in shadows deep and dark.
- 7 Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
 waves of your anger roll over me. *Selah*
- 8 You have put my friends far from me,
 you have made them shun me.
I am shut in, and cannot escape,
 my eyes are wasted with sorrow.
- 9 I call on you, LORD, every day,
 spreading my hands out to you.
- 10 For the dead can you work wonders?
 Can the shades rise again to praise you? *Selah*
- 11 Can your kindness be told in the grave,
 your faithfulness in the tomb?
- 12 Can your wonders be known in the darkness,
 or your help in the land of forgetfulness?
- 13 I cry for help to you,
 in the morning my prayer comes before you.
- 14 Why, O LORD, do you spurn me,
 and hide your face from me?
- 15 From my youth I am wretched and dying,
 I am numbed by the terrors I bear.
- 16 The fires of your wrath have passed over me,
 your terrors destroy me,
- 17 surging around me forever,
 hemming me in altogether.
- 18 Those who love me you put far from me;
 the dark is my only friend.

Psalm 89 – The Promise to David

- 89 I will sing evermore of the love of the LORD,
 proclaiming to all generations his faithfulness.
- 2 For your love you did promise to build up forever,
 your faithfulness firm as the heavens themselves.

- 3 'I have made with my chosen a covenant,
 and sworn to David my servant,
4 to establish his seed forever,
 and to build up his throne to all ages.' *Selah*
- 5 Then the holy assembly in heaven
 praised your marvellous faithfulness, LORD.
6 For who in the skies may compare with the LORD?
 Who is like the LORD among the gods?
- 7 A God to be feared in the holy assembly,
 awful and great above all who are round him.
8 O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you?
 Your strength and faithfulness, LORD, surround you.
- 9 You are the LORD of the raging sea:
 when its waves surge, it is you who still them.
10 It was you who did pierce and crush Rahab in pieces,
 and scatter your foes by your mighty arm.
- 11 Yours are the heavens, yours also the earth,
 the world and its fulness, it's you who did found them.
12 The north and the south, it's you have created them;
 Tabor and Hermon shout praise to your name.
- 13 You have an arm with the might of a hero;
 strong is your hand, high uplifted your right hand.
14 Justice and right are the base of your throne,
 kindness and faithfulness ever attend you.
- 15 Happy the people who know the glad shout,
 who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face.
16 They exult in your name all the day,
 and your righteousness they extol.
- 17 For you are our strength and our pride.
 Your favour will lift us to honour.
18 For the holy LORD of Israel
 keeps our defender and king.
- 19 In a vision of old you did speak
 in this way to the one whom you loved:

'A crown I have set on the hero
I chose to be over the people

20 'I found my servant David,
and anointed with holy oil.

21 My hand will be with him forever,
my arm will give him strength.

22 'No enemy will dare to assail him,
nor the wicked to oppress him;
but his foes I will shatter before him,
I will strike down those who hate him.

24 'My loyal love shall attend him,
and I will lift him to honour.

25 I will set his hand on the sea,
and his right hand on the rivers.

26 'As for him, he will call me "My father,
my God, and my rock of salvation."

27 And I will make him my first-born,
highest of kings on the earth.

28 'My love will I keep for him ever,
my covenant with him shall stand fast.

29 His line will I make everlasting,
and his throne as the days of the heavens.

30 'If his children forsake my law,
and walk not as I have ordained;

31 if they profane my statutes,
and do not keep my commandments;

32 'I will punish their sin with the rod,
their iniquity with scourges.

33 But my love will I not take from him,
nor will I belie my faithfulness.

34 'I will not profane my covenant
by changing the word that has passed my lips.

35 Once have I solemnly sworn
and I would not lie to David,

- 36 'that his line should endure forever,
 and his throne as the sun before me,
37 firm as the moon which for ever
 and ever is fixed in the sky.' *Selah*
- 38 But you have cast off in contempt,
 and been furious with your anointed.
39 You have spurned the covenant with your servant,
 and his sacred crown dashed to the ground.
- 40 You have broken down all his walls,
 and laid his bulwarks in ruins.
41 All who pass on their way despoil him,
 the scorn of his neighbours is he now.
- 42 You have given his foes the victory,
 and made all his enemies glad.
43 You have turned back his sword from the foe,
 you did not lift him up in the battle.
- 44 The sceptre you took from his hand,
 and his throne you did hurl to the ground.
45 You have shortened the days of his youth,
 and covered him with shame. *Selah*
- 46 How long, LORD will you hide you forever?
 How long are the fires of your wrath to burn?
47 Remember, LORD, the shortness of life
 how fleeting you made all people.
- 48 Who can live without seeing death?
 Who can rescue their life from the clutch of Sheol? *Selah*
49 Where, LORD, is your kindness of old,
 which you in your faithfulness swore to David?
- 50 Remember, O LORD, how your servants are mocked,
 how I bear in my heart the scorn of all nations
51 The scorn which your enemies hurl, O LORD,
 which they hurl at the footsteps of your anointed.
- 52 *Blest be the LORD, for ever and ever.*
 Amen and Amen.

Book Four

Psalm 90 – Hymn of Eternity

- 90 LORD, you have been a home to us
 one generation after another.
- 2 Before the mountains were born,
 or the earth and the world were brought forth,
from everlasting to everlasting
 you are God.
- 3 You bring us back to the dust,
 you summon mortals to return.
- 4 For you see a thousand years
 as the passing of yesterday,
as a watch in the night.
- 5 Your floods sweep them away;
they are like a dream,
 or like grass which sprouts in the morning,
- 6 which blossoms and sprouts in the morning,
 but by evening is cut and withered.
- 7 For your anger consumes us,
 the heat of your wrath confounds us.
- 8 Our sins you have set before you,
 our secrets in the light of your face.
- 9 For through your wrath our days are declining,
 we bring our years to an end as a sigh.
- 10 The span of our life is seventy years,
 or, if we are strong, maybe eighty;
yet is their breadth but empty toil,
 for swiftly they go, and we fly away.
- 11 Who lays to heart the power of your anger?
 Or who stands in reverent awe of your wrath?
- 12 O teach us to count our days

so our minds may learn wisdom.

- 13 Return, O LORD; why so long?
 Relent on your servants.
14 Grant us your love to the full in the morning,
 that all our days we may shout for joy.
15 Make us glad for the days you have humbled us,
 for the evil years we have seen.
16 Let your servants see you in action,
 show your majesty to their children.
17 Let the grace of the LORD our God be upon us,
 uphold what our hands are striving to do.

Psalm 91 – In the Shelter of the Most High

- 91 You whose home is the shelter of God Most High,
 whose abode is the shadow of God Almighty,
2 can say to the LORD, 'My refuge, my fortress,
 my God, in whom I trust.'
- 3 For he saves you from fowler's snare,
 from deadly plague,
4 he shelters you with his pinions,
 and under his wings you can hide.

His truth will be a shield and buckler.
- 5 You need not fear the terror of night,
 nor the arrow that flies by day,
6 nor the plague that stalks in darkness,
 nor the pestilence raging at noon.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
 ten thousand at your right hand:
but it will not draw near to you.
- 8 You will only look on with your eyes,
 and see how the wicked are punished.
9 You have made the LORD your refuge,
 you have made the Most High your defence.

- 10 You will never be met by misfortune,
no plague will come near your tent,
11 for he orders his angels to guard you,
wherever you go.
- 12 They will carry you with their hands,
so you don't hurt your foot on a stone.
13 You will trample down lions and snakes,
tread on young lions and cobras.
- 14 'Because of their love for me, I will deliver them,
I will protect those who trust my name.
15 I will answer their cry and be with them in trouble,
bringing them forth into safety and honour.
16 I will give them a life of many days,
I will show them my salvation.'

Psalm 92 – The Ways of God

- 92 It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praise to your name, O Most High,
2 to declare your love in the morning,
and your faithfulness in the night,
3 with voice and a ten-stringed harp,
with music that throbs on the lyre.
4 For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD,
at the work of your hands I will ring out my joy.
- 5 How great are your works, O LORD;
how deep are your thoughts!
6 The insensitive cannot know,
nor can a fool understand,
7 that, though the wicked flourish like grass,
and evil-doers all blossom,
they will perish forever.
- 8 But you are exalted forever.
9 For see! Your enemies, LORD
For see! Your enemies perish,
all evil-doers are scattered.

- 10 But you lift me to honour,
and anoint me afresh with oil.
- 11 My eyes will feast on my foes,
and my ears will hear of the doom of the wicked.
- 12 The righteous will sprout like the palm,
will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 13 In the house of the LORD are they planted,
in the courts of our God they will sprout.
- 14 They will still bear fruit in old age,
all sappy and fresh will they be
- 15 So they proclaim the LORD to be just,
my rock, in whom is no wrong.

Psalm 93 – The Lord, King of all the World

- 93 The LORD has taken his seat on the throne,
clothed with majesty, armed with might.
Now the world stands firm, to be shaken no more,
2 firm stands your throne from all eternity.
You are from everlasting.
- 3 The floods, O LORD, have lifted,
the floods have lifted their voice,
the floods lift up their roar.
- 4 But more grand than the great roaring waters,
more grand than the ocean waves,
grand on the height stands the LORD.
- 5 What you have ordained is most sure;
most sure shall your house stand inviolate,
O LORD, for ever and ever.

Psalm 94 – A Prayer for Vengeance on the Cruel

- 94 LORD , God of vengeance,
God of vengeance, shine forth.
- 2 Rise up, judge of the earth,

pay back the proud what they deserve.

- 3 LORD , how long shall the wicked,
 how long shall the wicked exult,
4 with their blustering arrogant words,
 their braggart and wicked speech,
5 crushing your people, LORD,
 and afflicting your heritage,
6 murdering widows and strangers,
 slaying the fatherless?
7 They think that the LORD does not see,
 nor the God of Jacob regard it.

8 Take heed, you dullest of people;
 when will you be wise, you fools?
9 Is he deaf, who shaped the ear?
 Is he blind, who fashioned the eye?
10 Can he who trains nations not punish them
 he who teaches knowledge to people?
11 The LORD knows the thoughts of people,
 that only a breath are they.

12 Happy are those whom you chasten,
 and teach out of your law,
13 keeping them calm in the day of misfortune,
 till a pit be dug for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not leave his people,
 he will not forsake his inheritance.
15 For the righteous shall come to their rights,
 and all true-hearted people shall follow them.

16 Who will rise up for me against those who do evil?
 Who will stand up for me against workers of wrong?
17 Were it not for the help of the LORD,
 I would soon have gone to the silent grave.
18 When I thought that my foot was slipping,
 your kindness, LORD, held me up.
19 When with cares my heart was crowded,
 your comforts make me glad.
20 Can corrupt justice be your ally,

- framing mischief by statute?
21 They assail the life of the righteous,
and innocent blood condemn.
22 But the LORD is my sure retreat,
my God is the rock of my refuge.
23 He will bring back their sin upon them,
for their wickedness he will destroy them;
the LORD our God will destroy them.

*Psalm 95 – For a Festival. A Hymn
of Praise and a Solemn Warning*

- 95 Come! Let us ring out our joy to the LORD,
let us merrily shout to our rock of salvation.
2 Before his face let us come with thanks,
with songs of praise let us shout to him.
3 For the LORD is a great God,
king above all gods.
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,
the heights of the mountains are his.
5 The sea is his, for he made it:
the dry land was formed by his hands.
6 Come! Let us worship and bow
on our knees to the LORD our creator.
7 For he is our God; and we
are the people he tends, the sheep in his care.
If only you would heed his voice today:
8 'Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah,
or at Massah, that day in the desert,
9 when your ancestors tempted and tried me,
though they had seen my deeds.
10 'For forty years I was filled with loathing
for that generation, so I said:
"A people with wandering hearts are they,
and ignorant of my ways."
11 So I solemnly swore to them in my anger,

that never would they enter my place of rest.'

Psalm 96 – The Lord's Rule

- 96 Sing to the LORD a new song,
 sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name,
 from day to day herald his victory.
- 3 Tell his glory among the nations,
 his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and worthy all praise;
 held in awe, above all gods:
- 5 for all the gods of the nations are idols,
 but the LORD created the heavens.
- 6 Before him are splendour and majesty,
 beauty and strength in his holy place.
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, you tribes of the nations,
 ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory he manifests:
 bring you an offering, enter his courts.
- 9 Bow to the LORD in holy array:
 tremble before him, all the earth.
- 10 Say to the nations, 'The LORD is king.'
 The world stands firm to be shaken no more.
 He will judge the peoples with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice,
 let the sea and its fulness thunder.
- 12 Let the field, and all that is in it, exult;
 let the trees of the forest ring out their joy
- 13 before the LORD: for he comes,
 he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with justice
 and the nations with faithfulness.

Psalm 97 – The Lord’s Judgment

- 97 The LORD is king, let the earth rejoice:
 let her many isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him,
 justice and right are the base of his throne.
- 3 Fire goes before him,
 and blazes around his steps,
- 4 his lightnings illumine the world:
 the earth quakes at the sight.
- 5 Mountains melt like wax
 before the LORD of all the earth.
- 6 The heavens proclaim his justice,
 all nations behold his glory.
- 7 Shamed are all image-worshippers,
 who make a boast of their idols.
 All the gods bow before him.
- 8 Zion is glad at the tidings,
 the towns of Judah rejoice
 because of your judgments, LORD.
- 9 For you are most high over all the earth,
 greatly exalted above all gods.
- 10 The LORD loves those who hate evil,
 he guards the lives of the faithful:
 from the hand of the wicked he saves them.
- 11 Light arises for the righteous,
 and joy for the upright in heart.
- 12 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous:
 give thanks to his holy name.

Psalm 98 – A Song of Praise to the Lord

- 98 Sing a new song to the LORD,
 for he has done wonders;
his right hand and holy arm
 have won him the victory.
- 2 The LORD has made his victory known,

and revealed to the eyes of the nations his righteousness.

- 3 Mindful he was of his kindness to Jacob,
 faithful he was to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
 the victory of our God.

- 4 Shout, all the earth, to the LORD:
 break into cries and music.

- 5 Play on the lyre to the LORD,
 on the lyre and with loud melody.

- 6 With trumpet and sound of horn,
 shout before the king.

- 7 Let the sea and its fulness roar,
 the world and the dwellers upon it.

- 8 Let the streams clap their hands,
 let the hills shout for gladness together
before the LORD for he comes,
 he comes to judge the earth.

- He will judge the world with justice
 and the nations with equity.

Psalm 99 – The Lord's Just and Holy Rule

- 99 The LORD is king; let the nations tremble:
 he is throned upon cherubs; let earth quake.

- 2 The LORD is great in Zion,
 he is high over all the nations.

- 3 Let them praise your great and terrible name.
 Holy is he.

- 4 You are a king who loves justice,
 equity you have established:
 justice and right you have wrought for Jacob.

- 5 Exalt the LORD our God,
 bow down at his footstool.
 Holy is he.

- 6 Among his priests were Moses and Aaron,
 Samuel among those who called on his name.

They called to the LORD, and he gave them answer.
7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud,
 they kept his commands and the statute he gave them.
8 LORD our God, you gave them answer.
A God of forgiveness were you to them,
 who suffered their deeds to go unpunished.
9 Exalt the LORD our God;
 bow down at his holy mountain.
 For holy is the Lord our God.

Psalm 100 – A Call to Worship

100 Shout, all the earth, to the LORD.
2 Serve the Lord with gladness,
 approach him with ringing cries.
3 Be sure that the Lord alone is God.
 It is he who has made us, and his we are
 his people, the sheep of his pasture.
4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
 his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.
5 For the Lord is good, his love is forever,
 and to all ages endures his faithfulness.

Psalm 101 – A Model King

101 If kindness and justice I sing,
 making melody to you, LORD.

2 I would look to the way that is blameless,
 and make it my own.

Within my own house I would walk
 with an innocent heart.

3 I would never direct my eyes
 to a thing that is base.

The impulse to stray I abhor

- it shall not cling to me.
- 4 Far from me be perverseness of heart,
or kinship with evil.
- 5 Who slanders their neighbour in secret,
I bring them to silence:
haughty looks and proud hearts
I will not abide.
- 6 I will favour the true in the land,
they shall live in my court.
Those who walk in a way that is blameless
will be my attendant.
- 7 No one will live in my house
who practises guile.
No one that speaks a lie
will abide in my presence.
- 8 Morn by morn I will wholly wipe out
all the bad in the land,
and cut off from the LORD's own city
all workers of evil.

Psalm 102 – A Prayer for Pity and for the Restoration of Zion

- 102** Hear my prayer, O LORD;
let my cry for help come to you.
- 2 Hide not your face from me
in the day of my distress.
Incline your ear to me:
when I call, answer me speedily.
- 3 For my days pass away like smoke:
my bones are burned through as with fire.
- 4 My heart is scorched, withered like grass;
I forgot to eat my bread.
- 5 By reason of my loud groaning,
my flesh clings to my bones.

- 6 Like a desert-owl of the wilderness,
 like an owl among ruins am I.
- 7 I make my sleepless lament
 like a bird on the house-top alone.
- 8 All the day wild foes revile me,
 using my name for a curse.
- 9 For ashes have been my bread,
 and tears have been mixed with my cup.
- 10 Because of your passionate anger,
 you did raise me, then hurl me to the ground.
- 11 My days come to an end, shadows lengthen,
 I wither like grass.
- 12 But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever,
 your fame endures to all generations.
- 13 You will arise and have pity on Zion;
 it's time to be gracious; her hour has come.
- 14 For even her stones are dear to your servants,
 even the dust of her ruins they look on with love.
- 15 Then the nations will revere the name of the LORD
 and all the kings of the earth his glory,
- 16 when the LORD shall have built up Zion,
 and revealed himself in his glory,
- 17 in response to the prayer of the destitute,
 whose prayer he will not despise.
- 18 Let this be recorded for ages to come,
 that the LORD may be praised by a people yet unborn.
- 19 For he shall look down from his holy height,
 from the heavens the LORD will gaze on the earth,
- 20 to hear the groans of the prisoner,
 to free those who are doomed to die;
- 21 that people may recount the LORD's fame in Zion,
 and the praise of him in Jerusalem,
- 22 when the nations are gathered together,
 and the kingdoms, to worship the LORD.
- 23 He has broken my strength on the way,
 he has shortened my days.

- 24 I will say, 'My God, take me not hence
in the midst of my days.

25 'Your years endure age after age.
Of old you have founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

26 They shall perish; but you do stand.
They shall all wax old like a garment,
and change as a robe you will change them.

27 But you are the same, your years are endless.
28 The children of your servants abide,
evermore shall their seed be before you.'

Psalm 103 – Bless the Lord, O my Soul

- 103 O my soul, bless the LORD;
and all that is in me, his holy name.
2 O my soul, bless the LORD;
and forget not one of his benefits.
3 He pardons all your sins,
he heals all your diseases.
4 He ransoms your life from the pit,
he crowns you with kindness and pity.
5 He gives you your heart's desire,
renewing your youth like the eagle's.

6 The LORD executes justice –
and right for all who are wronged.
7 He revealed his ways to Moses,
his acts to the children of Israel.
8 Full of pity and grace is the LORD,
patient, and rich in kindness:
9 he will not always chide,
nor cherish his anger forever.
10 Not after our sins has he dealt with us,
nor requited us after our wickedness.

11 For high as the heavens o'er the earth
is his love over those who fear him.

- 12 Far as is east from the west
has he put our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father pities his children,
so the Lord pities those who fear him;
- 14 for well he knows our frame,
he remembers that we are dust.
- 15 A person's days are as grass;
blossoms like a flower of the meadow.
- 16 At the breath of the wind it is gone,
and the place thereof knows it no more.
- 17 But the love of the Lord is eternal,
and his kindness to children's children,
- 18 to those who keep his covenant
and mindfully do his behests.
- 19 The Lord has set his throne in the heavens;
the whole world is under his sway.
- 20 Bless the Lord, you angels of his,
mighty heroes performing his word.
- 21 Bless the Lord, all you his hosts,
you servants who do his will.
- 22 Bless the Lord, all you his works,
far as his sway extends.
O my soul, bless the Lord.

Psalm 104 – The Hymn of Creation

- 104** Bless the Lord, O my soul.
O Lord my God, you are very great,
clad in awful splendour,
covered with robe of light.
- 2 You stretch out the heavens like the cloth of a tent.
3 He lays the beams of his chambers on water.
He takes dark clouds for his chariot,
and rides on the wings of the wind.
- 4 He takes the winds for his messengers,
the fire and the flame for his servants.
- 5 He founded the earth upon pillars,

- to sustain it unshaken forever.
- 6 With the garment of ocean he covered it,
 waters towered over the mountains.
- 7 But at your rebuke they fled,
 scared by the roar of your thunder,
- 8 mountains rose, valleys sank down
 to the place appointed for them.
- 9 They dared not pass the bounds set for them,
 or cover the earth any more.
- 10 He sent brooks into the valleys,
 they meander between the mountains.
- 11 The wild beasts all drink from them,
 and the wild asses quench their thirst.
- 12 The birds have their home by the banks,
 and sing in the branches.
- 13 From his chambers above he gives drink to the mountains,
 and satisfies earth with the vials of heaven.
- 14 He makes grass grow for the cattle,
 and herbs for people.
He brings bread out of the earth;
15 wine, to gladden hearts;
oil, to make faces shine;
 bread, to strengthen hearts.
- 16 The trees of the LORD drink their fill
 the cedars he planted on Lebanon,
17 where the little birds build their nest,
 and the stork whose home is the cypress.
- 18 The high hills are for the wild goats,
 and the rocks are for coney's to hide in.
- 19 He created the moon to mark seasons,
 and told the sun when to set.
- 20 You make it dark: night comes,
 when all the wild beasts creep out.
- 21 Young lions that roar for their prey,
 seeking their meat from God.
- 22 At sunrise they slink away,
 and lie down in their dens.
- 23 Then people go forth to their work,

and toil till evening.

- 24 How many, O LORD, are your works,
 all of them made in wisdom!
 The earth is filled with your creatures.
- 25 And there is the great broad sea,
 where are countless things in motion,
 living creatures, both great and small.
- 26 There go the ships,
 and the Leviathan you made to play there.
- 27 They all look in hope to you,
 to give them their food in due season.
- 28 And you give with open hand;
 they gather and eat to their heart's desire.
- 29 When you hide your face, they are terrified;
 when you take their breath away,
 they die and go back to their dust.
- 30 But a breath from your lips creates them,
 and renews the face of the earth.
- 31 May the glory of the LORD be forever,
 may the LORD rejoice in his works.
- 32 A glance of his makes the earth tremble,
 a touch of his makes the hills smoke.
- 33 I will sing to the LORD while I live,
 I will play to my God while I am.
- 34 May my musing be sweet to him,
 for I rejoice in the LORD.
- 35 But may sinners be swept from the earth,
 and the wicked vanish forever.
 O my soul, bless the LORD.
 Hallelujah.

Psalm 105 – The Inspiration of the Past

- 105 Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name:
 make known his deeds among the nations.
- 2 Sing to him, make music to him,

tell of all his wondrous works.
3 Make your boast in his holy name,
 be glad at heart, you who seek the LORD.
4 Seek after the LORD and his strength,
 seek his face evermore.
5 Remember the wonders he did,
 his portents, the judgments he uttered,
6 you who are offspring of Abraham, his servant,
 the children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
7 He is the LORD our God:
 in all the earth are his judgments.
8 He remembers forever his covenant,
 his promise for a thousand generations
9 The covenant he made with Abraham,
 the oath he swore to Isaac,
10 and confirmed as a statute to Jacob,
 a pact everlasting to Israel
11 to give them the land of Canaan
 as the lot which they should inherit.
12 And when they were very few,
 few and but pilgrims therein,
13 wandering from nation to nation,
 journeying from people to people,
14 he allowed no one to oppress them,
 even punishing kings for their sakes.
15 He forbade them to touch his anointed,
 or do any hurt to his prophets.
16 When he called down famine on the land,
 and cut off the bread which sustained them,
17 he sent before them a man,
 Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
18 His feet were galled with fetters,
 he was laid in chains of iron,
19 till the time that his word came to pass,
 the word of the LORD that had tried him.
20 The king sent and freed him,
 the ruler of nations released him.

- 21 He made him lord of his household,
and ruler of all his possessions,
22 to admonish his princes at will
and instruct his elders in wisdom.
- 23 Thus Israel came into Egypt,
Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
24 His people he made very fruitful,
and mightier than their foes.
25 He inspired them to hate his people,
and to deal with his servants craftily.
- 26 He sent his servant Moses,
and Aaron whom he had chosen,
27 portents he wrought in Egypt,
and signs in the land of Ham.
28 Darkness he sent, and it fell:
yet they gave no heed to his word.
- 29 He turned their waters into blood,
thus causing their fish to die.
30 Their land was alive with frogs,
swarming even in the royal chambers.
31 At his command came flies,
and lice in all their borders.
32 He gave them hail for rain
and fire that flashed through the land,
33 smiting their vines and figs,
breaking the trees of their border.
- 34 At his command came locusts,
young locusts beyond all counting,
35 which ate every herb in the land,
ate up, too, the fruit of their ground.
36 He struck down in their land all the first-born,
the firstlings of all their strength
37 Then forth he led Israel with silver and gold,
and among his tribes no one was weary.
- 38 Egypt was glad when they left,
for terror had fallen upon them.

- 39 He spread out a cloud to screen them,
and fire to give light in the night.
40 He sent quails at their entreaty,
and heavenly bread in abundance.
41 He opened the rock; waters gushed:
in the desert they ran like a river.
42 For he remembered his holy promise
to Abraham his servant.
43 So he led out his people with joy,
his elect with a ringing cry.
44 And he gave them the lands of the nations,
the fruit of their toil for possession,
45 that so they might keep his statutes,
and be of his laws observant.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 106 – The Nation's Sin against the Lord

- 106 Hallelujah!
Give thanks to the LORD for his goodness,
for his kindness endures forever.
2 Who can describe his heroic deeds,
or publish all his praise?
3 Happy they who act justly,
and do righteousness evermore.
4 Remember me, LORD, as you remember your people,
and visit me with your gracious help.
5 May I see the good fortune of your elect,
may I share in the joy of your nation,
and in the pride of your heritage.
6 We, like our fathers, have sinned,
we have done perversely and wickedly
7 In the land of Egypt our fathers,
all heedless of your wonders,
and unmindful of your great kindness,
at the Red Sea defied the Most High.

- 8 But true to his name he saved them,
 in order to show his might.
- 9 He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried;
 they marched through the depths as through desert,
- 10 saved from the hand of the hostile,
 redeemed from the hand of the foe.
- 11 The waters covered their enemies:
 not one of them was left.
- 12 So then they believed in his words,
 and began to sing his praise.
- 13 But soon they forgot his deeds:
 they did not wait for his counsel.
- 14 Their greed was ravenous in the desert;
 they put God to the test in the wilderness.
- 15 He gave them the thing they had asked for,
 but sent wasting disease among them.
- 16 The camp grew jealous of Moses
 and of Aaron, holy one of the LORD.
- 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
 and covered Abiram's company.
- 18 Fire broke out on their company,
 flame kindled upon the wicked.
- 19 They made a calf in Horeb,
 and bowed to the molten image.
- 20 They exchanged their glorious God
 for the image of ox that eats grass.
- 21 They forgot the God who had saved them
 by mighty deeds in Egypt
- 22 Wonders in the land of Ham,
 terrors by the Red Sea.
- 23 So he vowed, and would have destroyed them,
 but for Moses his elect,
 who stepped into the breach before him,
 to divert his deadly wrath.
- 24 They spurned the delightsome land,
 they refused to believe in his word.
- 25 They grumbled in their tents,

would not listen to the voice of the LORD.
26 So he swore with uplifted hand
to lay them low in the wilderness;
27 to disperse their seed among heathen,
to scatter them over the world.

28 Then they joined them to Baal of Peor,
and ate what was offered the dead.
29 They provoked him to wrath by their deeds,
and plague broke out among them.
30 Then Phinehas stood between,
and so the plague was stayed;
31 and it was counted to him for righteousness
unto all generations forever.

32 They angered him at the waters of Meribah,
through them it went ill with Moses.
33 They rebelled against his spirit,
and he uttered speech that was rash.

34 They did not destroy the nations,
as the LORD had commanded them;
35 but they mingled with the heathen,
and learned to do as they did.
36 Their idol gods they worshipped,
and they were ensnared by them.
37 They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons.
38 They poured out innocent blood
the blood of their sons and daughters
whom they offered to Canaan's idols,
and the land was polluted with blood.
39 They became unclean by their works,
and adulterous in their deeds.
40 Then the LORD's fury was on his people,
filled with horror at his inheritance.
41 He delivered them to the heathen,
to the sway of those who hated them.
42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and subdued them under their hand.
43 Many a time he saved them,

- but they rebelled at his counsel,
and were brought low by their wrongdoing.
- 44 Yet he looked upon their distress,
when he heard their cry.
- 45 He remembered his covenant,
and, in his great kindness, relented.
- 46 He caused them to be pitied
by all who carried them captive.
- 47 Save us, O LORD our God,
and gather us out of the nations,
to give thanks to your holy name,
and to make our boast of your praise.
- 48 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
And let all the people say 'Amen.'
Praise the LORD.*

*Book Five**Psalm 107 – The Song of the Redeemed*

- 107** GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD for his goodness
for his kindness endures forever.
- 2 Let this be the song of the ransomed,
whom the LORD has redeemed from distress,
- 3 gathering them from all lands,
east, west, north, and south.
- 4 In the wastes of the desert some wandered,
finding no way to a city inhabited.
- 5 Full of hunger and thirst,
their spirit failed.
- 6 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distresses,
- 7 guiding them straight on the way,
till they reached an inhabited city.

- 8 Let them thank the LORD for his kindness,
for his wonderful deeds for people;
- 9 for the thirsty he satisfies,
and the hungry he fills with good things.
- 10 Some sat in darkness and gloom
prisoners in irons and misery,
- 11 for rebelling against God's word,
and spurning the Most High's counsel.
- 12 Their heart was bowed with toil;
there was no one to help when they stumbled.
- 13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distresses.
- 14 Out of darkness and gloom he brought them,
and burst their chains.
- 15 Let them praise the LORD for his kindness,
for his wonderful deeds for people.
- 16 For he shattered the gates of bronze,
and broke bars of iron.
- 17 Some were sick from their wicked ways,
and suffering because of their sins.
- 18 All manner of food they hated;
they had come to the gates of death.
- 19 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distresses.
- 20 He sent his word and healed them,
and delivered their life from the pit.
- 21 Let them praise the LORD for his kindness,
for his wonderful deeds for people.
- 22 Let them offer to him thankofferings,
and with joy tell what things he has done.
- 23 Some crossed the sea in ships,
doing business in great waters.
- 24 They have seen what the LORD can do,
and his wonderful deeds on the deep.
- 25 At his command rose a tempest,
which lifted the waves on high.
- 26 Up to heaven they went, down to the depths;
their courage failed them.

- 27 They staggered and reeled like drunkards;
 all their skills useless.
- 28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
 and he saved them from their distresses.
- 29 He stilled the storm to a whisper,
 and the waves of the sea were hushed.
- 30 They were glad, because it was quiet;
 they were led to the haven they longed for.
- 31 Let them praise the LORD, for his kindness,
 for his wonderful deeds for people.
- 32 Where the people assemble, extol him,
 and praise him in council of elders.
- 33 He turns streams into a wilderness,
 springs of water into thirsty land,
- 34 fruitful land into a salt waste,
 because of the sin of the people.
- 35 A desert he makes pools of water,
 a land of drought into springs of water.
- 36 He settles the hungry therein,
 they establish a city to live in.
- 37 They sow fields and plant vineyards,
 which furnish a fruitful yield.
- 38 By his blessing they multiply greatly,
 and he lets not their cattle decrease.
- 39 Yet when they are bowed and diminished
 by oppression, misfortune, or sorrow,
- 40 he pours contempt upon princes,
 and on trackless wastes leads them astray
- 41 He lifts the poor out of misery,
 and makes families fruitful as flocks.
- 42 At this sight shall the upright be glad,
 and all wicked mouths shall be stopped.
- 43 Let those who are wise observe this,
 and consider the love of the LORD

Psalm 108 – A Prayer for Victory

- 108 My heart is steadfast, O God,

my heart is steadfast.
I would sing, I would make music;
awake, my soul.
2 Awake, harp and lyre;
I would wake the dawn.
3 I would praise you among the peoples, O LORD;
make music among the nations to you.
4 For great to heaven is your love,
and your faithfulness to the clouds.
5 Be exalted, O God, o'er the heavens,
and your glory o'er all the earth.
6 So those you love may be rescued,
save by your right hand and answer us.
7 God did solemnly swear:
‘As victor will I divide Shechem,
portion out the valley of Succoth.
8 Mine is Gilead, mine is Manasseh,
Ephraim is my helmet,
Judah my sceptre of rule,
9 Moab the pot that I wash in,
on Edom I hurl my sandal,
I shout o'er Philistia in triumph.’
10 O to be brought to the fortified city!
O to be led into Edom!
11 Have you not spurned us, O God?
You do not march forth with our armies.
12 Grant us help from the foe,
for human help is worthless.
13 With God we shall yet do bravely,
he himself will tread down our foes.

Psalm 109 – A Prayer for the Lord’s Help

109 O God whom I praise, keep not silence;
2 for their wicked mouths they have opened against me,
they speak to me with tongues that are false,

- 3 they beset me with words of hatred,
 and fight without cause against me.
- 4 My love they requite with hostility,
 while for them I lift up my prayer.
- 5 Evil for good they reward me,
 and hatred for my love.
- 6 ‘Set over him one who is godless,’ they say,
 ‘an opponent at his right hand.
- 7 From his trial let him come forth guilty,
 may his prayer be counted as sin.
- 8 Grant that his days may be few,
 that his office be seized by another.
- 9 Grant that his children be fatherless,
 and that his wife be a widow.
- 10 Up and down may his children go begging,
 expelled from their desolate home.
- 11 May all that he owns be seized by the creditor
 may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil.
- 12 ‘May none extend to him kindness,
 or pity his fatherless children.
- 13 His descendants be doomed to destruction!
 Blotted out be his name in one generation!
- 14 May his father’s guilt be remembered,
 and his mother’s sin not blotted out:
- 15 on record always before the LORD,
 and his memory root from the earth;
- 16 for he gave no thought to show kindness,
 but pursued the poor and the needy,
 drove the downhearted to death.
- 17 ‘May the curses he loved light upon him,
 may the blessings he loathed be afar.
- 18 Like a garment he clothed him with curses;
 may they pierce to his inwards like water,
 and cling to his bones like oil.
- 19 Let them be like the robe he wraps round him,
 like the belt he wears every day.’
- 20 Be this the reward of my adversaries,
 of those who speak evil against me.

- 21 But you, LORD my God,
 be true to your name,
 deal kindly with me;
 in your gracious kindness
 save me.
- 22 For I am poor and needy,
 and my heart is wounded within me.
- 23 I am gone like a lengthening shadow,
 I am shaken off like a locust.
- 24 My knees totter from fasting,
 my flesh is shrivelled and spare.
- 25 They heap insults upon me:
 when they see me, they shake their head.
- 26 Help me, O LORD my God,
 and save me in your kindness.
- 27 Teach them that this is your hand,
 and your own doing, O LORD.
- 28 Let them curse, if only you bless.
 Put my assailants to shame,
 and make your servant glad.
- 29 My opponents be clothed with dishonour,
 and wrapped in a robe of shame.
- 30 I give thanks to you, LORD, with loud voice,
 I give praise in the midst of the throng;
31 for he stands by the poor, at his right hand,
 to save them from those who condemn them.

Psalm 110 – A Promise of Victory to the King

- 110 This said the LORD concerning my lord,
 ‘Sit at my right hand,
 till I set your foot on the neck of your foes.’
- 2 On Zion the LORD is wielding
 your sceptre of might, and charges you
 to rule over the foes that surround you.
- 3 The day that you march to battle

your people will follow you gladly
young warriors in holy array,
like dew-drops, born of the morning.

- 4 The LORD has sworn and will not repent,
‘As for you, you are priest for ever
as Melchizedek was.’
- 5 By your side will the LORD shatter kings
on the day of his wrath.
- 6 He will execute judgment
filling the valleys with dead,
the broad fields with shattered heads.
- 7 He will drink of the brook by the way,
and march onward with uplifted head.

Psalm 111 – In Praise of the Divine Goodness

111 Hallelujah.

- I will thank the LORD with all my heart,
in the assembled congregation of his people.
- 2 Great are the things that the LORD has done,
worthy of study by those who love them.
- 3 Majestic and glorious is his work,
and his righteousness abides forever.
- 4 For his marvellous deeds he has won renown;
the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.
- 5 Food he gives to those who fear him,
always he remembers his covenant.
- 6 His mighty works he has shown to his people,
in giving to them the nations for heritage.
- 7 All that he does is faithful and right,
all his behests are firm and sure.
- 8 They are established for ever and ever,
executed with truth and uprightness.
- 9 To his people he sent redemption,
he has appointed his covenant forever.
- His name is holy and awe-inspiring.
- 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom

those who keep it are wise indeed.
His praise abides for ever and ever.

Psalm 112 – The Blessings of Godliness

- 112** Hallelujah. Happy are those who fear the LORD,
 and greatly delight in his commandments.
2 Mighty on earth shall be their seed;
 a blessing shall rest on the race of the upright.
3 Wealth and riches are in their houses,
 their prosperity stands forever.
4 To the upright arises light in the darkness;
 full of favour and pity and kindness are they.
5 It is well with those who show pity and lend,
 who support all their affairs upon justice.
6 For they will never be shaken;
 the just will be forever remembered.
7 They will not be afraid of evil tidings,
 with steady heart they trust the LORD.
8 Their heart is firm and unafraid:
 they know they will feast their eyes on their enemies.
9 With lavish hands they give to the poor,
 and their prosperity stands forever.
 They are lifted to heights of triumph and honour.
10 The sight of them fills the wicked with anger:
 grinding their teeth with despair.
 The hopes of the wicked will come to nothing.

Psalm 113 – The Lord loves the Humble

- 113** Hallelujah.
Praise the LORD, you his servants,
 praise the name of the LORD.
2 The name of the LORD be blessed
 from now and for evermore.
3 From sunrise to sunset
 is the name of the LORD to be praised.

4 High is the LORD above all nations,
 above the heavens is his glory.
5 Who is like the LORD our God,
 seated on high?
6 He bends down to look
 at the heavens and earth.
7 He raises the weak from the dust,
 he lifts the poor from the dunghill,
8 and sets them beside the princes,
 even the princes of his people.
9 He gives the childless woman a home,
 and makes her the happy mother of children.
 Hallelujah.

Psalm 114 – The Marvel of the Exodus

114 When Israel went out of Egypt,
 Jacob's house from a barbarous people,
2 God chose Judah for himself,
 Israel became his kingdom.

3 The sea saw it, and fled,
 Jordan river ran backwards.
4 Mountains skipped like rams,
 hills like the young of the flock.

5 Why, sea, do you flee?
 Jordan, why run backwards?
6 Mountains, why skip ram-like?
 Why, hills, like the young of the flock?

7 Earth, tremble before the LORD,
 at the presence of Jacob's God,
8 who turns rocks into pools of water,
 and flint into fountains of water.

Psalm 115 – Israel's Incomparable God

- 115 Not to us, LORD, not to us,
but to your name give glory,
for your kindness' and faithfulness' sake.
- 2 Why should the heathen say,
'Where is now their God?'
- 3 Our God he is in heaven;
whatever he wishes, he does.
- 4 Their idols are silver and gold,
made by human hands.
- 5 They have mouths, but cannot speak;
they have eyes, but cannot see.
- 6 They have ears, but cannot hear;
they have noses, but cannot smell.
- 7 They have hands, but cannot feel;
they have feet, but cannot walk:
no sound comes from their throats.
- 8 Their makers become like them,
so do all who trust in them.
- 9 O Israel, trust in the LORD:
he is their help and their shield.
- 10 House of Aaron, trust in the LORD:
he is their help and their shield.
- 11 You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD
he is their help and their shield.
- 12 The LORD, mindful of us, will bless us:
he will bless the house of Israel,
he will bless the house of Aaron.
- 13 He will bless those who fear the LORD,
the small and the great together.
- 14 May the LORD add to your numbers
to you and to your children.
- 15 Blessed be you of the LORD,
creator of heaven and earth.
- 16 The heavens are the heavens of the LORD,
but the earth has he given to people.

17 The dead cannot praise the LORD,
 nor those who go down into silence.
18 But we will bless the LORD
 from now and for evermore.
 Hallelujah.

Psalm 116 – Song of Thanksgiving for Deliverance

116 I love the LORD, for he hears
 my voice, my pleas for mercy.
2 For he has inclined his ear to me:
 I will call upon him as long as I live.

3 About me were snares of death,
 the anguish of Sheol was upon me:
 distress and sorrow were mine.
4 Then I called on the name of the LORD:
 ‘I beseech you, O LORD, deliver me.’

5 Gracious and just is the LORD,
 compassionate is our God.
6 The LORD preserves the simple;
 when I was drooping, he saved me.
7 Be at peace, my heart, once more,
 for the LORD has been good to you.

8 You have rescued me from death,
 my eyes from tears,
 my feet from stumbling.
9 Before the LORD I will walk
 in the land of the living.

10 I held fast my faith, though I said,
 ‘Ah me! I am sore afflicted,’
11 though in my alarm I said,
 ‘Everyone is a liar.’

12 What shall I render the LORD
 for all his bounty to me?
13 I will lift up the cup of salvation,

and call on the name of the LORD.

14 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.

15 Grave in the eyes of the LORD
is the death of his loyal and loved ones.

16 Ah, LORD! I am your servant,
your servant, child of your handmaid.
You have loosened my bonds.

17 I will offer to you a thank-offering,
and call on the name of the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people,
19 in the courts of the house of the LORD,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 117 – A Call to Praise

117 Praise the LORD, all you nations:
laud him, all you peoples.

2 For his mighty love is over us:
the LORD is faithful forever.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 118 – Thanksgiving for Victory

118 Give thanks to the LORD for his goodness,
his kindness endures forever.

2 Let the house of Israel now say:
his kindness endures forever.

3 Let the house of Aaron now say:
his kindness endures forever.

4 Let those who fear the LORD now say:
his kindness endures forever.

5 Out of straits I called on the LORD,

the LORD answered and gave me room.
 6 The LORD is mine; I am fearless.
 What can mere people do to me?
 7 The LORD is mine, as my help:
 I shall feast my eyes on my foes.
 8 It is better to hide in the LORD
 than to trust in mortals.
 9 It is better to hide in the LORD
 than to put any trust in princes.
 10 Everywhere heathen swarmed round me;
 in the name of the LORD I cut them down.
 11 They swarmed, swarmed around me;
 in the name of the LORD I cut them down,
 12 they swarmed around me like bees,
 they blazed like a fire of thorns:
 in the name of the LORD I cut them down.
 13 Sore they pushed me, to make me fall;
 but the LORD gave me his help.
 14 The LORD is my strength and my song,
 and he is become my salvation.
 15 Hark! In the tents of the righteous
 glad cries of victory are ringing.
 The hand of the LORD has wrought bravely,
 16 the hand of the LORD is exalted,
 the hand of the LORD has wrought bravely.
 17 I shall not die: nay, I shall live,
 to declare the works of the LORD.
 18 Though the LORD has chastened me sore,
 he has not given me over to death.

(The Procession arrives at the Temple)

19 'Open to me the gates of victory.
 I would enter therein and give thanks to the LORD.'

(The Welcome)

20 'This is the gate of the LORD:
 the righteous may enter therein,'

- 21 I thank you because you have heard me,
and are become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders despised
is become the head-stone of the corner.
- 23 This has been wrought by the LORD;
it is marvellous in our eyes.
- 24 This day is the LORD's own creation:
in it let us joy and be glad.
- 25 O LORD, save us, we pray,
O LORD, prosper, we pray.
- 26 Blessed the one who enters
in the name of the LORD.
From the house of the LORD we bless you.
- 27 The LORD is God,
he has given us light.
Wreathe the dance with boughs,
till they touch the horns of the altar.
- 28 You are my God, I will thank you;
O my God, I will exalt you.
- 29 Give thanks to the LORD for his goodness:
his kindness endures forever.

Psalm 119 – The Power and Comfort of the Word of God

- 119 Happy they whose life is blameless,
who walk by the law of the LORD.
- 2 Happy they who keep his charges,
and seek him with all their hearts;
- 3 who have done no wrong,
but walk in his ways.
- 4 You yourself have appointed your precepts
to be kept with diligence.
- 5 O to be steadily guided
in the keeping of your statutes!
- 6 Then unashamed shall I be,
when I look towards all your commandments.

- 7 I will thank you with heart unfeigned,
when I learn your righteous judgments.
- 8 I will observe your statutes:
O forsake me not utterly.
- 9 How can a young person keep their life pure?
By giving heed to your word.
- 10 With all my heart have I sought you,
let me not stray from your commandments.
- 11 In my heart have I treasured your word,
to keep from sinning against you.
- 12 Blessed are you, O LORD;
teach me your statutes.
- 13 With my lips have I rehearsed
all the judgments of your mouth.
- 14 I delight in the way of your charges,
more than in riches of all sorts.
- 15 I will muse upon your precepts,
and look to your paths.
- 16 In your statutes I delight,
I will not forget your word.
- 17 Grant that your servant may live,
and I will observe your word.
- 18 Open my eyes, that I see
wondrous things out of your law.
- 19 But a guest am I on the earth:
hide not your commandments from me.
- 20 My heart is crushed with longing
for your ordinances, at all times.
- 21 You rebuke the proud, the accursed,
who wander from your commandments.
- 22 Roll away from me scorn and contempt,
for I have observed your charges.
- 23 Though princes sit plotting against me,
your servant will muse on your statutes.
- 24 Your charges are my delight,
they are my counsellors.
- 25 I lie grovelling in the dust;
revive me, as you have promised.

- 26 I told of my ways, you made answer;
 teach me your statutes.
- 27 Grant me insight into your precepts,
 and I will muse on your wonders.
- 28 I am overcome with sorrow;
 raise me up, as you have promised.
- 29 Put the way of falsehood from me,
 and graciously grant me your law.
- 30 I have chosen the way of fidelity,
 your ordinances I long for.
- 31 I hold fast to your charges:
 O put me not, LORD, to shame.
- 32 I will run in the way of your commandments,
 for you give me room of heart.
- 33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
 and I will keep it to the end,
34 instruct me to keep your law,
 and I will observe it with all my heart.
- 35 Guide me in the path of your commandments,
 for therein do I delight.
- 36 Incline my heart to your charges,
 and not to greed of gain.
- 37 Turn away my eyes from vain sights,
 revive me by your word.
- 38 Confirm to your servant the promise
 which is given to those who fear you.
- 39 Remove the reproach which I dread,
 because your judgments are good.
- 40 Behold, I long for your precepts.
 Quicken me in your righteousness.
- 41 Visit me, LORD, with your love
 and salvation, as you have promised.
- 42 So shall I answer my slanderers,
 for my trust is in your word.
- 43 Snatch not from my mouth the word of truth,
 for in your judgments I hope.
- 44 I will keep your law continually,
 for ever and evermore.

- 45 So shall I walk in wide spaces,
 for I give my mind to your precepts.
- 46 I will speak of your charge before kings,
 and will not be ashamed thereof.
- 47 Your commandments are my delight,
 I love them exceedingly.
- 48 I will lift up my hands to your commandments,
 and muse upon your statutes.
- 49 Remember your word to your servant,
 on which you have made me to hope.
- 50 This is my comfort in trouble,
 that your word gives life to me.
- 51 The arrogant utterly scorn me,
 but I have not declined from your law.
- 52 When I think of your judgments of old,
 O LORD, I take to me comfort.
- 53 I am seized with glowing anger
 at the wicked who forsake your law.
- 54 Your statutes have been to me songs
 in the house of my pilgrimage.
- 55 I remember your name in the night,
 O LORD and observe your law.
- 56 My lot has been this,
 that I have kept your precepts.
- 57 My portion are you, O LORD:
 I have promised to keep your words.
- 58 I entreat you with all my heart;
 grant me your promised favour.
- 59 I have thought upon my ways,
 and turned my feet to your charges.
- 60 I hastened and tarried not
 to give heed to your commandments.
- 61 Though the godless have wound their cords round me,
 I have not forgotten your law.
- 62 At midnight I rise to praise you
 because of your righteous judgments.
- 63 With all those who fear you I company,
 aid with those who observe your precepts.

- 64 The earth, LORD, is full of your kindness;
 teach me your Statutes.
- 65 Well have you dealt with your servant,
 as you have promised, O LORD.
- 66 Teach me discretion and knowledge,
 for I have believed your commandments.
- 67 Till trouble came I was a wanderer,
 but now I observe your word.
- 68 You are good and do good;
 teach me your statutes.
- 69 The proud have forged lies against me,
 but I keep your precepts with all my heart.
- 70 Their heart is gross like fat,
 but I delight in your law.
- 71 It was good for me to be humbled,
 that I should learn your statutes.
- 72 The law of your mouth is better to me
 than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.
- 73 Your hands have made me and fashioned me;
 make me wise to learn your commandments.
- 74 Those who fear you shall see me with joy,
 for in your word have I hoped.
- 75 I know, O LORD, that your judgments are right,
 and in faithfulness you have afflicted me.
- 76 Let your love be a comfort to me,
 for so have you promised your servant.
- 77 Visit me with your quickening pity,
 for your law is my delight.
- 78 Put the proud to shame, who have wronged me falsely:
 I will muse on your precepts.
- 79 Let those turn to me who fear you,
 that they may learn your charges.
- 80 Let my heart be sound in your statutes,
 that I may not be put to shame.
- 81 My long for you to rescue me,
 I put my hope in your word.
- 82 My eyes pine away for your promise:
 saying, 'When will you comfort me?'

- 83 Though shrivelled like wine-skin in smoke,
your statutes I have not forgotten.
- 84 How few are the days of your servant!
When will you judge those who harass me?
- 85 Proud people have dug for me pits
people who do not conform to your law.
- 86 All your commandments are trusty.
With falsehood they harass me: help me.
- 87 They had nearly made an end of me,
yet I did not forget your precepts.
- 88 Spare me in your kindness,
and I will observe the charge of your mouth.
- 89 Forever, O LORD, is your word
fixed firmly in the heavens.
- 90 Your truth endures age after age;
it is established on earth, and it stands.
- 91 By your appointment they stand this day,
for all are your servants.
- 92 Had not your law been my joy,
in my misery then had I perished.
- 93 I will never forget your precepts,
for through them you have put life in me.
- 94 I am yours, O save me,
for I give my mind to your precepts.
- 95 The wicked lay wait to destroy me,
but I give heed to your charge.
- 96 I have seen a limit to all things:
but your commandment is spacious exceedingly.
- 97 O how I love your law!
All the day long I muse on it.
- 98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies:
for it is mine forever.
- 99 I am prudent above all my teachers,
for your charges are my meditation.
- 100 I have insight more than the aged,
because I observe your precepts.
- 101 I refrain my foot from all wicked ways,
that I may keep your word.

- 102 I turn not aside from your judgments,
for you yourself are my teacher.
- 103 How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
- 104 Insight I win through your precepts,
therefore every false way I hate.
- 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet,
and a light to my path.
- 106 I have sworn an oath, and will keep it,
to observe your righteous judgments.
- 107 I am afflicted sorely:
revive me, O LORD, as you said.
- 108 Accept, LORD, my willing praise,
and teach me your judgments.
- 109 My life is in ceaseless peril;
but I do not forget your law.
- 110 The wicked set traps for me,
yet I do not stray from your precepts.
- 111 In your charges are my everlasting inheritance,
they are the joy of my heart.
- 112 I am resolved to perform your statutes
forever, to the utmost.
- 113 I hate people of divided heart,
but your law do I love.
- 114 You are my shelter and shield:
in your word do I hope.
- 115 Begone, you wicked people,
I will keep the commands of my God.
- 116 Uphold me and spare me, as you have promised:
O disappoint me not.
- 117 Hold me up, and I shall be saved:
and your statutes shall be my unceasing delight.
- 118 All who swerve from your statutes you spurn:
their cunning is in vain.
- 119 All the wicked of earth you count as dross,
therefore I love your charges.
- 120 My flesh, for fear of you, shudders,
and I stand in awe of your judgments.

- 121 Justice and right have I practised,
do not leave me to my oppressors.
- 122 Be your servant's surety for good,
let not the proud oppress me.
- 123 My eyes pine for your salvation,
and for your righteous promise.
- 124 Deal in your love with your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
- 125 Your servant am I; instruct me,
that I may know your charges.
- 126 It is time for the LORD to act:
they have violated your law.
- 127 Therefore I love your commandments
above gold, above fine gold.
- 128 So by all your precepts I guide me,
and every false way I hate.
- 129 Your decrees are wonderful,
gladly I keep them.
- 130 When your word is unfolded, light breaks;
it imparts to the simple wisdom.
- 131 With open mouth I pant
with longing for your commandments.
- 132 Turn to me with your favour,
as is just to those who love you.
- 133 Steady my steps by your word,
so that sin have no power over me.
- 134 Set me free from those who oppress me,
and I shall observe your precepts.
- 135 Shine with your face on your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
- 136 My eyes run down with rills of water,
because your law is not kept.
- 137 Righteous are you, O LORD,
and right are your ordinances.
- 138 The laws you have ordered are just,
and trusty exceedingly.
- 139 My jealousy has undone me,
that my foes have forgotten your words.

- 140 Your word has been tested well;
and your servant loves it.
- 141 I am little and held in contempt,
but your precepts I have not forgotten.
- 142 Just is your justice forever,
and trusty is your law.
- 143 Stress and strain are upon me,
but your commandments are my delight.
- 144 Right are your charges forever,
instruct me that I may live.
- 145 With my whole heart I cry; O answer me.
I would keep your statutes, O LORD.
- 146 I cry to you: O save me,
and I will observe your charges.
- 147 Ere the dawn I cry for your help:
in your word do I hope.
- 148 Awake I meet the night-watches,
to muse upon your sayings.
- 149 Hear my voice in your kindness:
O LORD, by your judgments revive me.
- 150 Near me are wicked tormentors,
who are far from thoughts of your law;
- 151 but near, too, are you, O LORD,
and all your commandments are trusty.
- 152 Long have I known from your charges
that you have founded them for all time.
- 153 Look on my misery, and rescue me;
for I do not forget your law.
- 154 Defend my cause and redeem me:
revive me, as you have promised.
- 155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for their mind is not in your statutes.
- 156 Great is your pity, O LORD:
Revive me, as you have ordained.
- 157 My foes and tormentors are many,
but I have not declined from your charges.
- 158 I behold the traitors with loathing,
for they do not observe your word.

- 159 Behold how I love your precepts:
 revive me, O LORD!, in your kindness.
- 160 The sum of your word is truth,
 all your laws are just and eternal.
- 161 Princes have harassed me wantonly:
 but my heart stands in awe of your word.
- 162 Over your word I rejoice
 as one who finds great spoil.
- 163 Falsehood I hate and abhor,
 but your law do I love.
- 164 Seven times a day do I praise you
 because of your righteous judgments.
- 165 Right well do they fare who love your law:
 they go on their way without stumbling.
- 166 I hope for your salvation;
 O LORD I do your commandments.
- 167 I observe your charges:
 I love them greatly.
- 168 I observe your precepts and charges:
 all my ways are before you.
- 169 Let my cry come before you, O LORD:
 give me insight, as you have promised.
- 170 Let my prayer enter into your presence:
 deliver me, as you have said.
- 171 My lips shall be fountains of praise,
 that you teach me your statutes.
- 172 My tongue shall sing of your word,
 for all your commandments are right.
- 173 Let your hand be ready to help me,
 for your precepts have been my choice.
- 174 I long, LORD, for your salvation,
 and your law is my delight.
- 175 Revive me that I may praise you,
 and let your precepts help me.
- 176 I have strayed like a wandering sheep
 seek your servant, because
 I do not forget your commandments.

Psalm 120 – Prayer for Deliverance from Slander and Treachery

- 120 In distress I cried to the LORD,
and he answered me.
2 'Deliver me, LORD,
from the lip that is false
and the tongue that is crafty.'
3 What shall he give to you,
you tongue that is crafty?
What yet shall he give to you?
4 Arrows of warrior, sharpened,
with glowing broom coals together.
5 Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech,
that I live by the tents of Kedar.
6 Already too long have I dwelt
among those who hate peace.
7 I am for peace:
but when I speak of it,
they are for war.

Psalm 121 – The Lord Our Protector

A song of ascents

- 121 I will lift up my eyes to the mountains.
O whence shall help for me come?
2 From the LORD comes help to me
the creator of heaven and earth.
3 Your foot he will not let totter:
he who guards you will not sleep.
4 The guardian of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
5 The LORD is he who guards you
your shelter upon your right hand.
6 The sun by day shall not strike you,

nor the moon by night.

- 7 From all evil the LORD will guard you,
 he will guard your life.
8 The LORD will guard your going and coming
 from now and for evermore.

Psalm 122 – The Joy and the Prayer of the Pilgrims

- 122** I was glad when they said to me,
 ‘We will go to the house of the LORD.’
2 Now we are standing,
 within your gates, O Jerusalem.

3 O Jerusalem, built close-packed,
 like a city without breach or gap,
4 to you do the tribes come,
 the tribes of the LORD,
as the law has ordained for Israel,
 there to give thanks to the LORD.
5 There once stood thrones of justice
 even thrones of the household of David.

6 Pray that all may be well with Jerusalem,
 and well with those who love you,
7 well within your ramparts,
 and well within your palaces.

8 For the sake of my brethren and friends,
 I will wish you now prosperity:
9 for the sake of the house of the LORD
 our God, I will seek your good.

Psalm 123 – A Prayer for Mercy

- 123** I Lift up my eyes to you,
 who are throned in the heavens.
2 As the eyes of a servant
 turn to the hand of his master,

or the eyes of a maid
 to the hand of her mistress,
so do our eyes turn
 to the LORD our God,
until he is gracious to us.

- 3 Be gracious, be gracious to us, LORD.
 Scorn enough, and more, have we borne
4 More than enough have we borne
 of derision from those at their ease,
 of scorn from those who are haughty.

Psalm 124 – A Magnificent Deliverance

- 124 ‘Had it not been the LORD who was for us’
 let Israel say
2 ‘Had it not been the LORD who was for us
 when enemies rose against us,
3 then alive they’d have swallowed us up,
 when their anger was kindled against us.
4 Then the waters would’ve swept us away,
 and the torrent passed over us clean:
5 then most sure would’ve passed over us clean
 the wild seething waters.’
6 Blest be the LORD who has given us not
 to be torn by their teeth.
7 We are like a bird just escaped
 from the snare of the fowler.

The snare is broken,
 and we are escaped.
8 Our help is the name of the LORD,
 the Creator of heaven and earth.

Psalm 125 – A Sure Defence

- 125 Those who trust in the LORD

- are like Mount Zion,
that cannot be moved,
but abides forever.
- 2 Round Jerusalem are the mountains,
and the LORD is round his people
from now and for evermore.
- 3 For he will not suffer
the sceptre of wrong
to rest on the land
allotted to the righteous;
else the righteous might put forth
their own hand to evil.
- 4 Do good, O LORD,
to the good,
and to the true-hearted.
- 5 But those who swerve
into crooked ways
will the LORD lead away
with the workers of evil.

Peace be upon Israel.

Psalm 126 – Sowing in Tears

- 126 When the LORD turned the fortunes of Zion,
we were like dreamers.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
our tongue with glad shouts;
then among the nations they said,
'The LORD has dealt greatly with them.'
- 3 The LORD had dealt greatly with us,
and we were rejoicing.
- 4 Turn our fortunes, O LORD,
as the streams in the Negreb.
- 5 They who sow in tears
shall reap with glad shouts.

- 6 Forth they fare, with their burden of seed,
and they weep as they go.
But home, home, with glad shouts they shall come
with their arms full of sheaves.

Psalm 127 – The Need of Heavenly Help

- 127 Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it labour in vain.
Unless the LORD guards the city,
the watchman wakes in vain.
- 2 In vain you rise early,
and finish so late,
and so eat sorrow's bread;
for he cares for his loved ones
in their sleep.
- 3 Children are a gift of the LORD,
the fruit of the womb, a reward.
- 4 Like arrows wielded by warriors,
are the children of youth.
- 5 Happy the man who has filled
his quiver full of them.
He will not be ashamed when he speaks
with enemies in the gate.

Psalm 128 – The Blessings of Home

- 128 Happy all who fear the LORD,
who walk in his ways.
- 2 You will eat what your hands have toiled for,
and be happy and prosperous!
- 3 Like a fruitful vine shall your wife be
in the innermost room of your house:
your children, like olive shoots,
round about your table.

Psalm 129 – A Prayer for the Discomfiture of the Enemies of Zion Psalms 129

4 See! This is the blessing
of the man who fears the LORD.
5 The LORD shall bless you from Zion.
You will see Jerusalem nourish
all the days of your life.
6 You will see your children's children.

Peace upon Israel.

Psalm 129 – A Prayer for the Discomfiture of the Enemies of Zion

129 'Sore have they vexed me from youth'
thus let Israel say
2 'Sore have they vexed me from youth,
but they have not prevailed against me.
3 'The ploughers ploughed on my back,
they made their furrows long.
4 But the LORD, who is righteous, has cut
the cords of the wicked.'
5 Let all who are haters of Zion
be put to shame and defeated.
6 May they be as the grass on the house-top,
which withers before it shoots up;
7 which fills not the arms of the reaper,
nor the lap of the binder of sheaves
8 whereof no one says as they pass,
'The blessing of God be upon you.'

In the name of the LORD we bless you.

Psalm 130 – Out of the Depths

130 Out of the depths
I call to you, LORD.
2 LORD, hear my voice:
give heed with your ears

to my loud plea.

3 If you should mark sin, LORD,
 O LORD, who could stand?

4 But with you is forgiveness,
 that you may be feared.

5 I wait for the LORD,
 I wait for his word,

6 I look for the LORD
 more than watchman for morning,
 than watchman for morning.

7 Israel, hope in the LORD:
 with the LORD there is love
 with him plenteous redemption.

8 And he redeems Israel
 from all his iniquities.

Psalm 131 – As a Little Child

131 O LORD, my heart is not haughty,
 my eyes are not lofty,
I walk not among great things,
 things too wonderful for me.

2 Yes, I have soothed and stilled myself,
 like a young child on his mother's lap;
 like a young child am I.

3 O Israel, hope in the LORD
 from now and for evermore.

Psalm 132 – The Ancient Promise to David and Zion

132 Remember, O LORD, David
 all his sufferings,
2 the oath that he swore to the LORD,
 and his vow to the Strong One of Jacob,

- 3 never to enter his tent,
 never to lie on his bed,
4 never to give his eyes sleep
 or his eyelids slumber,
5 till he had found a place for the LORD,
 for the Strong One of Jacob to live in.
- 6 We heard of it in Ephrathah,
 in the fields of Jaar we found it.
7 We went to the place where he dwelt,
 we bowed ourselves low at his footstool.
8 'Arise, LORD, and enter your resting-place,
 you and your mighty ark.
9 Let your priests wear a garment of righteousness,
 your faithful shout aloud for joy.
10 For the sake of David your servant,
 do not reject your Anointed.'
- 11 The LORD swore an oath to David
 an oath that he will not break;
'I will set on your throne
 a prince of your line.
12 If your sons keep my covenant
 and the statutes I teach them,
then their sons, too, forever,
 will sit on your throne.'
13 For the choice of the LORD is Zion;
 she is the home of his heart.

14 'This is forever my resting-place,
 this is the home of my heart.
15 I will royally bless her provision,
 and give bread to her poor in abundance.
16 Her priests I will clothe with salvation;
 her faithful will shout for joy.
17 There will I raise up for David
 a dynasty of power.
I have set my anointed a lamp
 that shall never go out.
18 Robes of shame I will put on his foes,
 but on his head a glittering crown.'

Psalm 133 – Family together

- 133 Behold! How good and how pleasant
is the dwelling of kindred together!
2 Like precious oil on the head
that ran down on the beard,
the beard of Aaron, running
over the collar of his robe:
3 like the dew upon Hermon which falls
on the mountains of Zion.
For there has the LORD ordained blessing –
life that is endless.

Psalm 134 – An Evening Invocation

- 134 Come, praise the LORD,
all you the LORD's servants,
who stand by night
in the house of the LORD.
2 Lift your hands to the holy place,
praise the LORD.
3 The LORD who made heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

Psalm 135 – The Lord's Power Revealed in Nature and History

- 135 Hallelujah.
Praise the name of the LORD.
Praise the LORD, you his servants,
2 who stand in the house of the LORD,
in the courts of the house of our God.
3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good:
Sing praise to his name it is pleasant.
4 The LORD for himself chose Jacob,
Israel as his own special treasure.

- 5 For I know that the LORD is great,
 that our LORD is above all gods.
- 6 All that he wills he does
 in the heavens and on the earth,
 in the seas and in all the abysses.
- 7 Clouds he brings up from the ends of the earth,
 lightnings he makes for the rain,
 wind he brings out of his storehouses.
- 8 The first-born of Egypt he struck,
 both humans and animals.
- 9 Signs and wonders he sent
 into your midst, O Egypt,
 upon Pharaoh and all his servants.
- 10 Many nations he struck,
 mighty kings he slew
- 11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
 Og, king of Bashan,
 and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
- 12 He gave their land for possession,
 possession to Israel his people.
- 13 Your name, O LORD, is forever;
 your memorial world without end.
- 14 For the LORD secures right for his people,
 and takes pity upon his servants.
- 15 The idols of heathen are silver
 made by human hands.
- 16 They have mouths, but cannot speak:
 they have eyes, but cannot see.
- 17 They have ears, but cannot hear:
 there is no breath in their mouths.
- 18 Their makers become like them,
 so do all who trust in them.
- 19 House of Israel, praise the LORD:
 house of Araon, praise the LORD.
- 20 House of Levi, praise the LORD:
 you who fear the LORD, praise the LORD.
- 21 Blest be the LORD out of Zion,

who lives in Jerusalem.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 136 – The Lord's Love Revealed in Nature and History

- 136 Give thanks to the LORD for his goodness:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 2 Give thanks to the God of gods:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 4 To him who alone does great wonders:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 5 Whose wisdom created the heavens:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 6 Who spread forth the earth on the waters:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 7 Who made great lights:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 8 The sun to rule over the day:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 9 Moon and stars to rule over the night:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 10 Who struck the first-born of Egypt:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 11 And brought Israel out from their midst:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 12 With strong hand and outstretched arm:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 13 Who cut the Red Sea in pieces:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 14 And brought Israel right through the midst:
for his kindness endures forever.
- 15 And shook Pharaoh with all his host into the sea
for his kindness endures forever.
- 16 Who led his people through the desert:

for his kindness endures forever.
17 Who struck down great kings:
for his kindness endures forever.
18 And slew noble kings:
for his kindness endures forever.
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites:
for his kindness endures forever.
20 And Og, king of Bashan:
for his kindness endures forever.
21 Who gave their land for possession:
for his kindness endures forever.
22 Possession to Israel his servant:
for his kindness endures forever.

23 Who remembered our low estate:
for his kindness endures forever.
24 And rescued us from our foes:
for his kindness endures forever.
25 Who gives to all flesh food:
for his kindness endures forever.
26 Give thanks to the God of heaven:
for his kindness endures forever.

Psalm 137 – By the Waters of Babylon

137 By the waters of Babylon there we sat,
and we wept at the thought of Zion.
2 There on the poplars we hung our harps.
3 For there our captors called for a song;
our tormentors, rejoicing, saying:
'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.'

4 How can we sing the LORD's song
in the foreigner's land?
5 If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand wither.
6 May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
if I am unmindful of you,
or don't set Jerusalem

above my chief joy.

- 7 Remember the Edomites, LORD,
the day of Jerusalem’s fall,
when they said, ‘Lay her bare, lay her bare,
right down to her very foundation.’
- 8 Babylon, despoiler,
happy are those who pay you back
for all you have done to us.
- 9 Happy are they who seize and dash
your children against the rocks.

Psalm 138 – The Constancy of the Lord’s Care

- 138 I will thank you, O LORD, with all my heart:
in the sight of the gods I will sing your praise,
- 2 and prostrate before your holy temple,
will praise your name for your constant love,
for you have exulted your promise above all.
- 3 When I called you, you answered;
you gave me strength, you inspired me.
- 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD,
when they shall have heard the words you have uttered;
- 5 and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
and tell of the LORD’s transcendent glory.
- 6 For, high though the LORD is, he looks on the lowly,
and strikes down the haughty from far away.
- 7 Though my way be distressful, yet you preserve me:
you lay your hand on my angry foes,
and your right hand gives me victory.
- 8 The LORD will accomplish all that which concerns me.
Your kindness, O LORD, endures forever.
O do not abandon the work of your hands.

Psalm 139 – The Ever-Present God

- 139 O LORD, you search and know me;
2 when I sit, when I rise you know it,
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- 3 When I walk, when I lie you sift it,
familiar with all my ways.
- 4 There is not a word on my tongue,
but see! LORD, you know it all.
- 5 Behind and before you beset me,
upon me you lay your hand.
- 6 It's too wonderful for me to know
too lofty I cannot attain it.
- 7 Whither shall I go from your spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from your face?
- 8 If I climb up to heaven, you are there:
or make Sheol my bed, you are there.
- 9 If I lift up the wings of the morning
and fly to the end of the sea,
- 10 there also your hand would grasp me,
and your right hand take hold of me.
- 11 If I say, 'Let the darkness cover me,
and night be the light about me,'
- 12 The dark is not dark for you,
but night is as light as the day.
- 13 For you did put me together;
in my mother's womb you did weave me.
- 14 I give you praise for my fashioning
so full of awe, so wonderful.
Your works are wonderful.
- You knew me right well;
15 my bones were not hidden from you,
when I was made in secret,
and woven in the depths of the earth.

- 16 Your eyes saw all my days:
 they stood on your book every one
written down, before they were fashioned,
 while none of them yet was mine.
- 17 But how far, O God, beyond measure
 are your thoughts! How mighty their sum!
18 Should I count, they are more than the sand.
 When I wake, I am still with you.
- 19 Will you slay the wicked, O God?
 And remove from me the bloodthirsty,
20 who maliciously defy you
 and take your name in vain.
- 21 Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD?
 Do I not loathe those who resist you?
22 With perfect hatred I hate them,
 I count them my enemies.
- 23 Search me, O God, know my heart:
 test me, and know my thoughts,
24 and see if guile be in me;
 and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 140 – A Prayer for Preservation

- 140 Rescue me, LORD, from evil people;
 from the violent guard me
2 from those who plot evil in their heart,
 and stir up war continually:
3 who make their tongue as sharp as a serpent's,
 and under whose lips is the poison of adders. *Selah*
- 4 Preserve me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked,
 from the violent guard me
 from those who are plotting to trip up my feet.
- 5 The proud have hidden a trap for me,
 cords they have spread as a net for my feet:
 snares they have set at the side of my track. *Selah*

- 6 I have said to the LORD, 'My God are you;
give ear, LORD, to my loud plea.
7 O LORD my LORD, my saviour mighty,
you did cover my head in the day of battle.
8 Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked;
and what they have purposed, promote you not.' *Selah*
9 Let them not lift up their heads against me.
May the mischief they prate bring themselves to destruction,
10 may he rain upon them coals of fire,
may he strike them down swiftly, to rise no more,
11 no place in the land may there be for the slanderer:
may the violent be hunted from sorrow to sorrow.
12 I know that the LORD will do right by the weak,
and will execute justice for those who are needy.
13 Surely the righteous shall praise your name,
and they who are upright shall live in your presence.

Psalm 141 – A Prayer for Protection from Persecutors

- 141** LORD , I call to you: hasten, to me,
give ear to my voice, when I call to you.
2 Let my prayer be presented as incense before you,
and my uplifted hands as the evening meal-offering.
3 Set, O LORD, a watch on my mouth,
put a guard on the door of my lips.
4 Incline not my heart to an evil matter,
to busy myself in deeds of wickedness,
in company with workers of evil:
never may I partake of their dainties.
5 A wound or reproof from a good person in kindness
is oil which my head shall never refuse.
In their misfortune my prayer is still with them.
6 Abandoned they are to the hands of their judges:
they shall learn that my words are true.

- 7 Like stones on a country road cleft and broken
so lie our bones scattered for Death to devour.
8 But my eyes are turned towards you, O LORD.
Do not pour out my life, for in you I take refuge.
9 Keep me safe from the trap they have laid for me,
from the snares of the workers of trouble.
10 Into their own nets let wicked people fall;
while I pass by in safety.

Psalm 142 – A Prayer for Deliverance from Persecutors

- 142** Loudly I cry to the LORD:
to the LORD plead loudly for mercy,
2 I pour my complaint before him,
I tell my troubles to him.

3 When my spirit is faint within me,
my path is known to you.
In the way I am wont to walk in,
they have hidden a trap for me.

4 I look to the right and the left;
but not a friend have I.
No place of refuge is left me,
not a man to care for me.

5 So I cry to you, O LORD:
I say, 'My refuge are you,
all I have in the land of the living.'
- 6 Attend to my piercing cry,
for very weak am I.
Save me from those who pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.

7 Free me from prison,
that I may give thanks to your name,
for the righteous are patiently waiting
till you show your bounty to me.

Psalm 143 – A Prayer for Deliverance and Guidance

- 143 Listen, O LORD, to my prayer;
give ear to my plea.
In your faithfulness give me answer,
and in your righteousness.
- 2 With your servant O enter you not into judgment,
for in your sight can no one alive be justified.
- 3 For the enemy persecutes me,
crushing my life to the ground,
making me live in the darkness,
as those who have long been dead.
- 4 My spirit is faint within me,
my heart is bewildered within me.
- 5 I remember the days of old,
and brood over all you have done,
musing on all that your hands have wrought.
- 6 I spread out my hands to you:
I thirst for you,
like parched earth. *Selah*
- 7 Answer me soon, LORD,
because my spirit is spent.
Hide not your face from me,
else become I like those who go down to the pit.
- 8 Let me learn of your love in the morning,
for my trust is in you.
Teach me the way I should go:
for my heart longs for you.
- 9 Save me, O LORD, from my foes:
for to you I have fled for refuge.
- 10 Teach me to do your will,
for you yourself are my God.
Guide me by your good spirit,
O LORD, on a way that is smooth.
- 11 Be true to your name LORD, spare me,

bring me out of distress in your faithfulness.
12 In your kindness extinguish my enemies,
and all those who vex me destroy;
for I am your servant.

Psalm 144 – The Warrior's Song

- 144 Blest be the LORD my rock,
who trains my hands for war,
my fingers for fighting.
- 2 My rock and my fortress,
my tower, my deliverer,
my shield, behind whom I take refuge,
who lays nations low at my feet.
- 3 LORD , what are mortals
that you care for them,
humans,
that you think of them?
- 4 They are like a breath,
their days as a shadow that passes.
- 5 LORD , bow your heavens and come down:
touch the hills, so that they smoke.
- 6 Flash forth lightning and scatter them,
your arrows send forth and confound them.
- 7 Stretch out your hand from on high;
pluck me out of the mighty waters,
out of the hands of foreigners,
- 8 who speak with the mouth of falsehood,
and lift their right hand to swear lies.
- 9 O God, a new song I would sing you,
on a ten-stringed harp make you music.
- 10 For to kings you give the victory,
and David your servant you save.
- 11 Snatch me from the cruel sword,
rescue me from the hand of foreigners,
who speak with the mouth of falsehood,

and lift their right hand to swear lies.

The Prosperity of the Lord's People

- 12 May our sons in their youth
 be as plants well tended:
our daughters like cornices
 carved as in palaces.
- 13 May our barns be bursting
 with produce of all kinds.
In the fields may our sheep bear
 by thousands and ten thousands.
- 14 May our cattle be fat,
 our walls unbreached,
may no cry of distress
 ring in our streets.
- 15 Happy the people
 who fares so well:
and so fares the people
 whose God is the LORD.

Psalm 145 – The Kingdom Everlasting

- 145 I will exalt you, my God, O king;
 I will praise your name for ever and ever.
- 2 I will bless you every day;
 I will praise your name for ever and ever.
- 3 Great is the LORD and worthy all praise,
 his greatness is unsearchable.
- 4 One age to another shall praise your deeds,
 declaring the mighty things you have done.
- 5 Of your glorious majesty they shall tell,
 and I will muse of your many wonders.
- 6 Of the might of your terrible acts they shall speak,

and the tale of your great deeds I will tell.

- 7 The fame of your abundant goodness
 and righteousness they shall pour forth in song.
- 8 The LORD is full of grace and pity,
 patient and rich in loving-kindness.
- 9 The LORD is good to all the world,
 and his pity is over all things that he made.
- 10 All your works give you thanks, O LORD,
 and you are blessed of those who love you.
- 11 They shall speak of your glorious kingdom,
 and of your might shall they discourse,
- 12 making known to all his mighty acts,
 and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.
- 13 Yours is a kingdom that lives through all ages:
 through all generations extends your dominion.
The LORD is faithful in all that he promises,
gracious is he in all that he does.
- 14 The LORD upholds all who fall;
 he lifts up all who are bowed down.
- 15 The eyes of all look in hope to you,
 and you give them their food in due season.
- 16 You yourself open your hand,
 and fill with your favour all things that live.
- 17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways,
 gracious is he in all that he does.
- 18 The LORD is near to all who call him,
 to all who call upon him in truth.
- 19 He will fulfil the desires of those who fear him;
 he will hear their cry for help and save them.
- 20 The LORD is the keeper of all who love him,
 but all the wicked will he destroy.
- 21 My mouth will utter the praise of the LORD,
 and all life will bless his holy name
 for ever and ever.

Psalm 146 – The Great Protector

- 146** My soul, praise the LORD.
2 I will praise the LORD, while I live;
I will sing to my God, while I am.

3 Put not your trust in princes
mortals, in whom is no help.
4 When their breath goes out,
they go back to the dust:
on that very day
their purposes perish.
5 Happy those whose help
is the God of Jacob:
whose hope is set
on the LORD their God,
6 the Creator of heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them.
- He remains eternally loyal.
- 7 For the wronged he executes justice;
he gives bread to the hungry;
the LORD releases the prisoners.
8 The LORD gives sight to the blind:
the LORD raises those who are bowed.
The LORD loves the righteous.
9 The LORD preserves the stranger,
upholds the widow and orphan,
but the wicked he leads to disaster.
- 10 The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, to all generations.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 147 – The Lord's Love and Power Revealed in Nature

- 147** Hallelujah.
It is good to sing praise to our God,

- for praise is sweet and seemly.
- 2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem,
the outcasts of Israel he gathers.
- 3 He heals the broken in heart,
and binds up their wounds.
- 4 He counts the numberless stars,
he gives names to them all.
- 5 Great is our LORD, rich in power,
and measureless is his wisdom.
- 6 The LORD lifts up the down-trodden,
the wicked he brings to the ground.
- 7 Sing songs of thanks to the LORD,
and play on the lyre to our God.
- 8 For he covers the sky with clouds,
he prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass to grow on the mountains.
- 9 He gives the cattle their food
the young ravens when they cry.
- 10 His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse,
his joy is not in the speed of a runner;
- 11 but the LORD has his pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who wait for his kindness.
- 12 Praise the LORD, then, O Jerusalem:
sing praise to your God, O Zion.
- 13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates,
and blesses your children within you.
- 14 He brings peace to your borders,
and choicest of wheat in abundance.
- 15 He sends his command to the earth:
his word runs very swiftly.
- 16 Snow he gives like wool,
frost he scatters like ashes.
- 17 He casts forth his ice like morsels:
who can stand before his cold?
- 18 He sends forth his word, and melts them:
his wind blows the waters flow.
- 19 He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and judgments to Israel.

- 20 No other nation did he do this for,
they know nothing of his judgments.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 148 – The Universal Chorus of Praise

- 148** Praise the LORD from the heavens,
praise him in the heights.
2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts.

3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all stars of light.
4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for at his command they were made.
6 And he fixed them for ever and ever
by a law which they dare not transgress.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth:
you depths, with your monsters, all.
8 Fire, hail, snow and ice,
and stormy wind doing his word.

9 All you mountains and hills,
all you fruit trees and cedars,
10 all you wild beasts and tame,
creeping things, birds on the wing.

11 All you kings and nations of earth;
all you princes and judges of earth:
12 young men and maidens together,
old men and children together.

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted.
Over heaven and earth is his glory.
14 He has lifted his people to honour.

Wherefore this chorus of praise from his saints,
from Israel, the people who stand in his fellowship.
Hallelujah.

Psalm 149 – Song of Victory

149 Hallelujah.

Sing to the LORD a new song,
sound his praise where the faithful are gathered.

2 Let Israel rejoice in its maker,

sons of Zion exult in their king.

3 Let them praise his name in the dance,

making music with lyre and with timbrel.

4 For the LORD delights in his people,

adorning the humble with victory.

5 Let the faithful exult and extol him

with glad ringing cries all night long.

6 High praises of God in their mouth,

and a two-edged sword in their hand:

7 on the heathen to execute vengeance,

and chastisement sore on the nations,

8 binding their kings with chains,

and their nobles with fetters of iron,

9 to execute on them the doom that is written.

This is the glory of all his faithful.

Hallelujah.

Psalm 150 – Hallelujah

150 Hallelujah.

Praise God in his holy place.

Praise him in the sky, his stronghold.

2 Praise him for his deeds of power.

Praise him for his boundless greatness.

3 Praise him with blast of horn;

- praise him with harp and lyre.
4 Praise him with timbrel and dance;
 praise him with strings and pipe.
5 Praise him with resounding cymbals,
 praise him with clashing cymbals.
6 Let all that has breath praise the LORD.
 Hallelujah.

JOEL

- 1 The LORD's message that came to Joel, son of Pethuel.

Locust plague and drought

- 2 Hear this, elders,
 pay attention, all inhabitants of the land,
Has anything like this happened in your days,
 or in the days of your ancestors?
3 Recount it to your children;
 let your children tell it to their children,
 and their children to the generation that follows.
4 That which the cutting locust has left,
 the swarming locust has eaten,
that which the swarming locust has left,
 the hopping locust has eaten,
and that which the hopping locust has left,
 the destroying locust has eaten.
5 Awake, drunkards, and weep,
 and wail, all drinkers of wine;
 the new wine is cut off from your mouth.
6 For a nation has come up on my land,
 powerful, and numberless;
its teeth are the teeth of a lion,
 and its jaw-teeth are like those of a lioness.
7 It has laid waste my vines,
 and barked my fig-tree;
it has peeled and cast it away,
 bleached are the branches.
8 Wail as a bride, clad in sack-cloth,
 for the husband of her youth.
9 Cut off are the cereal and drink-offerings
 from the house of the LORD;
in mourning are the priests,

- who minister at the LORD's altar.
- 10 The fields are blasted,
 the land is in mourning,
for ruined is the corn,
 the new wine fails
 and the oil is dried up.
- 11 Be dismayed, farmers;
 wail, vine-dressers.
For the wheat and the barley;
 for the harvest is lost from the fields.
- 12 The vine fails to bear fruit,
 and the fig-tree is drooping;
the pomegranate, palm, and apple,
 all the trees of the field are dried up.
The people's joy withers.
- 13 Put on sackcloth, and beat your breasts, priests;
 wail, ministers of the altar;
 come, lie all night in sack-cloth, ministers of God;
for cereal-offering and drink-offering
 are cut off from the house of your God.
- 14 Sanctify a fast,
 summon an assembly,
gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land
 into the house of the LORD your God,
cry to the LORD:
 Alas for the day!
- 15 Near at hand is the day of the LORD,
 and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.
- 16 Is not food cut off
 from before us,
gladness and joy
 from the house of our God?
- 17 The grains shrivel under their hoes,
 the storehouses are desolate,
 the barns broken down,
 for the corn is withered.
- 18 How the herds of cattle bellow in distress,
 for they have no pasture!

The flocks of sheep are forlorn.

- 19 To you, the LORD, I cry.
For fire has devoured
 the pastures of the wilderness,
 and flame has scorched
 all the trees of the field.
- 20 The wild animals also look up to you longingly,
 for the water-courses are dried up,
 and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.
- 2 Blow a horn in Zion,
 sound an alarm in my holy mountain,
let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the LORD comes,
2 for near is the day of darkness and gloom,
 the day of cloud and thick darkness!
- Like the light of dawn scattered over the mountains,
 a people great and powerful;
its like has not been from of old,
 neither will be any more after it,
 even to the years of coming ages.
- 3 Before them the fire devours,
 and behind them a flame burns;
like the garden of Eden is the land before them,
 and after them it is a desolate desert,
nothing escapes them.
- 4 Their appearance is as the appearance of horses,
 and like horsemen they charge.
- 5 Like the sound of chariots on the tops of the mountains they leap,
 like the crackle of flames devouring stubble,
like a mighty people preparing for battle.
- 6 Peoples are in anguish before them,
 all faces grow pale.
- 7 Like mighty men they run,
 like warriors they mount up a wall,
they march each by himself,

they break not their ranks,
8 none jostles the other.

They march each in his path.
They fall upon the weapons without breaking.
9 They scour the city, they run on the wall.
They climb up into the houses.
Like a thief they enter the windows.

10 Earth trembles before them,
the sky quakes,
the sun and moon become dark,
and the stars withdraw their shining;
11 and the LORD utters his voice before his army,
for his host is exceedingly great.
Mighty is he who performs his word.
For great is the day of the LORD,
it is terrible, who can endure it?

12 But now this is the message of the LORD:
Turn to me with all your heart,
and with fasting and weeping and mourning,
13 rend your hearts and not your garments,
and turn to the LORD your God;
for he indeed is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and plenteous in love,
and relents of the evil.
14 Who knows but he will turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a cereal and drink-offering for the LORD your God.

15 Blow a horn in Zion,
sanctify a fast, summon an assembly,
16 gather the people, make holy the congregation,
assemble the elders,
gather the children,
and the infants at the breast.
Let the bridegroom come forth from his chamber,
and the bride from her bridal tent.

17 Between the porch and the altar,

let the priests, the ministers of the LORD weep aloud,
let them say:

Spare, the LORD, your people.
Make not your heritage an object of reproach,
for the heathen to mock them.
Why should it be said among the nations, "Where is their God?"

Future blessings

- 18 Then the LORD became deeply concerned for his land, and took pity upon
19 his people, and the LORD answered and said to his people:

I will send you corn, wine, and oil.

You will be satisfied.

I will not make you again
an object of scorn among the nations,

- 20 I will remove far from you the northern foe,
and I will drive it into a land barren and desolate,
its front into the eastern sea,
and its rear to the western sea.
And from it a stench will arise.

He has done great things!

- 21 Fear not, land, exult.
Rejoice for the LORD has done great things!

- 22 Fear not, animals of the field.
For the pastures of the wilderness are putting forth new grass,
for the trees bear their fruit,
fig-tree and vine yield full harvest.

- 23 Be glad, then, children of Zion,
and rejoice in the LORD your God,
For he has given you the early rain in just measure,
and poured down upon you the winter rain,
and sent the latter rain as before.

- 24 The threshing floors will be full of grain,
and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.
25 I will repay you for the years
which the swarming locust has eaten.
The hopping, the destroying, and the cutting locusts,

my great army which I sent among you,
and my people will never again be put to shame.

26 You will eat your food and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the LORD your God,
who has dealt so wonderfully by you,

27 and you will know that I am in the midst of Israel,
that I am the LORD your God and none else,
and my people will never again be put to shame.

28 Afterwards,
I will pour out my spirit on everyone.
Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams.
Your young men will see visions,
29 and even on your male and female slaves
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

30 And I will show signs in the sky and on earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
31 The sun will be turned into darkness,
and the moon into blood
before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

32 But whoever will call upon the name of the LORD will be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, even as the LORD has said, and among the fugitives those whom the LORD calls.

3 For, in those days and in that time, when I bring back again the captivity
2 of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all the nations and bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and there I will enter into judgment with them for my people and my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and divided my land.

3 They have cast lots for my people.
They have traded boys
for prostitutes,
and sold girls for wine,
and drunk it.

4 What are you to me, Tyre and Sidon and all the districts of Philistia? Were you repaying any deed of mine, or were you doing something for me?
5 Quickly will I return your deed upon your heads. You who have taken my silver and my gold, and you have brought my goodly jewels into your

- 6 palaces, you have sold the people of Judah and of Jerusalem to the Greeks,
7 so that you might remove them far from their own borders. I am about to
8 stir them up from the place to which you have sold them, and I will turn
your deeds upon your own head. I will sell your sons and your daughters
into the hands of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans,
to a nation far off, for the LORD has spoken.
- 9 Proclaim this among the nations, sanctify war.
Arouse the warriors,
 let all the fighting men muster and go up.
- 10 Beat your ploughshares into swords,
 and your pruning-hooks into lances;
let the weak say, I, indeed, am strong.
- 11 Bestir yourselves and come,
 all you nations round about.
Quickly gather yourselves together,
 ask the LORD to bring his warriors.
- 12 Let the nations rouse themselves
 and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat,
for there will I sit to judge
 all the surrounding nations.
- 13 Put in the sickle,
 for the harvest is ripe;
go in, tread,
 for the wine press is full.
The vats overflow,
 for great is their wickedness.
- 14 Noisy multitudes, noisy multitudes
 in the valley of decision
For near is the LORD's day in the valley of decision!
- 15 Sun and moon have turned dark,
 and the stars withdrawn their shining.
- 16 Whenever the LORD roars from Zion
 and utters his voice from Jerusalem,
earth and sky quake;
but the LORD is a refuge to his people,
 and a fortress to the people of Israel.
- 17 And you will know that I am the LORD your God,

I who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain,
and Jerusalem will be holy,
and strangers will not pass through her any more.

- 18 In that day,
the mountains will drop sweet wine,
the hills will flow with milk,
all the channels of Judah will flow with water,
a fountain will spring from the house of Judah,
and will water the Valley of Shittim.
- 19 Egypt will become a desolation,
and Edom a wilderness,
because of the violence done to the people of Judah,
because they shed innocent blood in their land,
- 20 Judah will remain inhabited forever,
and Jerusalem from generation to generation.
- 21 I will avenge their blood which I have not yet avenged.

The LORD lives in Zion!

THE VISION OF OBADIAH CONCERNING EDOM

- 1 The vision of Obadiah; what the LORD said about Edom:

We have heard a report from the LORD,
a messenger has been sent among the nations;
Rise up, let us rise against Edom in battle!

- 2 I will make you small among the nations,
and despised by all!

- 3 Your proud heart has misled you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
you who build on high your dwelling.
You say to yourselves,
“Who can bring me down to earth?”

- 4 Though you build high as the eagle,
though between the stars you set your nest,
from there will I bring you down,
says the LORD.

- 5 If thieves had come to you, marauders by night
would they not have stolen only as much as they needed?
If grape-gatherers had come to you
would they not have left some gleanings?

- 6 Descendents of Esau,
all your treasures are looted.

- 7 To your border they have driven you,
all your allies have betrayed you.
Your avowed friends have overpowered you,
they have set a trap for you.
Where is your wisdom now?

- 8 The LORD says:

On that day,

- I will destroy the wise of Edom,
 drive wisdom out of Mount Esau.
- 9 Your warriors will be filled with terror, Teman,
 none will be left alive on Mount Esau.
- 10 Because of the violence done to your relatives, the people of Jacob,
 shame covers you,
 you are cut off forever.
- 11 In the day when you stood aloof,
 in the day when strangers carried away their wealth,
 and strangers entered into their gates,
 and over Jerusalem cast lots,
you were as one of those strangers.
- 12 You should not have gloated over your relatives,
 in the day of their misfortune.
You should not have exulted over the land of Judah
 in the day of their destruction.
You should not have laughed loudly
 at their distress.
- 13 You should not have entered in at the gate of my people
 in the day of their disaster.
You should not have gloated over their calamity,
 in the day of their disaster,
nor stretched out your hand after their wealth
 in the day of their disaster,
- 14 nor stood at the crossroads
 to cut down their fugitives,
nor should you have betrayed their refugees
 in the day of distress.
- 15 Near at hand is the LORD's day for all the nations.
As you have done so will it be done to you.
Your deeds will come back on your own head.
- 16 As you have drunk upon my holy mountain,
 so all the nations will drink in turn;
They will drink deep
 and be as though they had not been.
- 17 But on Mount Zion some will escape,

it will be again holy,
and those of the house of Jacob
will again enter into their possessions.

- 18 For the house of Jacob will be a fire,
and the house of Joseph a flame,
but the house of Esau will become stubble.
They will kindle and devour it.
Not even one of the house of Esau will escape,
for the LORD has spoken.

- 19 They will possess the Negeb and Mount Esau,
and the Shephelah of the Philistines.
They will possess the territory of Ephraim and Samaria,
and Benjamin will possess Gilead.
20 The exiles of Israel will possess the land of the Canaanites
as far as Zarephath.
The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
will possess the cities of the Negreb.
21 The rescued will come up on Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau,
and the kingdom will belong to the LORD.

JONAH

Jonah runs away

- 1 This message from the LORD came to Jonah, the son of Amittai: 'Arise, go
2 to that great city, Nineveh, and preach against it; for their wickedness is
3 known to me.' But Jonah started to flee to Tarshish from the presence of
the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish.
So he paid the fare and went aboard to go with them to Tarshish from
4 the presence of the LORD. But the LORD made a furious wind blow over
the sea, and there was such a great storm that the ship was in danger of
5 breaking to pieces. The sailors were terrified and each cried for help to his
own god. They threw the ship's cargo into the sea to make the ship lighter.
Meanwhile Jonah had gone down into the bottom of the ship and lay fast
6 asleep. The captain of the ship went and said to him, 'How can you sleep?
Call on your god; perhaps that god will think of us, so that we may not be
lost.'
- 7 The sailors said to one another, 'Come, let us cast lots to discover on
whose account this evil has come upon us.' So they cast lots, and the lot
8 indicated Jonah. So they said to him, 'Are you to blame for this? Tell us,
what is your business, and where do you come from? What is your country
9 and to what people do you belong?' He replied, 'I am a Hebrew, and a
worshipper of the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the
10 dry land.' Then the men were greatly frightened and said to him, 'What
have you done?' For they knew that he was fleeing from the presence of
the LORD, because he had told them.
- 11 Then they said to him, 'What should we do to you, to make the sea calm
12 for us?' For the sea grew more and more stormy. He said to them, 'Take
me up and throw me into the sea, and the sea will be calm for you, for I
know that it is because of me this fierce storm has overtaken you.'
- 13 But instead the men rowed hard to get back to the land; they could not,
14 however, for the sea grew more and more stormy ahead. So they cried to
the LORD and said, 'We beg you, LORD, we beg you, don't let us die for this
15 man's life, and don't let us be guilty of shedding innocent blood, for you
are the LORD; you have done as it pleases you.' And they took up Jonah,
16 and threw him into the sea; and the sea became calm. Then the men greatly
feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice and made vows to him.

17 But the LORD arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah's song

2 Jonah prayed to the LORD his God, out of the belly of the fish, and said:

2 I cried out of my distress, to the LORD
and he answered me;
out of the midst of Sheol I cried aloud,
and you heard my voice.

3 For you cast me into the deep,
into heart of the seas,
and the great flood rolled about me;
all your breakers and your waves
passed over me.

4 Then I said, I am driven out,
away from your sight;
How will I ever again
look towards your holy temple?

5 The waters surrounded me,
the great deep engulfed me,
the sea weeds were wrapped about my head.

6 I went down to the roots of the mountains;
the prison of the earth closed over me forever.

Yet you brought up my life from destruction,
O LORD my God.

7 As my life slipped away,
I remembered the LORD;
and my prayer reached you,
in your holy temple.

8 Those who worship worthless idols
abandon their own mercy,

9 but I will sacrifice to you
with loud thanksgiving!
I will pay that which I have vowed.

Salvation is the LORD's.

- 10 And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it threw up Jonah upon the dry land.

The message to Nineveh

- 3 This message from the LORD came to Jonah the second time, 'Arise, go to
2 that great city, Nineveh, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' So
3 Jonah started for Nineveh, as the LORD commanded. Now Nineveh was
4 so large a city that it took three days' journey to cross it. Jonah began by
going a day's journey into the city, and he proclaimed, 'Forty days more
and Nineveh shall be overthrown.'
- 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God; and they ordered a fast and
6 put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. And when word
came to the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his robe,
7 dressed in sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he made this proclamation
and published it in Nineveh: 'By the decree of the king and his nobles:
People, beast, herd, and flock shall not taste anything; let them not eat nor
8 drink water. Let both people and animals put on sackcloth and let them
cry earnestly to God; let them each turn from their evil ways and from the
9 deeds of violence which they are doing. Who knows? God may relent and
avert his fierce anger, so that we may not die.'
- 10 When God saw that they turned from their evil course, he relented the
evil which he said he would do to them, and did not do it.

Jonah sulks

- 4 But this seemed very wrong to Jonah and he became angry. He prayed to
2 the LORD and said, 'Ah, LORD, wasn't this what I said when I was still in my
own country? That was why I fled at once to Tarshish; for I knew that you
are a gracious and merciful God, patient, and loving and ready to forgive.
3 Therefore, LORD, I beg you, take my life from me; for it is better for me to
4 die than to live!' But the LORD said, 'Are you doing right in being angry?'
5 Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down on the east side, and
there made a hut for himself and sat under it, waiting to see what would
6 become of the city. And the LORD arranged for a bush to grow up over
Jonah as a shade for his head to make him comfortable. The bush gave

- 7 Jonah great pleasure; but at dawn the next day God arranged for a worm
8 which attacked the bush, so that it wilted. And when the sun rose, God
arranged a hot east wind. And the sun beat upon Jonah's head, so that he
was faint and begged that he might die, saying, 'It is better for me to die
9 than to live.' But God said to Jonah, 'Are you doing right in being angry
about the bush?' He replied, 'I have every right to be as angry as I could
possibly be!'

Jonah is rebuked

- 10 The LORD said, 'You care about a bush which has cost you no trouble and
which you have not made grow, which came up in a night and wilted in a
11 night. Should I not care for the great city Nineveh, in which there are one
hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand
from their left; and many cattle too?'

MICAH

The Superscription to Micah's Sermons

- 1 The LORD's message which came to Micah of Morsheth in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. The visions he saw about Samaria and Jerusalem.

The Lord's Judgment on Guilty Samaria and Judah

- 2 Listen, all you peoples!
Pay attention, all you inhabitants of the earth!
For the Lord God will be a witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple!
- 3 The LORD is coming from his holy place,
he descends and treads on the heights of the earth,
4 so that the mountains melt beneath
like wax in the presence of the fire,
and the valleys break apart
like water poured down a steep descent.
- 5 All this is because of the crime of Jacob,
and for the sin of the house of Israel.
What was the crime of Jacob?
Was it not Samaria?
What is the sin of Judah?
Is it not Jerusalem?
- 6 'I will make Samaria a ruin in an open field,
and a place where a vineyard is planted,
I will hurl down her stones into the valley,
and lay bare her foundations.

- 7 'All her images will be shattered,
and all her statues will be burned with fire,
and all her idols I will lay in ruins.
For they were acquired by prostitution,
and to prostitution they will return.'
- 8 This is why I will mourn and wail,
I will go barefoot and naked,
I will howl like the jackals
and mourn like the desert owl.
- 9 For the blow that Samaria has received is incurable.
It has spread over Judah,
it extends even to the gate of my people,
even to Jerusalem.
- 10 Don't tell this in Gath!
Don't even cry – but sit in the dust at Beth-leaphrah.
- 11 Pass by, inhabitants of Shaphir, naked and ashamed!
The inhabitants of Zaanan cannot leave their city.
Beth-ezel laments and removes its support from you.
- 12 The inhabitants of Maroth wait anxiously for good!
But the LORD has sent disaster to the gates of Jerusalem.
- 13 Harness the horse to the chariot, inhabitants of Lachish.
You led the daughter of Zion, Jerusalem, into sin,
in you are found the crimes of Israel.
- 14 Therefore you must give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath.
Beth-achzib will betray the kings of Israel.
- 15 I will hand you to a conqueror, people of Mareshah,
the leaders of Israel will hide in Adullam Cave!
- 16 Shave your head in morning for the children you love,
until you are bald as vultures, because they have left you for exile.

The Oppression of the Poor

- 2 Woe to those who lie awake planning evil,
who in the light of morning carry out their plan
because they have the power to do it.
- 2 They covet fields and seize them,

desire houses and take them,
they crush householder and his household,
people and their possessions.

- 3 Therefore the LORD says:
'I am planning disaster from which you cannot save your neck,
nor walk proudly because it will be a terrible time.
4 On that day they will sing a taunt-song to you,
this mocking lament:
"My people's estate is being measured for sale,
our captors are dividing our fields.
We are completely undone."
5 There will be no one to measure out land for you
from the LORD's community.
6 "'Don't rant!' they urge, "Of such things one does not prophesy!
Shame will not overtake us!
7 Is the LORD impatient, or are such things his deeds?
Are not his words favourable to the family of Jacob?"
Aren't my commands good for those who obey them?
8 But you, you stand up as a foe against those who are peaceful;
you strip the robe from those who pass by quietly, averse to conflict.
9 Women of my people you drive out from their happy homes,
from their young children you take away my glory forever.
10 Rise and begone, for this is no place to rest.
Your uncleanness brings destruction, severe destruction.
11 If a person walking in wine and falsehood were to say,
"I will prophesy to you of wine and strong drink,"
then he would be the perfect prophet for this people!"

The Lord Leading Back His Scattered People

- 12 'I will assuredly assemble all of Jacob,
I will surely gather the survivors of Israel.
I will herd them together as sheep in a fold,
like a flock in the pasture,
and the land will resound with the sounds of multitudes.
13 'The one who breaks out goes first.

They have broken forth and passed by the gate
and through it have they gone out.
Their king leads before them,
the LORD at their head.'

The Crimes of Judah's Civil and Spiritual Leaders

- 3 I also said:
'Listen now, leaders of Jacob,
judges of the house of Israel.
Is it not your duty to know what is the right?
2 Haters of that which is good and lovers of evil!
- 3 'They devour the flesh of my people,
and their hide they strip from off them,
and break in pieces and serve up their bones,
like meat in a pot or the cooking-pan!'
- 4 'Then they will cry out to the LORD,
but he will not pay attention to them.
He will hide his face from them at that time
because they have committed such crimes.'
- 5 Therefore the LORD says:
'To the prophets who lead my people astray,
who when they have food between their teeth declare peace,
but against one who puts nothing in their mouths,
they proclaim an open war!'
- 6 'Night will overtake you so that you have no vision,
and darkness so that there will be no divination,
and the sun will go down on the prophets,
and the day shall be dark over them.'
- 7 'The seers will be ashamed,
and the diviners will turn pale,
all of them will cover their mouths.
For there will be no answer from God.'
- 8 'But I, on the contrary am full of power,

and the sense of justice and strength,
to make known to Jacob his crime,
and to Israel his sin.

- 9 ‘Hear this, leaders of the house of Jacob,
judges of the house of Israel,
you who spurn justice,
and make all that is straight crooked,
10 who build Zion with acts of bloodshed,
and Jerusalem with crime.

- 11 ‘The leaders render judgment for a bribe,
and her priests give oracles for a reward,
and her prophets divine for silver.
Yet they claim to rely on the LORD,
“The LORD”, they say, “is in our midst.
Evil cannot overtake us.”

- 12 ‘Therefore for your sakes
Zion will be plowed as a field,
and Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins,
and the temple mount a wooded height.’

The Peace and World-wide Renown of Zion

- 4 In the days to come
the mountain of the LORD will be established,
the house of our God on the top of the mountain,
lifted above the hills.

- All the nations will flow to it,
2 and many peoples will go and say,
‘Come, let us go up to the Lord’s mount,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
so that he may instruct us in his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.’
For from Zion proceeds instruction
and the Lord’s word from Jerusalem.

- 3 He will arbitrate between many peoples,

and render decisions for numerous nations,
They will beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
they will learn war no more.

- 4 They will live each under his vine,
and under his fig-tree, with none to terrify them.
For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

- 5 Each nation trusts in the names of their gods,
but we will worship the LORD our God forever.

- 6 'On that day,' says the LORD,
'I will assemble the lame.
I will gather exiles I punished.
7 I will restore the lame as a remnant,
the exiles into a great nation.
The LORD will rule over them
on Mount Zion from that time forever.'

- 8 But you, watchtower for the flock,
hill of the daughter of Zion,
to you will return your former rule.

- 9 So why do you now cry aloud? Haven't you any king?
Or has your counsellor perished, so you writhe in pain like a woman
in labour?

- 10 Writhe and scream, daughter of Zion, like a woman in labour!
For now you must leave the city and camp in the open field.
You will be taken to Babylon, but there will be rescued.
There the LORD will save you from the hands of your foes.

- 11 But now many nations gather against you.
They say, 'Let her be defiled, we will gloat over Zion.'
12 But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD.
They do not understand his plan,
for he has gathered them like sheaves for the threshing floor.

- 13 'Arise, thresh, daughter of Zion.
I will make your horns iron,
and your hoofs brass,
so you might beat in pieces many peoples,

and devote to the LORD their spoil,
and their wealth to the ruler of all the earth.

- 5 'Now cut yourself in bitter grief,
 daughter besieged by soldiers.
They have set a wall around you.
They strike the ruler of Israel,
in the face with a rod.
- 2 'Bethlehem in Ephrathah,
 small among the tribes of Judah,
from you will come a king
who will rule for me over Israel,
whose family line goes back to the distant past.'
- 3 So the LORD will only abandon Israel to its enemies
until the woman in labour gives birth.
Then the survivors will be reunited with their own people.
- 4 And he will stand and shepherd by the strength of the LORD,
In the exalted name of the LORD his God;
And they will live in security, for now he will be great,
even to the ends of the earth.
- 5 This will be our peace:
when Assyria comes into our land
and treads on our soil,
we will raise up against him seven shepherds,
eight leaders of men.
- 6 They will shepherd Assyria with a sword,
and the land of Nimrod with bared blades.
They will deliver us from Assyria,
when they come into our land,
and tread within our borders.
- 7 And the survivors of Jacob will be disbursed among the nations,
in the midst of many peoples,
like dew from the LORD,
like showers on the grass,
which don't wait for people to come
or linger for mortals.

- 8 And the survivors of Jacob will be disbursed among the nations,
in the midst of many peoples,
like a lion among the beasts of the forest,
like a young lion among the sheep-folds,
who, when he passes through, pounces.
He savages his prey. There is no rescuer.
- 9 Let your hand triumph over your adversaries,
let all your enemies be cut off.
- 10 On that day, says the LORD:
'I will slaughter your horses from your midst,
and destroy your chariots.
- 11 I will devastate the cities in your land,
and tear down your fortresses.
- 12 I will destroy your magic charms,
and you will have no soothsayers.
- 13 I will cut down your idols and sacred pillars,
and you will not worship any more the work of your hands.
- 14 I will uproot your sacred poles,
and destroy your idols.
- 15 In my wrath and my anger
I will seek vengeance on the nations that ignore me.'

Israel's False Conception of the Lord's Character and Demands

- 6 Hear now what the LORD is saying:
Arise, present your complaint before the mountains,
let the hills hear your voice!
- 2 Hear, mountains, the LORD's accusation,
listen, foundations of the earth.
For the LORD has a case against his people.
He has a dispute with Israel.
- 3 'My people, what have I done to you.
How have I displeased you? Answer me!
- 4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
from the land of slavery I redeemed you.
I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you.
- 5 My people, what did Balak, king of Moab counsel?

And how did Balaam, the son of Beor, answer him?
Remember now the journey from Shittim to Gilgal,
so that you might realise the just deeds of the LORD.'

- 6 With what should I come before the LORD?
Bow myself before the God on high?
Should I come before him with burnt-offerings,
with calves a year old?
- 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
With ten thousand streams of oil?
Should I give him my first-born son for my guilt,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
- 8 The LORD has told you what is good,
what he demands of you:
Only to do justice and love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.

Guilt and Punishment of Jerusalem

- 9 Listen! The LORD calls to the city!
Listen, tribe and assembly of the city!
- 10 'Can I forget the hoarded treasures in the houses of the wicked,
and the accursed scant measure?
- 11 Can I leave her unpunished because of evil scales,
and the bag of false weights?
- 12 Whose rich people are full of violence,
her inhabitants liars,
whose tongues speak deceit?
- 13 'But I indeed, have begun to punish you,
to lay you in ruins because of your sins.
- 14 You will eat but not be satisfied,
your stomach empty within you.
You will store up but lose everything,
because whatever you save I will give to the sword.
- 15 You will sow but not reap.
You will tread the olives but have no oil for rubbing,
tread grapes but drink no wine!

- 16 ‘For you have followed the commands of Omri,
and all the practices of the house of Ahab.
You have acted in accord with their counsels,
so I will give you up to ruin,
the city’s inhabitants to derision.
The nations will treat you with contempt!’

The Utter Degeneracy of the People

- 7 Woe, woe is me, for I have become
like a field after harvest,
like a vineyard after gathering;
not a cluster of grapes to eat,
not a fig that anyone desires.
- 2 The honest have perished from the land,
of the upright among people there is none.
All of them lie in wait to shed blood.
They hunt one another with the net.
- 3 Their hands know well how to do evil,
the officer and judge demands a bribe,
the high official decides as he pleases
and they conspire to pervert justice.
- 4 The best of them are like a thorn thicket,
their most upright like a prickly hedge.
The day of their punishment has come,
now will be their confusion!
- 5 Do not trust your neighbour,
do not rely on a friend.
From the wife who lies in your arms
guard your tongue.
- 6 For son insults father,
daughter rises up against mother,
daughter-in-law against mother-in-law,
a man’s enemies are the people of his own household.

Zion's Ultimate Vindication and Exaltation

- 7 But I will look to the LORD,
I will wait for the God of my salvation.
My God will hear me!
- 8 Do not rejoice over me, my enemy.
If I have fallen, I will rise.
If I sit in darkness, the LORD is my light.
- 9 The anger of the LORD I will bear,
for against him have I sinned –
until he champions my cause
and gives judgment for me.
He will bring me into to the light,
I will see his justice.
- 10 So my enemy will see, and shame will cover them,
they who said, 'Where is the LORD your God?'
I will look upon them,
they will be trampled on like mud in the street!
- 11 It is a day for rebuilding your walls,
this day will your boundary will be extended.
- 12 This day they will come to you,
from Assyria and the cities of Egypt,
and from Egypt even to the Euphrates River,
from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.
- 13 Though the land has become a desolation
because of its inhabitants, because of their deeds.
- 14 Shepherd your flock with your staff, the flock that belong to you,
who live alone in the forest, in the midst of meadows;
so that they may pasture in Bashon and Gilead as in the days of old,
as in the days when you came from Egypt, gave us wonders to see.
- 15 Nations will see and be ashamed of all their might;
they will put their hands to their mouth, their ears will become
deaf,
- 16 they will lick the dust like snakes, like creatures that crawl on the
earth;
- 17 they will come trembling and in terror from their hiding places, in
dread and fear.

- 18 Who is a God like you, forgiving iniquity
and passing by the rebellion of the remnant of your people?
He does not retain his anger forever, but is one who delights in
mercy.
- 19 He will tread under foot our iniquity;
you will cast into the depths of the sea all our iniquities.
- 20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob, and loving kindness to Abra-
ham,
as you have sworn to our ancestors from the days of old.

NAHUM

1 A message about Nineveh, a vision which came to Nahum from Elkosh.

God's wrath

2 The LORD tolerates no rivals.

The LORD is vengeful and fierce in wrath.
The LORD does not fail to punish his foes;
the LORD is vengeful against his enemies.

3 The LORD is slow to anger,
great in power.

The guilty will not escape
his punishment.

Storm tempest is his path
and cloud is the dust of his feet.

4 He rebukes the sea and dries it up
and makes all the streams run dry.

Bashan and Carmel are languishing
and the bloom of Lebanon is withered.

5 The mountains tremble before him
and the hills dissolve.

The earth heaves before him,
the world and all who live in it.

6 Who can stand before his wrath?

Who can withstand the heat of his anger?
His fierce fury pours forth like fire,
he shatters rocks.

7 The LORD is good to those who hope in him,
a place of refuge in the day of trouble.

8 With rushing flood an end he makes
of those who rise against him,
he drives his enemies into darkness.

- 9 Why do you plot against the LORD?
 He will end you.
 He only takes vengeance once.
- 10 Thorns, tangled and drenched,
 they are consumed like dry stubble.
- 11 Nineveh! From you has arisen
 one who plots evil against the LORD,
 a counsellor of wickedness.

Good news for Judah

- 12 The LORD says:
 ‘Though they are many and strong,
 they will pass away and be gone.
 Though I have afflicted you,
 I will afflict you no more,
13 and now I will break his yoke from your necks
 and snap your chains.’
- 14 The LORD has given this command concerning you, Nineveh:
 ‘Your name will no longer be remembered.
 I will destroy every idol and image
 in the house of your God.
 I will destroy even your tomb,
 for you are worthless.’
- 15 Look! On the mountains a messenger
 bringing good news,
 announcing peace!
 ‘Celebrate the feasts, Judah,
 fulfil your vows.
 Never again will these enemies invade your land,
 they are destroyed!’

Destruction of the city

- 2 Nineveh! The destroyer has come up against you;

mount guard upon the rampart;
watch the road; brace yourselves;
strengthen your might to the utmost.

- 2 For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob
and of Israel,
though the devastators have plundered them
and destroyed their vines.
- 3 The shields of his warriors are dyed red,
his soldiers are clothed in scarlet,
his chariots gleam like fire
on the day he prepares for battle
spears are shaken.
- 4 Chariots rush across the fields,
storm through the squares;
they flame like torches,
they dart like lightning.
- 5 A leader rallies his nobles,
they hurl themselves forward.
They speed on toward the wall;
the storming-shield is set up.
- 6 The water-gates are thrown open,
and the palace dissolves in ruins.
- 7 The queen is stripped,
she is carried off.
Her maids moan like doves,
beating upon their breasts.
- 8 Like a pool of water is Nineveh,
her waters fast ebbing away.
'Stand firm! Stand firm!' someone cries,
but no one turns back.
- 9 'Loot the silver, loot the gold,
for there is no end to the treasure,
the wealth and precious things.'
- 10 Nineveh is empty, desolate, devastated,

with faint heart and knocking knee.
There is weakness in every limb,
and faces grow pale.

- 11 Where now is the den of lions?
Where now the lair of their young?
Where the lion used to withdraw,
with his cubs, with none to disturb them?
- 12 The lion tore enough for his cubs,
and strangled prey for his lionesses.
He filled his caves with the kill,
he filled his lairs with fresh meat.
- 13 'But see, I am against you,'
the LORD of hosts declares,
'I will burn your chariots in smoke and fire.
The sword will devour your young lions.
You will never again prey on the land.
No more will your messengers be heard.'

Ruin

- 3 Woe to the bloody city!
Full of lies and plunder,
without end is the spoil.
- 2 Hear the crack of the whip,
hear the rattle of wheels.
Galloping horses,
jolting chariots.
- 3 Horsemen charging,
swords flashing,
spears glittering,
a multitude of slain,
a heap of bodies,
no end to the corpses
over which people stumble!
- 4 'Because you acted like a whore,
bewitching the nations,

- enticing the peoples,
5 I am against you, Nineveh'
the LORD of hosts declares.
'I will strip your clothes
and show the nations your nakedness,
and the kingdoms your shame.
- 6 'I will fling loathsome filth at you,
and make you an object of contempt,
a spectacle,
7 so that everyone who sees you
will flee from you and say:
"Nineveh is laid waste,
who will mourn for her?"
- 8 'Are you any better than Thebes,
which stood on the banks of the Nile,
with waters around as a rampart,
whose wall was the sea of waters?
- 9 Her strength was Ethiopia and Egypt.
The Libyans were her helpers,
and Put with its countless people.
- 10 Yet she was exiled
and made captive.
On all corners of the streets
her infants were dashed to pieces.
Lots were cast for her nobles,
all her great ones were bound in chains.
- 11 'You too, Nineveh, will be drunk with fear;
you too will seek a place of escape from the foe.
12 All your fortresses are fig-trees with the first ripe figs;
if shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater!
13 Your troops are weak as women before your foes;
the gates of your land are wide open;
your defenses burned down.
- 14 'Draw water for the siege,
strengthen your forts.
Go to the clay pits and tread the clay;
take up the brick moulds.

- 15 There the fire will consume you,
the sword will cut you down.
- Multiply like the locust
or a swarm of grasshoppers.
- 16 Increase the numbers of your merchants
until they are more than the stars of heaven,
- 17 until your watchmen are locusts,
and your scribes like grasshoppers,
which swarm in the hedges on a cold day;
but when the sun rises
they fly away,
no one knows where.
- 18 'King of Assyria:
your princes slumber,
your nobles sleep!
Your people are scattered on the mountains
with no one to gather them!
- 19 There is no healing for your hurt,
your wound is incurable.
All who hear of your fate clap their hands in joy,
for who has escaped your limitless cruelty?'

HABAKKUK

Habakkuk's message

- 1 The message seen by the prophet Habakkuk.

(*Habbakuk*)

- 2 How long, LORD, have I cried out
and without you hearing me!
I cry to you, 'Violence!'
but you do not help.
3 Why do you make me look upon wickedness
and behold trouble?
Destruction and violence are before my eyes,
and fighting and quarrelling.
4 Therefore the law is weak,
and justice is never rendered;
for the wicked surround the righteous,
so that justice is perverted.

(*The Lord*)

- 5 Look at the nations, look well,
be shocked and amazed.
For I am about to do a work in your days;
you will not believe it when it is told.
6 For I am about to raise up the Chaldeans,
a nation grim and quick of action
who sweep over the whole breadth of the earth
to seize dwellings not their own.

- 7 They bring fear and terror.
They write their own rules.
- 8 Their horses are swifter than leopards,
quicker than wolves hunting at dusk.
From afar they come swooping down,
like an eagle attacking its prey.
- 9 They all come to do violence,
a horde like a desert wind,
they gather up captives like sand.
- 10 At kings they scoff,
and princes are sport to them.
They laugh at every fortress,
and heap up earth to take it.
- 11 Then they sweep on like the wind,
Their strength is their god.

(Habakkuk)

- 12 Are you not eternal, LORD,
my holy one, who does not die?
LORD you have appointed them to execute judgment,
my rock, you have established them to punish.
- 13 Your eyes are too pure to look at evil,
you cannot condone iniquity.
So why do you regard the treacherous in silence,
while the wicked swallows the upright?
- 14 You have made people like the fish of the sea,
like reptiles that have no ruler.
- 15 The wicked sweep them all into their nets,
and gather them into their drag-nets,
and rejoice and celebrate.
- 16 Therefore they sacrifice to their net,
and burn offerings to their drag-net;
for by their nets are their portions generous,
and their food is rich.
- 17 Will they empty their nets continually,
slaughter nations unpityingly?

- 2 I will take my stand on my watch-tower,
and station myself on a turret.
I will watch to see what the LORD will say to me,
what answer he will make to my complaint.

(*The Lord*)

- 2 Then the LORD answered me and said:
Inscribe the vision plainly on tablets,
so that even someone running by could read it.
- 3 Though the vision waits for the time set,
it hastens to fulfilment and will not fail;
Though it lingers long, wait for it.
For it surely will come and will not be delayed.
- 4 The strength of the proud fails,
but the upright lives by their faithfulness.
- 5 Wealth is treacherous,
the arrogant never have enough.
They make their desire as wide as Sheol,
are like death, unsatisfied,
For they gather to themselves all the nations,
bring together to themselves all peoples.
- 6 Shouldn't everyone mock them?
sing a taunt-song against them, and say:

Woe to the person who amasses what is not theirs,
and loads themself down with goods taken in pledge!
- 7 Won't your creditors suddenly rise,
and those who will overthrow you awake,
and you become their prey?
- 8 For as you have plundered many peoples,
the survivors will prey upon you.
You have shed blood and committed violence
to the earth, peoples and their cities.
- 9 Woe to you who seeks unjust gain for your dynasty,
who sets your nest on high to be safe from the reach of misfortune!

- 10 You have planned only shame for your dynasty.
You have destroyed many peoples,
and brought guilt upon yourself;
- 11 the stone will cry out from the wall,
and the beam from the timber will answer it.
- 12 Woe to the person who builds a city by bloodshed,
and founds a town by crime
- 13 while the peoples toil for what fires will consume,
and the nations weary themselves for nothing!
- 14 This the LORD of hosts has said, and the earth will be as full of the knowledge of the LORD as the seas are full of water.
- 15 Woe to him who in fury gives drink to his neighbor
to make him drunk, and see him naked.
- 16 You are filled with shame, not glory;
drink yourself and be uncovered.
The cup from the LORD's hand
will pass in turn to you,
and shame will cover your glory!
- 17 For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you,
the destruction of animals will terrify you,
because you shed people's blood on the earth,
destroyed people and their cities.
- 18 What use is an idol?
A human made it,
a metal image.
It cannot speak,
it cannot teach truth,
Why does its maker trust it?
- 19 Woe to the person who says to a block, awake!
to a dumb stone, arise!
What can it teach?
It may be set with gold and silver,
but there is no breath at all within it.
- 20 The LORD is in his holy temple.
Let all the earth be silent before him!

Habakkuk's psalm

- 3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to the Shigionoth.
- 2 I have heard, LORD, of your fame,
 I have seen, LORD, your work;
through the years you have made yourself known,
 in wrath you remember mercy.
- 3 God comes from Teman,
 and the Holy One from the mountain-land of Paran. *Selah*
His glory covers the heavens,
 and his splendour fills the earth.
- 4 Before him it is like the light,
 rays he has at his side,
 where his power is hidden.
- 5 Before him pestilence stalks,
 after him plague follows.
- 6 He stands, and the earth trembles,
 he looks, and the nations melt away,
and the mountains of old are scattered,
 the everlasting hills bow down.
These are his ways from of old.
- 7 The tents of Cushan are afraid,
 the curtains of Midian tremble.
- 8 Is your wrath, LORD, with the rivers?
 Is your anger against the streams?
 Or your rage against the sea?
Is that why you ride on your war-steeds?
 Why you mount your chariots of victory?
- 9 Why you bare your bow?
 Why you fill your quiver with shafts?

You split the earth with torrents.
- 10 The mountains see you and writhe.
The tempest of waters sweeps by.
 The great deep sends forth its voice,
 and lifts up its hands.
- 11 The sun forgets to rise.
 The moon stands still in its place.

- Your arrows go forth to give light.
Your glittering spear is as lightning.
- 12 In rage you stride over the earth.
In wrath you trample the nations.
- 13 You go forth to save your people.
You go to help your anointed.
You crush the head of the wicked nation,
laying him bare from thigh to neck. *Selah*
- 14 You pierced his head with his spears,
as his champions storm out to scatter us,
as they rejoice to devour the poor secretly.
- 15 You tread the sea with your horses,
while the mighty waters roar.
- 16 I hear, and my body trembles,
and at the sound my lips quiver.
My bones begin to decay,
and my footsteps totter beneath me,
while I long for the day of distress
to come upon those who attack us.
- 17 Though the fig-tree bears no fruit,
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive harvest fails,
and the fields produce no food,
though the flock is cut off from the fold,
and there is no herd in the stalls,
- 18 yet I will exult in the LORD,
and rejoice in the God who saves me.
- 19 The Lord God is my strength;
he makes my feet as sure as the feet of deer,
and causes me to walk on the heights!

To the music director: Use stringed instruments.

ZEPHANIAH

- 1 The LORD's message, which came to Zephaniah, son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the time of Josiah of Judah who was son of Amon.

The Day of Judgment on Judah

- 2 I will utterly destroy everything
from off the face of the earth,
says the LORD.
- 3 I will sweep away human and animal,
the birds of the sky
and the fish of the sea.
I will cause the wicked to stumble,
and I will cut off humanity from the face of the earth,
says the LORD.
- 4 I will stretch out my hand over Judah
and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
and I will cut off from this place the last remnant of Baal
and the name of the heathen priests,
- 5 and those who worship on the housetops
to the stars in the sky,
and those worshippers of the LORD
who also pay homage to Milcom,
- 6 and those who turn back
from following the LORD,
And those who do not seek the LORD
nor strive to find him.
- 7 Be silent before the Lord God,
for near is the day of the LORD,
for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has sanctified his guests.
- 8 On the day of the LORD's sacrifice:
I will punish the officers and the royal princes,

and all those who clothe themselves in foreign apparel.

- 9 On that day:
I will punish all who leap over the threshold,
who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.
- 10 Listen on that day, says the LORD:
A cry will be heard from the Fish Gate,
and a wailing from the New Quarter,
and a great din from the hills.
- 11 Those who live in the Mortar wail,
for all the traders are silenced,
the money counters wiped out.
- 12 I will search Jerusalem with a lamp,
I will punish those who are at ease,
who sit comfortably with their wine,
who say to themselves,
'the LORD brings neither prosperity nor calamity.'
- 13 Their wealth will become a prey
and their houses a desolation.
Though they build houses,
they will not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they will not drink wine from them.
- 14 Near is the day of the LORD!
Near and rapidly approaching!
Near is the bitter day of the LORD,
and the scream of the warrior.
- 15 That day is a day of wrath,
a day of trouble and distress,
a day of destruction and desolation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
a day of the trumpet and battle-cry,
against the fortified cities
and against the high battlements.

- 17 And I will bring distress upon the people
and they will walk as the blind,
because they have sinned against the LORD,
and their blood will be poured out as dust
and their flesh as dung.
- 18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them. For in the day
of the wrath of the LORD and in the fire of his fury the whole earth will
be consumed. For he will make a speedy end of all the inhabitants of the
earth.

The Imminent Judgment upon the Nations

- 2 Be ashamed within yourselves, be ashamed,
2 before you become as the drifting chaff,
before the anger of the LORD comes upon you,
before the day of the LORD's wrath comes upon you.
- 3 Seek the LORD all you meek of the earth,
you who obey his law;
Seek righteousness, seek meekness;
perhaps you may be hidden in the day of the LORD's wrath.
- 4 For Gaza will be forsaken;
Ashkelon a desolation;
Ashdod – by noon will they rout her
and Ekron be torn up!
- 5 Woe to those who live by the sea coast,
people of the Cherethites!
The word of the LORD is against you,
Canaan, land of the Philistines!
- 6 I will destroy you so that you will be without inhabitants, and you will
7 become shepherds' cots and folds for flocks. The sea coast will belong to
the survivors of the house of Judah. They will pasture their flocks there. In
the house of Ashkelon they will lie down at evening. The LORD their God
will be with them and restore their fortunes.
- 8 I have heard the taunts of Moab,
and the revilings of the Ammonites,

how they have taunted my people,
and spoken boastfully concerning their border.
Therefore as I live, says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Moab will be like Sodom,
and the Ammonites like Gomorrah,
a breeding-place of nettles, and salt pits,
and a desolation, forever;
the residue of my people will plunder them,
and the survivors of my nation will inherit them.

This will they have for their pride,
because they have taunted and spoken boastfully
against the people of the LORD of hosts.

The LORD will terrify them;
he will reduce all the gods of the earth;
then all the peoples of the nations will worship him,
each in their own land.

You, also, Ethiopians,
slain by his sword are you!

And he will stretch out his hand
against the north and destroy Assyria;
And he will make Nineveh a desolation,
dry as the wilderness.

Herds will lie down in it,
every beast of the earth,

Desert owl and screech owl
will lodge in its capitals.

The owl will hoot in the window,
the raven on the doorstep,
all stripped bare of cedar.

This is the exultant city which sat secure. The city who said to herself, I am
and there is none else! How has she become a desolation! A lair of beasts!
Every passerby hisses at her, shakes their hand.

Jerusalem's Deep-seated Corruption

Woe to the rebellious and unclean city of oppression,

- 2 She has not obeyed the voice,
she has not accepted instruction,
In the LORD she has not trusted,
to her God she has not drawn near.
- 3 Her rulers in her midst are roaring lions.
Her judges are evening wolves,
who leave nothing over until the morning,
- 4 Her prophets are braggarts, faithless men.
Her priests profane what is holy
and do violence to the law.
- 5 The LORD is righteous in her midst,
he does no wrong,
Morning by morning
he establishes his decree,
Light is not lacking,
an oversight is unknown.
But the unjust know no shame.
- 6 'I have cut off nations,
their turrets are destroyed;
I have laid waste their broad streets,
so that none passes over them.
Desolate are their cities without people,
without inhabitants.'
- 7 I said:
'Surely the city will fear me,
she will accept instruction.
Nothing will vanish from her eyes
that I have impressed upon her;
But the more zealously have they made all their deeds corrupt.'

The Future Vindication and Exultation of Jerusalem

- 8 Wait for me, is the LORD's message, until the day when I stand up as a witness, for it is my fixed purpose to gather the nations, to collect the kingdoms, to pour upon them my wrath and my hot anger; for by the fire of my fury will all the earth be consumed.

- 9 For then I will purify the lips of all peoples, so that they will all call on
10 the LORD's name, to serve him with one accord. From beyond the rivers of
Cush my worshipers will bring me offerings.
- 11 On that day you will no longer be ashamed of all your deeds by which
you rebelled against me. For I will rid you of your proudly arrogant ones,
12 and you will never again be haughty on my holy mountain. But I will leave
13 in your midst a people humble and poor, and the remnant of Israel will
trust in the name of the LORD. They will not do evil, nor speak falsehood,
and a deceitful tongue will not be found in their mouth; but they will
pasture and lie down, and no one will make them afraid.
- 14 Cry out with joy, daughter of Zion,
shout aloud, Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
daughter of Jerusalem.
- 15 The LORD has put away your adversaries,
he has turned away your foes;
the LORD is king in your midst,
you will fear evil no more.
- 16 In that day it will be said to Jerusalem:
Fear not!
Zion, let not your hands grow weak!
- 17 The LORD your God is in your midst,
a victorious hero.
He will rejoice over you with joy,
he will renew his love,
he will exult over you with singing,
as on a day of festival.
- I will take away from you your disgrace,
and put away from you your reproach.
- 19 I will destroy at that time
all who afflict you.
I will deliver the lame,
and gather the outcast,
I will make them an object of renown
and fame in all the earth.
- 20 I will do good to you,
at the time when I gather you.
For I will make you an object of fame and renown
among all the peoples of the earth;

when I bring back your captivity before your eyes.

This says the LORD.

THE ADDRESSES OF HAGGAI TO THE TEMPLE BUILDERS

The call to rebuild the Temple

- 1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, this message from the LORD came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest:
- 2 The LORD of hosts says:
The people say that the time has not yet come to rebuild the temple of the LORD.
- 3 Then this message from the LORD came to Haggai the prophet:
- 4 Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your own well-roofed houses, while this temple lies in ruins?
- 5 The LORD of hosts says:
Consider your past experiences.
- 6 You sow much,
but bring in little;
you eat,
but you do not have enough;
you drink,
but are not filled;
you clothe yourselves,
but not enough to be warm;
and those who earn wages,
put those wages in a bag with holes.
- 7 The LORD of hosts says:
Consider your experiences.

8 Go up to the mountains,
and bring wood
and rebuild the temple;
then I will be pleased with it,
and I will reveal my glory.

The LORD says:

9 You looked for much,
and it came to little;
and when you brought the harvest home,
I blew it away.

Why?

The LORD of hosts says:

Because my temple lies in ruins,
while you shelter in your own houses.

10 The heavens withhold the dew,
and the earth withholds its fruit,
11 and I have called forth a drought upon the land
and upon the mountains,
and upon the grain and the new wine and the oil
and upon that which the ground brings forth,
and upon people and animals,
and upon all the labor of your hands.

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, with all the rest of the people, obeyed the command of the LORD their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him to them. They showed proper respect for the LORD.

13 Haggai, the prophet of the LORD, as the LORD commanded him, told the people: 'The LORD says: I am with you.'

14 And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, and the spirit of all the rest of the people, so that they came and 15 worked on the temple of the LORD of hosts, their God, in the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

The future glory of the new Temple

- 2 In the second year of Darius the king, on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, this message from the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, telling him to speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the rest of the people:
- 3 Who is left among you that saw this temple in its former glory?
And how do you see it now?
Doesn't it seem as though there is nothing there?
- 4 The LORD says:
Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,
be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest,
be strong, all you people of the land.
- The LORD says:
Begin the work, for I am with you.
- The LORD of hosts says:
5 When your ancestors left Egypt I made a promise to you,
and I am still with you.
Do not be afraid!
- 6 The LORD of hosts says:
In a little while, I will shake the heavens,
and the earth, and the sea, and the land.
- 7 And I will shake all nations,
and the precious things of all nations shall come here;
and I will fill this temple with glory.
- The LORD of hosts says:
8 The silver is mine,
and the gold is mine,
9 The later glory of this temple
shall be greater than the former.
- The LORD of hosts says:
In this place I will grant prosperity.
- This is the message of the LORD of hosts.

Former displeasure and the new promise of blessings

10 In the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius,
11 this message from the LORD came to Haggai the prophet: The LORD of hosts
12 says: 'Ask the priests for a ruling: "If one carries consecrated meat in the
fold of his garment, and with that garment touches bread, or stew, or wine,
or oil, or any food, will it become holy?"'

And the priests answered: 'No.'

13 Then said Haggai, 'If one who is unclean by reason of a dead body
touches any of these, will it be unclean?'

And the priests answered: 'It would be unclean.'

14 Haggai replied: 'So is this people and so is this nation before me, the
LORD declares, and so is every work of their hands; and that which they
15 offer there is unclean. Think back from this day, before a stone was laid
16 upon a stone in the temple of the LORD. How were you? When you came
to a heap of grain expecting twenty measures, there were only ten; when
you came to the wine vat to draw out fifty vessels, there were only twenty.
17 "I struck all the work of your hands with blasting and blight, with mildew
18 and with hail. Yet you didn't turn to me," says the LORD, "Think back
from this day, think! From the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from
the day when the foundations of the temple of the LORD were laid, and
19 consider. The seed is in the granary, but the vine and the fig tree and the
pomegranate and the olive tree have not yet brought forth fruit. From this
day will I bless you."

Zerubbabel

20 This message from the LORD came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-
fourth day of the month:

21 Tell Zerubbabel, governor of Judah:
I will shake the heavens and the earth;
22 and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms;
and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations;
and I will overthrow the chariots,
and those who ride in them;
and the horses and their riders shall come down,

each by the sword of his fellow.

23 In that day,
 the LORD of hosts says,
I will take you, Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel,
 the LORD says,
and will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you,
 the LORD of hosts says.

ZECHARIAH

The Lesson from the Past

- 1 In the eighth month in the second year of Darius, this message of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo:
- 2 The LORD was furious with your ancestors. So tell the people this message
3 of the LORD of hosts: ‘Return to me,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I will
4 return to you’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Do not be like your ancestors to
whom the former prophets cried, “The LORD of hosts says to turn now
5 from your evil ways, and from your evil deeds”. They did not heed nor
6 listen to me,’ says the LORD. ‘Your ancestors, where are they? And the
prophets, do they live forever? But did not my words and my statutes with
which I charged my servants the prophets overtake your ancestors? And
they repented and said, “Just as the LORD of hosts planned to do to us,
according to our ways, and according to our deeds, so he has dealt with
us.”’

The Lord's Jealous Love for Zion

- 7 In the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat,
in the second year of Darius, this message of the LORD came to the prophet
Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo:
- 8 I saw in the night a man on a red horse, among the myrtle trees that
were in the valley-bottom. Behind him there were horses, red, sorrel, and
9 white. Then said I, ‘My Lord, what are these?’ And the messenger who was
10 talking with me said, ‘I will show you what they are.’ And the man who
was standing among the myrtle trees answered, ‘They are those whom the
11 LORD has sent to patrol the earth.’ And the riders answered the messenger
of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, ‘We have gone up
and down through the world and behold, all the earth is still and at peace.’
- 12 Then the messenger of the LORD said, ‘LORD of hosts, how long will you
have no pity for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah with which you have
13 been angry for seventy years?’ And the LORD answered the messenger who
14 was talking with me with kind and comforting words. So the messenger

15 who was talking with me said to me, 'Proclaim now that the LORD of hosts says: I am deeply concerned for Jerusalem. But I am deeply angry with the arrogant, complacent nations. I was only a little angry with Israel but they
16 made the suffering worse. Therefore, says the LORD, I am turning to show mercy to Jerusalem. My temple will be rebuilt in it, says the LORD of hosts,
17 and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem. Proclaim again: Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities will again overflow with prosperity and the LORD will again comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem.'

Destruction of the Heathen Powers

18 Now I looked up and saw four horns. I said to the messenger who was
19 talking with me, 'What are these?' He answered, 'These are the horns which scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.'
20 Then the LORD showed me four smiths. I said, 'What are these coming
21 to do?' He answered, 'The horns scattered Judah, so that no one dared lift their head. But the smiths have come to terrify them, to crush the horns of the nations which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter its people.'

Promise that Jerusalem Will be Gloriously Restored

2 Then I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. I said,
2 'Where are you going?' He replied, 'To measure Jerusalem, to see what is
3 its breadth and length.' Then the messenger who talked with me stepped
4 forward, and another messenger went out to meet him, and said to him,
'Run and tell to that young man that Jerusalem will be inhabited like a
village without walls, because so many people and cattle will live there.
5 For I, says the LORD, will be a wall of fire her, and I will be the glory in the
midst of her.
6 Up! Away! Flee from the land of the north, says the LORD.
For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, says
the LORD.
7 Up, escape to Zion, you who live in Babylon.
8 This is what the LORD of hosts says to the nations which plundered
you:
Whoever touches you touches the apple of my eye.

- 9 I will raise my hand against them.
They will be plunder for their own slaves; and you will know that
the LORD of hosts has sent me.
- 10 ‘Sing and rejoice, daughter of Zion! I am coming,
I will live among you, says the LORD.
- 11 Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day,
and will be his people, and he will live among you.
You will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.
- 12 The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land.
He will again choose Jerusalem.
- 13 Be silent, everyone, in the presence of the LORD,
because he is coming from his holy dwelling.’

Purification of the Priesthood and Nation

- 3 Then he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the messenger
of the LORD and the Adversary standing at his right hand to accuse him.
- 2 And the messenger of the LORD said to the Adversary, ‘May the LORD rebuke
you, Adversary! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not
3 this man a brand plucked out of the fire?’ Now Joshua was clothed with
4 filthy garments and was standing before the messenger. The messenger
said to those who stood before him, ‘Take off his filthy garments.’ Then
to Joshua he said, ‘I have taken your guilt from you and I will clothe you
5 in priestly robes.’ And he ordered: ‘Set a clean turban upon his head.’ So
they set a clean turban on his head, and clothed him with garments. The
messenger of the LORD was standing by.
- 6 And the messenger of the LORD testified to Joshua: The LORD of hosts
7 says: ‘If you walk in my ways, and if you will keep my instructions, then
you will rule my house and keep my courts and I will give you a place of
8 access among these that stand by. Hear now, Joshua the high priest, you
and your associates who sit before me; for they are men who are a sign; for
9 I am going to bring forth my servant the Branch. On the stone that I have
set before Joshua, on one stone, are seven facets. I will engrave it,’ says the
10 LORD of hosts, ‘and I will remove the guilt of that land in one day. On that
day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘you will each invite your neighbour under
the vine and under the fig tree.’

The Supporters of the Temple Service

4 Then the messenger who talked with me came again and woke me, as
2 someone who is woken from sleep. He said to me, 'What do you see?' I
3 said, 'I see a candlestick, all of gold, with a bowl on its top, and seven lamps
on it. There are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are on its top, and
4 two olive trees next to it, one on the right side of the bowl, and the other on
5 its left side.' I said to the messenger who talked with me, 'What are these,
6 my lord?' Then the messenger who talked with me answered, 'Don't you
7 know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' He said to me, 'This is the
message of the LORD regarding Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power,
8 but by my spirit, says the LORD of hosts, will I make the great mountain
before Zerubbabel a plain. He will bring forth the top stones with shoutings
9 of, "Grace, grace, to it."'" Moreover this message of the LORD came to me:
10 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. His hands
will also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to
11 you. For who has despised the day of small things? They will rejoice, and
will see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. (The seven lamps are the
12 eyes of the LORD that search all around the world.) Again I asked, 'What
13 are these two olive trees on the right side of the candlestick and on its left
14 side?' Again, 'What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are
pouring out the golden oil through the two golden pipes?' He answered
me, 'Don't you now what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' Then he
explained, 'They are the two anointed ones who attend the Lord of all the
earth.'

The Flying Scroll

5 Then again I looked up and saw a flying scroll. He said to me, 'What do you
2 see?' I answered, 'I see a flying scroll; twenty cubits long, ten cubits wide.'
3 Then he said to me, 'This is the curse that goes over the whole land. Every
thief will be banished according to the writing on one side and everyone
4 who lies under oath shall be banished according to the writing on the other
side. I have sent it out, says the LORD of hosts, and it will enter into the
house of the thief, and into the house of anyone who swears falsely by my
name. It will remain in the midst of his house and will consume it with its
timber and its stones.'

The Woman in an Ephah

5 Then the messenger who talked with me came forward, and said to me,
6 'Look up and see what is now coming.' I said. 'What is it?' He said, 'It is a
7 measuring basket, full of the guilt of the land.' A round leaden cover was
8 lifted up, and there was a woman sitting in the middle of the basket. He
9 said, 'This is Wickedness.' He thrust her down into the midst of the basket
10 and he pushed the round leaden cover back on its mouth. Then I looked
11 up and saw two women, and the wind was in their wings. They had wings
like the wings of a stork and they lifted up the basket between them. Then
I said to the messenger who talked with me, 'Where are they taking the
basket?' He said to me, 'To build her a house in the land of Shinar. When
it is prepared, they will rest the basket there.'

The War-Chariots of the Lord

6 Again I looked up, and saw four chariots come from between two moun-
2 tains. The mountains were mountains of bronze. The first chariot had red
3 horses. The second chariot had black horses, the third chariot white horses,
4 and the fourth chariot dappled horses. Then I said to the messenger who
5 talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' The messenger answered me,
'These are the four winds of heaven going out after standing before the
6 LORD of all the earth. The black horses are going toward the north country
and the white toward the west and the dappled toward the south country.'
7 The strong horses came out, and were impatient to patrol the earth. So
8 he said, 'Go, patrol the earth,' and they did so. Then he cried out to me,
'The horses that went to the north country will quiet my spirit in the north
country.'

Preparations for the Crowning of Zerubbabel

9 Now this message of the LORD came to me: Take the gifts from the exiles
10 Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah who have come from Babylon and go at once to

- 11 Josiah the son of Zephaniah. Take their silver and gold and make a crown and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak.
- 12 Tell him: 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, the man whose name is the Branch. He will branch out from his place and rebuild the temple of the LORD. He will rebuild the temple and will sit and rule upon his throne, receiving the honour due to a king. A priest will stand by his throne and they will work together in peace and harmony. The crown will be a memorial in the temple of the LORD for Heldai and Tobijah and Jedaiah, and Josiah the son of Zephaniah. People from far away will come and build in the temple of the LORD and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.'

The Lord's Real Demands

- 7 In the fourth year of the reign of King Darius, on the fourth day of Chislev, 2 the ninth month, the message of the LORD came to Zechariah. The city of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men, to entreat 3 the favour of the LORD, and to ask the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts, and the prophets 'Should I continue to mourn in the fifth month, 4 separating myself, as I have done for many years?' Then this message of 5 the LORD of hosts came to me: Tell all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh month, for 6 these seventy years, did you really fast for me? When you eat and when 7 you drink, do you not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves? Wasn't it this which the LORD proclaimed by the earlier prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous, and her towns surrounding her and the Negreb and the Shephelah were inhabited?'
- 8 The LORD gave this message to Zechariah: The LORD of hosts says, execute 9 true judgments. Show kindness and mercy to each other. Do not oppress 10 the widow or the orphan, the resident alien or the poor. Let none of you devise evil against another in your hearts.
- 11 But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped 12 their ears so they wouldn't hear. They made their hearts as hard as stone so they wouldn't accept the teaching and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his spirit through the earlier prophets. Great was the anger of 13 the LORD of hosts: I called and they would not hear, so they call and I do not 14 hear, says the LORD of hosts. I scattered them by a whirlwind out among

Promises that the Scattered Exiles Will Return and the Lord's Rule Zec 14:9 Widely Acknowledged

nations unknown to them. The land was left desolate behind them, with no one crossing or returning, for they made the pleasant land a desolation.

*Promises that the Scattered Exiles Will Return
and the Lord's Rule be Widely Acknowledged*

8 Now this message of the LORD of hosts came to me:

2 The LORD of hosts says:

I passionately care for Zion,
and I am fiercely protective of her.

3 The LORD says, I have returned to Zion,

and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem
and Jerusalem will be called, "The City of Truth"
and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, "The Holy Mountain."

4 The LORD of hosts says:

Old men and old women will sit again in the squares of Jerusalem,
each leaning on a staff because of old age.

5 And the streets of the city will be full of boys,
and of girls playing in its squares.

6 The LORD of hosts says:

Just because it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in
these days,
is it also impossible for me? says the LORD of hosts.

7 The LORD of hosts says:

I will rescue my people
from the land of the east and the land of the west.

8 I will bring them and they will live in Jerusalem,

and they will be my people,
and I will be their God,
in truth and righteousness.

9 The LORD of hosts says: Let your hands be strong, you who hear in these
days the words of the prophets spoken when the foundations for the house

10 of the LORD of hosts were laid. For before those days there were no wages
for people or animals. No one could go out or return safe from enemies,
11 because I set each against their neighbour. But now I will treat the remnant
of the people differently from former days, says the LORD of hosts.

12 Peace will be sown.

The vine will bear its fruit and the ground will yield its produce,
and the skies will give their dew.

I will give the remnant of this people all these things.

- 13 Just as you were accursed among the nations,
house of Judah and house of Israel,
so I will save you and you will be a blessing.
Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

- 14 For the LORD of hosts says: As I planned to do evil to you when your ancestors provoked me to anger, says the LORD of hosts, and I did not
15 relent, so again have I planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not be afraid.

- 16 These are the things that you should do: Speak the truth to each other.

- 17 Render peaceful decisions in your gates. Let none of you devise evil in your heart against one another. Do not love perjury. All these are things I hate, says the LORD.

- 18 And this message of the LORD of hosts came to me: The LORD of hosts
19 says: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, will be festivals of joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.

- 20 The LORD of hosts says: Peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities will
21 come, and the inhabitants of one city will go to another, saying, 'Let us go speedily to entreat the favour of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I
22 will go also.' Many peoples and strong nations will come to seek the LORD
23 of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favour of the LORD. The LORD of hosts says: In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'

The Conquest of Israel's Foes

- 9 An oracle:
The message of the LORD concerns the land of Hadrach,
it rests upon Damascus.
For the capital of Aram belongs to the LORD,
as the tribes of Israel do,
2 and also Hamath which borders on it.
Tyre and Sidon, for all their wisdom.
3 Tyre built for herself a fortress.

- Heaped up silver as dust,
and gold like the dirt of the streets.
- 4 But now the Lord will dispossess her,
cast down her rampart into the sea.
She will be consumed in fire.
- 5 Ashkelon will see and fear,
and Gaza writhe in anguish,
Ekron, also for her hope will be put to shame.
The king will perish from Gaza,
Ashkelon will remain uninhabited.
- 6 A foreign people will settle in Ashdod,
and I will humble the pride of the Philistines.
- 7 I will take their blood from their mouth,
and their abominations from between their teeth.
They also will be a remnant for our God,
like a clan in Judah,
and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.
- 8 But I will encamp as a guard about my house,
so that none will pass through or return,
and no oppressor will pass through them again,
for now I have seen with my own eyes.
- 9 Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, daughter of Jerusalem!
Look, your king comes to you.
Vindicated and victorious is he,
humble, and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- 10 He will cut off chariots from Ephraim,
and war horses from Jerusalem.
The battle bow will be cut off,
and he will speak peace to the nations.
His rule will be from sea to sea,
from the river to the ends of the earth.
- 11 And you, too – because of your blood covenant,
I have set free your prisoners from the waterless pit.
- 12 To the stronghold will the prisoners of hope return.

This day I declare, I will restore double to you.

- 13 For I have bent Judah to me,
like a bow which I have filled with Ephraim like an arrow.
I will urge your sons, Zion, against the sons of Greece,
I will make you like the sword of a hero.
- 14 Then the LORD will be seen above them
and his arrow will go forth like lightning.
The LORD will blow a blast upon a trumpet,
and travel on the whirlwinds of the south.
- 15 The LORD of hosts will defend them.
They will devour and tread down the slingstones,
they will drink their blood like wine,
they will be full like a bowl,
like the crevices of the altar.
- 16 And the LORD their God will save them on that day,
as the flock of his people,
as the jewel of a crown
shining in his land.
- 17 How good and how beautiful will it be!
Corn will make the young men flourish
and new wine the young women!

Victory and Restoration for the Lord's Betrayed but Loyal People

- 10 Ask from the LORD rain,
at the time of spring rain,
from the LORD who forms the storm clouds,
and the showers of rain he gives to you,
and green in the field.
- 2 But the household gods speak nonsense,
and the diviners see lies,
and relate idle dreams.
In vain they offer comfort,
so the people wander like sheep,
They suffer because there is no shepherd.
- 3 My wrath is hot against the shepherds,
and on the leaders will I bring punishment.

For the LORD cares for his flock,
the house of Judah,
and will make them his splendid war steeds.

- 4 From Judah will come the cornerstone and the stay,
from them the battle bow,
from them goes forth every commander.
- 5 Together they will trample on warriors,
as on the dirt of the streets in battle.
They fight, for the LORD is with them,
putting the riders on horses to shame.
- 6 I will make strong the house of Judah,
I will bring deliverance to the house of Joseph,
I will bring them back for I have compassion on them,
they will be as if I had not driven them away
For I am the LORD their God and will answer them.
- 7 The Ephraimites will be like warriors,
their hearts will rejoice as with wine,
their children will see and rejoice.
Their hearts will exult in the LORD.
- 8 I will whistle for them, and gather them,
and they will be as many as they once were.
- 9 I will sow them among the peoples,
but in distant lands they will remember me,
and they will bring up their children and come back.
- 10 I will bring them home from the land of Egypt,
and from Assyria will I gather them.
Into the land of Gilead and Lebanon I will bring them,
until the land overflows with them.
- 11 And when they pass through the sea of distress,
I will strike down the waves of the sea,
and all the deeps of the Nile will be dried up.
The pride of Assyria will be brought low
and the sceptre of Egypt turned aside.
- 12 I will make them strong in the LORD,
they will walk in his name,
says the LORD.

Fate of Judah's Traitorous Rulers and the Ultimate Deliverance

- 11 Open your doors, Lebanon,
so that fire may devour your cedars.
- 2 Wail, pine-tree, for the cedar is fallen.
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
for the inaccessible forest has fallen.
- 3 Listen to the wailing of the shepherds!
Their glory is destroyed.
Listen to the roaring of young lions!
Blasted is the thick forest of the Jordan.
- 4 The LORD said to me: shepherd the flock destined for slaughter, whose pos-
5 sessors slaughter them, and hold themselves not guilty! The people who
sell them say, Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich! And their own shepherds
6 have no compassion for them. I will no longer have pity on the people of
this earth, says the LORD. I will turn neighbour against neighbour, and put
everyone under the power of a king, and when the land is devastated I
7 will not rescue them. So I shepherded the flock of slaughter for the sheep-
merchants. I took two staffs: one I called Mercy and the other I called Union.
- 8 So I shepherded the sheep. I set aside three of the shepherds in one month;
9 for I was indignant against them, and they also were displeased at me. I
said, I will not shepherd you. What is dead, let it die. What is set aside, let
10 it be set aside. And let those who are left devour one another's flesh. And
I took my staff, Mercy, and broke it, so as to break my covenant which I
had made with all the peoples.
- 11 In that day it was broken, and the sheep-merchants who watched me
12 knew that it was the LORD's message. And I said to them, 'If it is good in
your sight, give me my wage. If not, don't.' So they weighed out my wage,
13 thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said to me, Cast it into the treasury –
the precious wage that at which I was valued by them! So I took the thirty
pieces of silver and cast them into the house of the LORD, into the treasury.
- 14 Then I broke my second staff called Union so as to dissolve the brother-
15 hood between Judah and Jerusalem. And the LORD said to me: Take again
16 the implements of a worthless shepherd. For I am about to appoint a shep-
herd over the land. Those who are thrust down he will not visit. Those
who are scattered he will not seek out. The wounded he will not heal, the
sick he will not make whole, but the flesh of the fat he will devour and
even their hoofs he will tear.

- 17 Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock!
May the sword strike his arm and his right eye.
May his arm completely wither.
And his right eye be blinded.

Jerusalem's Deliverance from Heathen Attack

- 12 An oracle. This is the message of the LORD about Israel. The LORD who stretches out the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the human spirit within people says:
- 2 Look! I am about to make Jerusalem
a cup of drunkenness for all the surrounding peoples.
There will be a siege of Jerusalem.
- 3 On that day that I will make Jerusalem
a stone to be lifted up by all the peoples.
All who lift it up will surely hurt themselves!
And all the nations of the earth will be gathered together against it.
- 4 On that day, says the LORD, I will strike
every horse with panic and its rider with madness.
But over the house of Judah I will keep watch,
though I strike every horse belonging to the peoples with blindness.
- 5 And the chieftains of Judah will say to themselves,
'The strength of the inhabitants is in the LORD of hosts their God.'
- 6 In that day I will make the chieftains of Judah
like a pan of fire in the woods,
like a torch among sheaves,
they will devour right and left all the surrounding peoples.
But Jerusalem will abide on its own site.
- 7 And the LORD will first give victory to the tents of Judah,
so that the glory of the house of David, and of the inhabitants of
Jerusalem be not exalted above Judah.
- 8 In that day the LORD will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
and the feeblest among them will in that day be like David,
and the house of David like God, like the messenger of the LORD
before them.

- 9 And in that day I will seek to destroy all the nations who have come up against Jerusalem.
- 10 And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem
the spirit of pity and compassion. They will look on him whom they have pierced
and they will lament for him as one laments for an only son.
They will bitterly grieve for him as one grieves for the first-born.
- 11 In that day mourning will be as great in Jerusalem
as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.
- 12 And the land will mourn, each family by itself:
the family of the house of David by itself,
and their wives by themselves,
and the family of the house of Nathan by itself,
and their wives by themselves,
- 13 and the family of the house of Levi by itself,
and their wives by themselves,
the family of the Shimeites by itself,
and their wives by themselves,
- 14 and all the families who are left, each by itself,
and their wives by themselves.
- 13 On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David,
and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.
- 2 And it will be on that day, says the LORD of hosts,
I will cut off the names of the idols from the land and they will be remembered no more.
And the prophets and the unclean spirit I will banish from the land.
- 3 If any man prophesy any more,
his father and his mother who bore him, will say to him,
'You will not live, for you speak falsehood in the name of the LORD.'
And his father and his mother who bore him will stab him through
when he is seized by the prophetic frenzy.
- 4 And it will be in that day that the prophets will be ashamed, each
of his vision,
and will not wear the hairy mantle in order to deceive.
- 5 Each will say, 'I am not a prophet,
a tiller of the ground am I, for the ground is my possession from
my youth.'

- 6 And they will say to him, 'What are these scars on your back?'
And he will say, 'The scars which I received in the house of my friends.'
- 7 Awake, sword, against my shepherd,
against the man who stands near to me,
says the LORD of hosts.
I will strike the shepherd so that the sheep may be scattered,
I will turn my hand against the little ones.
- 8 In all the land, says the LORD,
two-thirds in it will be cut off and die,
but a third will be left in it.
- 9 I will bring the third into the fire,
and melt it as one melts silver,
and test it as one tests gold.
Then they will call on my name,
and I myself will answer them.
I will say, 'They are my people.'
They will say, 'The LORD is our God.'

The Judgment upon the Heathen and the Exaltation of the Lord

- 14 A day is coming for the LORD, when your plundered possessions will be
2 divided while you watch. And all the nations will gather to Jerusalem, to
fight against it. The city will be taken and the houses plundered and the
3 women raped. Half of the city will go into captivity, and the rest of the
4 people left in the ruins. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against these
nations, as once he fought in the day of battle. On that day his feet will
stand on the Mount of Olives, (which is opposite Jerusalem, on the east).
The Mount of Olives will be split into halves, from east to west, by an ex-
ceedingly great valley; and half of the mountain will slide northwards and
5 half southwards. You will escape through my valley – the valley between
the hills will extend as far as Azel, and you will flee as you fled from before
the earthquake, in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. But the LORD your
God will come, and all the holy ones with him.
- 6 And in that day, there will be no heat nor cold nor frost, but it will be
7 constant day – it is known to the LORD – with neither day nor night. Even
8 at evening time there will be light. And on that day living waters will
flow from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to

- 9 the western sea; in both summer and winter. The LORD will be king over
10 all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one, and his name one. The
land will be changed to plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem,
but Jerusalem will be high and inhabited as it stands, from the Benjamin
Gate up to the place of the first gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to
11 the Corner Gate, and as far as the king's winepresses. Jerusalem will be
inhabited, for never again will it be doomed to destruction, and its people
will abide in security.
- 12 This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who
array themselves against Jerusalem: he will make their flesh rot while they
stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues
13 will rot in their mouth. On that day a great panic sent by the Lord will
fall on them. Everyone will seize their neighbours and attack them. Even
14 Judah will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of the surrounding nations
15 will be gathered up – gold and silver and piles of clothing. Plague will fall
upon the horses, mules, camels, and asses, and on all the animals in all
those camps.
- 16 All who are left of all the nations which fought against Jerusalem will
come up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to
17 keep the pilgrim-feast of tabernacles. Whoever of all the peoples of the
earth will not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts,
18 on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt does not go up nor
enter in, on them also will come the plague with which the LORD will
19 strike the nations. This will be the punishment for the sin of Egypt and the
punishment for the sin of all nations which do not come up to keep the
feast of the tabernacles.
- 20 On that day there will be inscribed upon the bells of the horses, "Holy
to the LORD" and the pots in the house of the LORD will be as holy as the
21 sacrificial bowls before the altars. Every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will
be holy to the LORD of hosts and all who sacrifice will come and take of
them and cook the sacrifices in them. There will be no more traffickers in
the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

MALACHI

The Lord's Love for Israel

1 An oracle. The message of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

2 ‘I have loved you,’ says the LORD. ‘But you ask, “How have you shown love to us?” Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ explains the LORD of hosts, ‘yet 3 I loved Jacob, but hated Esau, and made his mountains a desolation, and 4 transformed his ancestral land into a wilderness. When Edom says, “We are beaten down, but we will return and rebuild the ruined places”’ the LORD of hosts says, ‘They may build, but I will throw down. They will be called, “The border land of wickedness,” the people against whom the 5 LORD is angry forever. Your own eyes will see this, and you will say, “the LORD’s greatness reaches beyond the border of Israel.”’

Against the Priests

6 ‘A son honours his father and servant their master. If I am a father, where is my honour? And if I am a master, where is the one who fears me? So says the LORD to you, priests who despise my name. You ask, “How have 7 we despised your name?” You offer on my altar bread that is polluted. You ask, “How have we polluted it?” Because you say, “The table of the 8 LORD is contemptible.” When you offer the blind animal for sacrifice, “It doesn’t matter!” And when you offer the lame and the sick “It doesn’t matter!” Give an animal like that to your governor; will he be pleased with 9 it? Will he receive you favourably?’ says the LORD of hosts. Now, plead for the favour of God with such an offering, so that he may be gracious to us. ‘Would I receive any of you favourably?’ says the LORD of hosts.

10 ‘If only one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you could not kindle useless fires on my altar! I have no pleasure in you,’ says the LORD 11 of hosts, ‘Nor will I accept an offering from your hand. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place they offer to my name a pure offering. For my name is great among the nations,’ says the LORD of hosts.

- 12 ‘But you profane me when you say, “The table of the LORD is polluted,
13 and its food is contemptible.” You say also, “How tired we are of all this!”
and you sniff contemptuously at it. You have brought the blind, the lame
and the sick as offerings. Should I accept this from your hand?’ says the
14 LORD of hosts. ‘Cursed be the cheat, who has in his flock a valuable male,
but vows and sacrifices to the Lord a blemished animal! For I am a great
king,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and my name is feared among the nations.’
- 2 ‘Now, you priests, this command is for you. If you will not hear, and if
2 you do not take it to heart, to give glory to my name,’ says the LORD of
hosts, ‘Then I will lay a curse on you. I will turn your blessings into curses.
3 Indeed I have already done so, because you pay no attention. I will punish
your descendants! I will spread offal upon your faces, even the offal of your
4 pilgrim feasts, you will be discarded. You will then know that I have sent
this command to you, so that my covenant with Levi may be preserved,’
says the LORD of hosts.
- 5 ‘My covenant with him was to give life and peace. I gave them to him
so that he might revere me. He revered me, and stood in awe of my name.
6 The true instruction was in his mouth, and injustice was not found in his
lips; He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many away
7 from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and people
should seek the law from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the
LORD of hosts.
- 8 ‘But you have turned aside from that way. You have caused many to
stumble in the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,’ says the
9 LORD of hosts. ‘So I have made you contemptible and degraded before all
the people, because you have not kept my ways, and have had no respect
for me in imparting the law.’

Unfaithfulness

- 10 Don’t we have all one father? Didn’t one God created us? Why do we
deal faithlessly with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?
11 Judah is treacherous, and abominations are committed in Israel and in
Jerusalem because Judah has profaned the holy things loved by the LORD,
12 and has married the daughter of a foreign god. May the LORD banish from
the community of Jacob anyone who does this, anyone awaking, testifying,
13 and making an offering to the LORD of hosts. And you also do this: You
cover the altar of the LORD with tears, because he doesn’t accept the offering
14 any more, doesn’t accept it from your hand. Yet you ask, ‘Why?’ Because

the LORD is testifying against you on behalf of the wife you married when you were young. You have been unfaithful to her, even though she is your companion, and your legal wife.

- 15 Did not the one God make everyone, so that all both flesh and spirit is his? And what does that one God seek but godly children? Therefore keep watch over your spirit, and let none of you deal faithlessly with the wife
16 of your youth. ‘A man who divorces or puts away his wife,’ says LORD, the God of Israel, ‘overwhelms her with cruelty.’ The LORD of hosts says: ‘Keep watch over your spirit, do not be unfaithful.’

The Lord's Coming Judgment

- 17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. You ask, ‘How have we wearied him?’ By saying, ‘Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them.’ Or, ‘Where is the God of justice?’
3 ‘I am about to send my messenger and he will clear a path before me: And the LORD, who you are seeking, will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant who you long for is already coming, says
2 the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming? And who will stand firm when he appears? He is like a refiner’s fire, and like a
3 launderer’s soap, and he will sit as a refiner and purifier. He will purify the descendants of Levi, and refine them like gold and silver, until they
4 are fit to bring offerings to the LORD. Then will the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.
5 ‘I will come to you in judgment. I will be quick to testify against the sorcerers, adulterers, perjurors, those who cheat workers, or widows, or orphans, deny justice to immigrants, and do not fear me,’ says the LORD
6 of hosts. ‘For I, the LORD, do not change; and you have not ceased to be descendants of Jacob.’

Paying the Tithe

- 7 ‘From the days of your ancestors, you have turned aside from my statutes, and you have not kept them. Turn to me and I will turn to you,’ says the
8 LORD. ‘You say, “How should we turn?” Can a human rob God? Yet you
9 robbed me. You ask, “How have we robbed you?” In tithes and gifts! You – your entire nation – are all cursed, because you rob me.

10 ‘Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there is food in my house. Test me in this way. See if I will not open to you the windows of the sky, and pour you out a blessing, until there is more than enough. I will rebuke for your sakes the devouring locust and he will not destroy your crops, nor will the vine fail to ripen its fruit in the field, says the LORD of hosts, and all nations will call you happy, for you will be a delightful land,’ says the LORD of hosts.

Future Reward of the Godless and Faithful

13 ‘You have said terrible things about me,’ says the LORD. ‘You ask, “What have we said about you?” You have said, “It is useless to serve God, and what do we gain from the LORD of hosts by keeping his commands, and walking mournfully in funeral garb before him? So now we call the proud happy, evildoers thrive: they dare God and escape unharmed.”’

16 Such things those who revered the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD took notice, and a record was written before him of those who revered the LORD and those who keep in mind his name. ‘They will be mine,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘my special possession on that day that I am preparing. 18 I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Once again my people will see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between the person who serves God and the person who does not.’

4 ‘The day is coming that will burn like a furnace, and all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble, and the day that is coming will burn them up,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘leaving neither root nor branch. But to you who revere my name there will arise the sun of righteousness with healing 3 in its wings, and you will run free like calves let out from their stall. In the day when I act you will tread down the wicked, they will be as ashes under the soles of your feet,’ says the LORD of hosts.

4 ‘Remember the law of Moses my servant, statutes and judgments which 5 I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. I am about to send to you Elijah the 6 prophet, before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. He will turn fathers’ hearts to their sons and sons’ hearts to their fathers, so that I will not come and strike the earth with judgement.’

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

The Birth, Parentage and Infancy

- 1 A genealogy of Jesus Christ, a descendant of David and Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of Judah and his brothers, 2 Judah of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez of Hezron, 3 Hezron of Aram, Aram of Aminadab, Aminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of 4 Salmon, Salmon of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz of Obed, whose 5 mother was Ruth, Obed of Jesse, Jesse of David the King. David was the fa- 6 ther of Solomon, whose mother was Uriah's widow, Solomon of Rehoboam, 7 Rehoboam of Abijah, Abijah of Asa, Asa of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat 8 of Joram, Joram of Uzziah, Uzziah of Jotham, Jotham of Ahaz, Ahaz of 9 Hezekiah, Hezekiah of Manasseh, Manasseh of Amon, Amon of Josiah, 10 Josiah of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the Exile to Babylon.
- 11 After the Exile to Babylon – Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, Salathiel 12 of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel of Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, Eliakim of Azor, 13 Azor of Zadok, Zadok of Achim, Achim of Eliud, Eliud of Eleazar, Eleazar 14 of Matthan, Matthan of Jacob, Jacob of Joseph, the husband of Mary, who 15 was the mother of Jesus, who is called "Christ". So the whole number of 16 generations from Abraham to David is fourteen; from David to the Exile 17 to Babylon fourteen; and from the Exile to Babylon to the Christ fourteen.
- 18 This is how Jesus Christ was born:
His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but, before the marriage took 19 place, she found herself to be pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her 20 husband, Joseph, was a just man and, since he did not want to disgrace her publicly, he resolved to put an end to their engagement privately. He had been thinking this over, when an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.

'Joseph, son of David,' the angel said, 'do not be afraid to take Mary for your wife, for her child has been conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

21 She will give birth to a son; name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

22 All this happened in fulfilment of these words of the Lord through the prophet, where he says –

23 "The virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son, and they will give him the name Immanuel"

24 – a word which means "God is with us." When Joseph woke up, he did

25 as the angel of the Lord had directed him. He made Mary his wife, but they did not sleep together before the birth of her son; and to this son he gave the name Jesus.

2 After the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem in Judea, in the reign of King Herod,
2 some astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the
3 newborn king of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east, and have come
4 to worship him.' When King Herod heard of this, he was much troubled,
5 and so too was all Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and
teachers of the Law in the nation, and questioned them as to where the
Christ was to be born.

5 'At Bethlehem in Judea,' was their answer, 'for it is said in the prophet –

6 "And you, Bethlehem in Judah's land,
are in no way least among the chief cities of Judah,
for out of you will come a ruler –
who will shepherd my people Israel."

7 Then Herod secretly sent for the astrologers. He found out from them the
8 time of the appearance of the star. Sending them to Bethlehem he said, 'Go
and make a careful search for the child. When you have found him, bring
9 word back to me, so that I, too, can go and worship him.' The astrologers
heard what the king had to say, and then continued their journey. The star
which they had seen in the east led them on, until it reached and stood
10 over the place where the child was. At the sight of the star they were filled
11 with joy. Entering the house, they saw the child with his mother, Mary,
and fell at his feet and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure
chests, and offered to the child presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
12 But afterwards, having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod,
they returned to their own country by another road.

13 After they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and seek refuge in Egypt; and stay there until I tell you to return, for Herod is about to search for the
14 child, to put him to death.' Joseph woke up, and taking the child and his
15 mother by night, went into Egypt, and there he stayed until Herod's death; in fulfilment of these words of the Lord in the prophet, where he says –

"Out of Egypt I called my Son."

16 When Herod found out that the astrologers had tricked him, he flew into a rage. He sent and put to death all the boys in Bethlehem and the whole of that region, who were two years old or under, guided by the time which he
17 had learned from the astrologers. Then were fulfilled these words spoken in the prophet Jeremiah, where he says –

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah,
 weeping and mourning loudly;
 Rachel, weeping for her children,
 refusing all comfort for they were dead."

19 But, on the death of Herod, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream
20 to Joseph in Egypt, and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go into the Land of Israel, for those who sought to take the child's life
21 are dead.' He woke up, and taking the child and his mother, went into
22 the Land of Israel. But, hearing that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as king of Judea, he was afraid to go back there; and having been warned in a dream, he went into the part of the country called Galilee.
23 There he settled in the town of Nazareth, in fulfilment of these words in the prophets – "He will be called a Nazarene."

The Preparation

3 About that time John the Baptist first appeared, proclaiming in the wilderness of Judea: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' John was the
2 one who was spoken of in the prophet Isaiah, where he says –

"The voice of one crying aloud in the wilderness:
 'Make ready the way of the Lord,
 make his paths straight.'"

4 John's clothes were made of camels' hair, with a leather strap round his
5 waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem,

and all Judea, as well as the whole district of the Jordan, went out to him
6 and were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

7 But when John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to receive his baptism, he said to them, 'You children of snakes! Who has
8 prompted you to seek refuge from the coming judgment? Let your life,
9 then, prove your repentance; and do not think that you can say among yourselves "Abraham is our ancestor," for I tell you that out of these stones
10 God is able to raise descendants for Abraham! Already the axe is lying at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that fails to bear good fruit will
11 be cut down and thrown into the fire. I, indeed, baptize you with water to teach repentance; but he who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not fit even to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the
12 Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor, and store his grain in the barn, but the chaff he will burn with a fire that cannot be put out.'

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan, to John, to be baptized by
14 him. But John tried to prevent him.

'I need to be baptized by you,' he said, 'so why have you come to me?'

15 'This is the way it should be for now,' Jesus answered, 'because we should do everything that God requires.' So John agreed.

16 After the baptism of Jesus, and just as he came up from the water, the heavens opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove
17 and resting on him, and from the heavens there came a voice which said, 'This is my dearly loved son, who brings me great joy.'

4 Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. And, after he had fasted for forty days and forty nights, he
3 became hungry. The Tempter came to him, and said:

'If you are God's Son, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.'

4 But Jesus answered, 'Scripture says –

"It is not on bread alone that a person is to live, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

5 Then the devil took him to the Holy City, and, placing him on the
6 parapet of the temple, said to him, 'If you are God's Son, throw yourself down, for scripture says –

"He will give his angels commands about you,
and on their hands they will lift you up,
so you do not even strike your foot against a stone."

- 7 ‘Scripture also says,’ answered Jesus,
 “‘You must not tempt the Lord your God.’”
- 8 The third time, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain, and, showing him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour, said to him:
- 9 ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall at my feet and worship me.’
- 10 Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go away, Satan! For scripture says –
 “You must worship the Lord your God, and worship him only.”’
- 11 Then the devil left him alone, and angels came and helped him.

The Work in Galilee

- 12 When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he returned to Galilee.
13 Afterwards, leaving Nazareth, he went and settled at Capernaum, which
14 is by the side of the sea, within the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali; in
 fulfilment of these words in the prophet Isaiah –
- 15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
 the land of the Road by the sea, and beyond the Jordan,
 with Galilee of the Gentiles –
- 16 The people who were living in darkness
 have seen a great light,
 and, for those who were living in the shadow-land of death,
 a light has dawned!”
- 17 At that time Jesus began to proclaim –
 ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’
- 18 As Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers – Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew – casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.
- 19 ‘Come and follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will teach you to fish for people.’
- 20 The two men left their nets at once and followed him. Going further on,
21 he saw two other men who were also brothers, James, Zebedee’s son, and
 his brother John, in their boat with their father, mending their nets. Jesus
22 called them, and they at once left their boat and their father, and followed
 him.

- 23 Jesus went all through Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people; and his fame spread all through Syria. They brought to him all who were ill with any form of disease, or who were suffering pain – any who were either possessed by demons, or were lunatic, or paralysed; and he cured them. He was followed by large crowds from Galilee, the district of the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.
- 5 On seeing the crowds of people, Jesus went up the hill; and, when he had taken his seat, his disciples came up to him; and he began to teach them, saying:
- 3 ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed are the mourners,
for they will be comforted.
- 5 Blessed are the gentle,
for they will inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.
- 7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will find mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
- 10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted in the cause of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 ‘Blessed are you when people insult you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil lies about you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, because your reward in heaven will be great; this is the way they persecuted the prophets who lived before you.
- 13 ‘You are salt for the world. But if salt becomes tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown away, and trampled underfoot. It is you who are the light of the world. A town that stands on a hill cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp-stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. Let your light so shine before the eyes of others so that, seeing your good actions, they will praise your Father who is in heaven.

- 17 'Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law or the prophets;
18 I have not come to do away with them, but to complete them. For I tell
you, until the heavens and the earth disappear, not even the smallest letter,
nor one stroke of a letter, will disappear from the Law until all is done.
19 Whoever, therefore, breaks one of these commandments, even the least
of them, and teaches others to do so, will be the least esteemed in the
kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps them, and teaches others to do so,
20 will be esteemed great in the kingdom of heaven. Indeed I tell you that,
unless you obey God's commands better than of the teachers of the Law,
and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
- 21 'You have heard that to our ancestors it was said – "You must not commit
22 murder," and "Whoever commits murder will be brought to trial." But
I say to you that anyone who is angry at their brother or sister will be
brought to trial; and whoever insults their brother or sister will be brought
before the High Council, while whoever calls them a fool will be in danger
23 of the fires of Gehenna. Therefore, when presenting your gift at the altar, if
even there you remember that your brother or sister has something against
24 you, leave your gift there, before the altar, go and be reconciled to them,
25 first, then come and present your gift. Be ready to make friends with your
opponent, even when you meet them on your way to the court; otherwise
they might hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the judicial officer,
26 and you will be thrown into prison. I tell you, you will not come out until
you have paid the last cent.
- 27 'You have heard that it was said – "You must not commit adultery." But
28 I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman and desires her has already
29 committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to
sin, take it out and throw it away. It would be best for you to lose one part
30 of your body, and not to have the whole of it thrown into Gehenna. And,
if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It would
be best for you to lose one part of your body, and not to have the whole of
it go down to Gehenna.
- 31 'It was also said – "Let anyone who divorces his wife serve her with a
32 notice of separation." But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife,
except on the ground of some serious sexual sin, leads to her committing
adultery; while anyone who marries her after her divorce is guilty of adul-
33 ery. Again, you have heard that our ancestors were told – "Do not break
34 your oaths, keep your vows to the Lord." But I say to you that you must
35 not swear at all, either by heaven, since that is God's throne, or by the
earth, since that is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, since that is the city of the
36 Great King. Nor should you swear by your head, since you cannot make a

37 single hair either white or black. Let your words be simply "Yes" or "No"; anything beyond this comes from what is evil.

38 'You have heard that it was said – "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you that you must not resist those who wrong you; but, if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to them also. 40 If someone sues you for your shirt, let them have your cloak as well. If 41 you are forced to carry a soldier's pack for one mile, carry it two. Give to 42 anyone who asks and, if someone wants to borrow from you, do not turn them away.

43 You have heard that it was said – "You must love your neighbour and 44 hate your enemy." But what I tell you is this: love your enemies, and pray 45 for those who persecute you, so that you may become children of your Father who is in heaven; for he causes his sun to rise on bad and good 46 alike, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For, if you love only those who love you, what reward will you have? Even the tax-gatherers do this! And, if you only welcome your brothers and sisters, what 47 are you doing more than others? Even the Gentiles do this! You, then, must 48 become perfect – as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6 'Take care not to perform your religious duties in public in order to be seen by others; if you do, your Father who is in heaven has no reward for 2 you. Therefore, when you do acts of charity, do not have a trumpet blown in front of you, as hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets so 3 that people will praise them. There, I tell you, is their reward! But, when you do acts of charity, do not let your left hand know what your right hand 4 is doing, so that your charity may be secret; and your Father, who sees what is in secret, will reward you.

5 'And, when you pray, you are not to behave as hypocrites do. They like to pray standing in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets, so that 6 people will see them. There, I tell you, is their reward! But, when one of you prays, they should go into their own room, shut the door, and pray to their Father who dwells in secret; and their Father, who sees what is 7 secret, will reward them. When praying, do not repeat the same words over and over again, as is done by the Gentiles, who think that by using 8 many words they will obtain a hearing. Do not imitate them; for God, your 9 Father, knows what you need before you ask him. You, therefore, should pray like this –

"Our Father, who is in heaven,
may your name be held holy,
10 your kingdom come, your will be done –

on earth, as in heaven.

11 Give us today
the bread that we will need;
12 and forgive us our wrong-doings,
as we have forgiven those who have wronged us;
13 and take us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

14 For, if you forgive others their offences, your heavenly Father will
15 forgive you also; but, if you do not forgive others their offences, not even
your Father will forgive your offences.

16 'And, when you fast, do not put on gloomy looks, as hypocrites do who
disfigure their faces so that they may be seen by people to be fasting. That,
17 I tell you, is their reward! But, when one of you fasts, they should anoint
18 their head and wash their face, so that they may not be seen by people to
be fasting, but by their Father who dwells in secret; and their Father, who
sees what is secret, will reward them.

19 'Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust
20 destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures for
yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where
21 thieves do not break in or steal. For where your treasure is, there will your
22 heart be also. The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is unclouded,
23 your whole body will be lit up; but, if your eye is diseased, your whole
body will be darkened. And, if the inner light is darkness, how intense
24 must that darkness be! No one can serve two masters, for either they will
hate one and love the other, or else they will attach themselves to one and
despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

25 'This is why I say to you, Do not be anxious about your life – what you
can get to eat or drink, or about your body – what you can get to wear.
26 Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the
wild birds – they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns; and yet
27 your heavenly Father feeds them! Aren't you more precious than they? But
which of you, by being anxious, can prolong their life a single moment?
28 And why be anxious about clothing? Study the wild lilies, and how they
29 grow. They neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his
30 splendour was not robed like one of these. If God so clothes even the grass
of the field, which is living today and tomorrow will be thrown into the
31 oven, won't he much more clothe you, you of little faith? Do not then ask
anxiously "What can we get to eat?" or "What can we get to drink?" or
32 "What can we get to wear?" All these are the things for which the nations

33 are seeking, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But first seek his kingdom and the righteousness that he requires, and then 34 all these things will be added for you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own anxieties. Every day has trouble enough of its own.

7 ‘Do not judge and you will not be judged. For, just as you judge others, 2 you will yourselves be judged, and the standard that you use will be used 3 for you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your friend’s eye, 4 while you pay no attention at all to the plank of wood in yours? How will 5 you say to your friend “Let me take out the speck from your eye,” when all the time there is a plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take out the plank from your own eye first, and then you will see clearly how to take out the speck from your friend’s.

6 ‘Do not give what is sacred to dogs; they will turn and maul you. Do 7 not throw your pearls before pigs; they will trample them underfoot. Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door 8 will be opened to you. For the person who asks receives, the person who searches finds, and to the door will be opened to the person who knocks. 9 Who among you, when their child asks them for bread, will give them a 10 stone, or when they ask for a fish, will give them a snake? If you, then, 11 wicked though you are, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him!

12 ‘Do to others whatever you would wish them to do to you; for that is the 13 teaching of both the Law and the prophets. Go in by the small gate. The road that leads to destruction is broad and spacious, and many go in by it. 14 For the gate is small, and the road narrow, that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

15 ‘Beware of false teachers – people who come to you in the guise of sheep, 16 but at heart they are ravenous wolves. By the fruit of their lives you will know them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, too, every sound tree bears good fruit, while a worthless tree bears 18 bad fruit. A sound tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a worthless tree 19 bear good fruit. Every tree that fails to bear good fruit is cut down and 20 thrown into the fire. So it is by the fruit of their lives that you will know 21 such people. Not everyone who says to me “Master! Master!” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is 22 in heaven. On “that day” many will say to me “Master, Master, was not it in your name that we taught, and in your name that we drove out demons,

23 and in your name that we did many miracles?" And then I will say to them plainly "I never knew you. Go from my presence, you who live in sin."

24 'Everyone, therefore, who listens to this teaching of mine and acts on it may be compared to a prudent person, who built their house on the rock.
25 The rain poured down, the rivers rose, the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, for its foundations were on the rock. Everyone who listens to this teaching of mine and does not act on it may be compared
27 to a foolish person, who built their house on the sand. The rain poured down, the rivers rose, the winds blew and struck against that house, and it fell with a great crash.'

28 By the time that Jesus had finished speaking, the crowd was filled with
29 amazement at his teaching. For he taught them like one who had authority,
and not like their teachers of the Law.

8 When Jesus had come down from the hill, great crowds followed him. He
2 saw a leper who came up, and bowed to the ground before him, and said,
3 'Master, if only you are willing, you are able to make me clean.' Stretching
4 out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying as he did so, 'I am willing; become
clean.' Instantly he was made clean from his leprosy; and then Jesus said
to him, 'Be careful not to say a word to anyone, but go and show yourself
to the priest, and offer the gift directed by Moses, as evidence of your cure.'
5 After Jesus had entered Capernaum, a captain in the Roman army came
6 up to him, entreating his help. 'Sir,' he said, 'my manservant is lying ill at
my house with a stroke of paralysis, and is suffering terribly.'

7 'I will come and cure him,' answered Jesus. 'Sir,' the captain went on,
8 'I am unworthy to receive you under my roof; but only speak, and my
9 manservant will be cured. For I myself am a man under the orders of
others, with soldiers under me; and, if I say to one of them "Go," he goes,
and to another "Come," he comes, and to my slave "Do this," he does it.'
10 Jesus was surprised to hear this, and said to those who were following
11 him, 'Never I tell you, in any Israelite have I met with such faith as this! Yes,
and many will come in from East and West and take their places beside
12 Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; while the heirs to
the kingdom will be banished into the darkness outside; there, there will
13 be weeping and grinding of teeth.' Then Jesus said to the captain, 'Go now,
and it will be according to your faith.' And the man was cured that very
hour.

14 When Jesus went into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law pros-
15 trated with fever. On his taking her hand, the fever left her, and she rose
16 and began to take care of him. In the evening the people brought to Jesus

- many who were possessed by demons; and he drove out the spirits with
17 a word, and cured all who were ill, in fulfilment of these words in the prophet Isaiah – “He took our infirmities on himself, and bore the burden of our diseases.”
- 18 Seeing a crowd round him, Jesus gave orders to go across. A teacher of
19 the Law came up to him, and said, ‘Teacher, I will follow you wherever
you go.’
- 20 ‘Foxes have holes,’ answered Jesus, ‘and wild birds their nests, but the
21 Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ ‘Master,’ said another, who was
22 a disciple, ‘let me first go and bury my father.’ But Jesus answered, ‘Follow
23 me, and leave the dead to bury their dead.’ Then he got into the boat,
24 followed by his disciples. Suddenly so great a storm came up on the sea,
25 that the waves broke right over the boat. But Jesus was asleep; and the
disciples came and roused him. ‘Master,’ they cried, ‘save us; we are lost!’
26 ‘Why are you so timid?’ he said. ‘You of little faith!’ Then Jesus rose and
27 rebuked the winds and the sea, and a great calm followed. The men were
amazed, and exclaimed, ‘What kind of man is this, that even the winds
and the sea obey him?’
- 28 On getting to the other side – the region of the Gadarenes – Jesus met two
men who were possessed by demons, coming out of the tombs. They were
29 so violent that no one was able to pass that way. Suddenly they shrieked
out, ‘What do you want with us, Son of God? Have you come here to
30 torment us before our time?’ A long way off, there was a drove of many
31 pigs, feeding; and the foul spirits began begging Jesus, ‘If you drive us out,
send us into the drove of pigs.’
- 32 ‘Go,’ he said. The spirits came out, and entered the pigs; and the whole
33 drove rushed down the steep slope into the sea, and died in the water. At
this the men who tended them ran away and went to the town, carrying the
news of all that had occurred, and of what had happened to the possessed
34 men. At the news the whole town went out to meet Jesus, and, when they
saw him, they entreated him to go away from their region.
- 9 Afterwards Jesus got into a boat, and, crossing over, came to his own
2 city. There some people brought to him a paralysed man on a bed. When
Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, ‘Courage, child! Your sins are
3 forgiven.’ Then some of the teachers of the Law said to themselves, ‘This
4 man is blaspheming!’ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus exclaimed, ‘Why do
5 your cherish such wicked thoughts? Which, I ask, is the easier? – to say
6 “Your sins are forgiven”? Or to say “Get up, and walk”? But to show you
that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’ – then he said to the
7 paralysed man – ‘Get up, take up your bed, and return to your home.’ The

- 8 man got up and went to his home. When the crowd saw this, they were awe-struck, and praised God for giving such power to human beings.
- 9 As Jesus went along, he saw a man, called Matthew, sitting in the tax office, and said to him, 'Follow me.' Matthew got up and followed him.
- 10 And, later on, when he was having dinner in the house, a number of tax-gatherers and outcasts came in and took their places at the table with Jesus
- 11 and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat in the company of tax-gatherers and outcasts?'
- 12 On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not those who are healthy who need a
- 13 doctor, but those who are ill. Go and learn what this means – "I desire
- 14 mercy, and not sacrifice"; for I did not come to call the religious, but the
- 15 outcast.' Then John's disciples came to Jesus, and asked, 'Why do we and
- 16 the Pharisees fast while your disciples do not?' Jesus answered, 'Can the
- 17 groom's friends mourn as long as the groom is with them? But the days
- will come, when the groom will be taken away from them, and they will
- fast then. Nobody ever puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment;
- for such a patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.
- 18 Nor do people put new wine into old wine-skins; for, if they do, the skins
- burst, and the wine runs out, and the skins are lost; but they put new wine
- into fresh skins, and so both are preserved.'
- 19 While Jesus was saying this, a synagogue leader came up and bowed to
- the ground before him. 'My daughter,' he said, 'has just died; but come
- 20 and place your hand on her, and she will be restored to life.' So Jesus rose
- and followed him, and his disciples went also. But meanwhile a woman,
- who had been suffering from haemorrhage for twelve years, came up be-
- 21 hind and touched the tassel of his cloak. 'If I only touch his cloak,' she said
- 22 to herself, 'I will get well.' Turning and seeing her, Jesus said, 'Courage,
- daughter! Your faith has delivered you.' And at that very moment she be-
- 23 came well. When Jesus reached the leader's house, seeing the flute players,
- 24 and a number of people all in confusion, he said, 'Go away, the little girl is
- 25 not dead; she is asleep.' They began to laugh at him; but, when the people
- had been sent out, Jesus went in, and took the little girl's hand, and she
- 26 rose. The report of this spread through all that part of the country.
- 27 As Jesus was passing on from there, he was followed by two blind men,
- 28 who kept calling out, 'Take pity on us, Son of David!' When he had gone
- indoors, the blind men came up to him; and Jesus asked them, 'Do you
- 29 believe that I am able to do this?' 'Yes, Master!' they answered. Then he
- 30 touched their eyes, and said, 'It will be according to your faith.' Then
- their eyes were opened. Jesus sternly cautioned them. 'See that no one
- 31 knows of it,' he said. But the men went out, and spread the news about

32 him through all that part of the country. Just as they were going out, some people brought up to Jesus a dumb man who was possessed by a demon; 33 and, as soon as the demon had been driven out, the dumb man spoke. The people were astonished at this, and exclaimed, 'Nothing like this has ever 34 been seen in Israel!' But the Pharisees said, 'He drives out the demons by the help of the chief of the demons.'

35 Jesus went round all the towns and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every kind 36 of disease and every kind of sickness. But, when he saw the crowds, his heart was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed 37 and harassed, like sheep without a shepherd; and he said to his disciples, 38 'The harvest is abundant, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray to the owner of the harvest to send labourers to gather in his harvest.'

10 Calling his twelve Disciples to him, Jesus gave them authority over foul spirits, so that they could drive them out, as well as the power of 2 curing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. The names of the twelve apostles are these, First Simon, also known as Peter, and his 3 brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-gather; James the son 4 of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot – the apostle who betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out as his messengers, after giving them these 6 instructions – 'Do not go to the Gentiles, nor enter any Samaritan town, but 7 make your way rather to the lost sheep of Israel. On your way proclaim that 8 the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, make the lepers clean, drive out demons. You have received free of cost, give free of 9 cost. Do not provide yourselves with gold, or silver, or coins in your purses; 10 not even with a bag for the journey, or a change of clothes, or sandals, or 11 even a staff; for the worker is worth his food. Whatever town or village you visit, find out who is worthy in that place, and remain there until you 12 leave. As you enter the house, greet it. Then, if the house is worthy, let 13 your blessing rest on it, but, if it is unworthy, let your blessing return on 14 yourselves. If no one welcomes you, or listens to what you say, as you leave 15 that house or that town, shake off its dust from your feet. I tell you, the doom of the land of Sodom and Gomorrah will be more bearable in the day of judgment than the doom of that town.'

16 'Remember, I am sending you out as my messengers like sheep among 17 wolves. So be as wise as snakes, and as blameless as doves. Be on your guard against others, for they will betray you to courts of law, and scourge 18 you in their synagogues; and you will be brought before governors and

19 kings for my sake so that you may witness for me before them and the nations. Whenever they betray you, do not be anxious as to how you will speak or what you will say, for what you will say will be given you at the moment; for it will not be you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that 20 speaks within you. Brother will betray brother to death, and the father his child; and children will turn against their parents, and cause them to be 21 put to death; and you will be hated by everyone because of me. Yet the 22 person who endures to the end will be saved. But, when they persecute you in one town, escape to the next; for, I tell you, you will not have come 23 to the end of the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. A student 24 is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a 25 student to be treated like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If the 26 head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members 27 of his household! Do not, therefore, be afraid of them. There is nothing 28 concealed which will not be revealed, nor anything hidden which will not 29 become known. What I tell you in the dark, say again in the light; and what 30 is whispered in your ear, proclaim on the housetops. Do not be afraid of 31 those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; rather be afraid 32 of him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not 33 two sparrows sold for a one copper coin? Yet not one of them will fall 34 to the ground without your Father's knowledge. While as for you, even 35 the hairs of your head are numbered. Do not, therefore, be afraid; you 36 are of more value than many sparrows. Everyone, therefore, who will 37 publicly acknowledge me, I, too, will acknowledge before my Father who 38 is in heaven; but, if anyone publicly disowns me, I, too, will disown him 39 before my Father who is in heaven.

40 'Do not imagine that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have come 41 to bring, not peace, but the sword. For I have come to set – a man against his 42 father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against 43 her mother-in-law. A person's enemies will be the members of their own 44 household. Anyone who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy 45 of me; and anyone who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy 46 of me. Anyone who does not take their cross and follow in my steps is not 47 worthy of me. The person who has found their life will lose it, while the 48 person who, for my sake, has lost their life will find it.

49 'Anyone who welcomes you is welcoming me; and anyone who wel- 50 comes me is welcoming him who sent me as his messenger. The person who 51 welcomes a prophet, because they are a prophet, will receive a prophet's 52 reward; and anyone who welcomes a good person, because they are a good 53 person, will receive a good person's reward. And, if anyone gives but a

cup of cold water to one of these little ones because they are a disciple, I tell you that they will assuredly not lose their reward.'

11 After Jesus had finished giving directions to his twelve Disciples, he left that place in order to teach and preach in their towns.

2 Now John had heard in prison what the Christ was doing, and he sent a
3 message by his disciples, and asked – ‘Are you “the coming one,” or are we
4 to look for someone else?’ The answer of Jesus to the question was – ‘Go
5 and report to John what you hear and see – the blind recover their sight
6 and the lame walk, the lepers are made clean and the deaf hear, the dead,
7 too, are raised to life, and the good news is told to the poor. Blessed is the
8 person who finds no hindrance in me.’

7 While John’s disciples were going back, Jesus began to say to the crowds
8 with reference to John, ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look
at? A reed waving in the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man
9 richly dressed? Why, those who wear rich things are to be found in the
10 courts of kings! What, then, did you go for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell
11 you, and far more than a prophet. This is the man of whom scripture says –
“I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way
12 before you.” I tell you, no one born of a woman has yet appeared who is
greater than John the Baptist; and yet the least in the kingdom of heaven
13 is greater than he. From the time of John the Baptist to this very hour,
the kingdom of heaven has been taken by force, and people using force
14 have been seizing it. For the teaching of all the prophets and of the Law
15 continued until the time of John; and – if you are ready to accept it – John is
16 himself the Elijah who was destined to come. If you have ears, listen. But to
17 what will I compare the present generation? It is like little children sitting
18 in the market-places and calling out to their playmates – We have played
the flute for you, but you have not danced; We have wailed, but you have
19 not mourned. For, when John came, neither eating nor drinking, people
20 said “He has a demon in him”; and now that the Son of Man has come,
eating and drinking, they are saying “Here is a glutton and a wine-drinker,
a friend of tax-gatherers and outcasts!” And yet wisdom is vindicated by
her actions.’

20 Then Jesus began to reproach the towns in which most of his miracles
21 had been done, because they had not repented, ‘Alas for you, Chorazin!
Alas for you, Bethsaida! For, if the miracles which were done in you had
22 been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sack-
cloth and ashes. Yet, I tell you, the doom of Tyre and Sidon will be more
23 bearable in the day of judgment than yours. And you, Capernaum! Will
you exalt yourself to heaven? You will be flung down to Hades! For, if the

miracles which have been done in you had been done in Sodom, it would
24 have been standing to this day. Yet, I tell you, the doom of Sodom will
25 be more bearable in the day of judgment than yours.' At that same time
Jesus uttered the words, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
that, though you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, you
26 have revealed them to the child-like! Yes, Father, I thank you that this has
27 seemed good to you. Everything has been committed to me by my Father;
nor does anyone fully know the Son, except the Father, or fully know the
Father, except the Son and those to whom the Son may choose to reveal
28 him. Come to me, all you who toil and are burdened, and I will give you
29 rest! Take my yoke on you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble,
30 and you will find rest for your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden
is light.'

12 About the same time Jesus walked through the cornfields one Sabbath.
His disciples were hungry, and began to pick some ears of wheat and eat
2 them. But, when the Pharisees saw this, they said, 'Look! Your disciples
are doing what it is not allowable to do on a Sabbath!'

3 'Haven't you read,' replied Jesus, 'what David did, when he and his
4 companions were hungry – how he went into the house of God, and how
they ate the consecrated bread, through it was not allowable for him or
5 his companions to eat it, but only for the priests? And haven't you read in
the law that, on the Sabbath, the priest in the Temple break the Sabbath
6 and yet are not guilty? Here, however, I tell you, there is something greater
7 than the Temple! Had you learned the meaning of the words – "I desire
mercy, and not sacrifice," you would not have condemned those who are
8 not guilty. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.'

9 Passing on, Jesus went into their synagogue, and there he saw a man
10 with a withered hand. Some people asked Jesus whether it was allowable
to work a cure on the Sabbath – so that they might have a charge to bring
11 against him. But Jesus said to them, 'Which of you, if he had only one
sheep, and that sheep fell into a pit on the Sabbath, would not lay hold
12 of it and pull it out? How much more precious a person is than a sheep!
13 Therefore it is allowable to do good on the Sabbath.' Then he said to the
man. 'Stretch out your hand.' The man stretched it out; and it had become
14 as sound as the other. On coming out, the Pharisees plotted against Jesus,
to put him to death.

15 Jesus, however, became aware of it, and went away from that place. A
16 number of people followed him, and he cured them all; but he warned
17 them not to make him known, in fulfilment of these words in the prophet
18 Isaiah – "Here is my chosen servant, who I love and who pleases me! I will

19 breathe my spirit on him, and he will announce a time of judgment to the
20 Gentiles. He will not contend, nor cry aloud, Neither will anyone hear his
21 voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering
wick he will not quench, until he has brought the judgment to a victorious
issue, and on his name will the Gentiles rest their hopes."

22 Then some people brought to Jesus a possessed man, who was blind
and dumb; and he cured him, so that the man who had been dumb both
talked and saw. At this all the people were astounded. 'Is it possible that
this is the son of David?' they exclaimed. But the Pharisees heard of it
and said, 'He drives out demons only by the help of Beelzebul the chief
of the demons.' Jesus, however, was aware of what was passing in their
minds, and said to them, 'Any kingdom divided against itself becomes a
desolation, and any town or household divided against itself will not last.
26 So, if Satan drives Satan out, he must be divided against himself; and how,
then, can his kingdom last? And, if it is by Beelzebul's help that I drive out
demons, by whose help is it that your own sons drive them out? Therefore
they will themselves be your judges. But, if it is by the help of the Spirit of
God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God must already be
upon you. How, again, can anyone get into a strong man's house and carry
off his goods, without first securing him? Not until then will he plunder
his house. Anyone who is not with me is against me, and the person who
does not help me to gather is scattering. Therefore, I tell you, people will
be forgiven every sin and slander; but slander against the Holy Spirit will
not be forgiven. Whoever speaks against the Son of Man will be forgiven,
but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in
the present age, or in the age to come.

33 'You must assume either that both tree and fruit are good, or that both
tree and fruit are worthless; since it is by its fruits that a tree is known.
34 You children of snakes! How can you, evil as you are, say anything good?
35 For what fills the heart will rise to the lips. A good person, from his good
stores, produces good things; while an evil person, from his evil stores,
produces evil things. I tell you that for every careless thing that people say,
they must answer on the "day of judgment." For it is by your words that
you will be acquitted, and by your words that you will be condemned.'

38 At this point, some teachers of the Law and Pharisees spoke up. 'Teacher,'
they said, 'we want to see some sign from you.'

39 'It is a wicked and unfaithful generation,' answered Jesus, 'that is asking
for a sign, and no sign will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.
40 For, just as Jonah was inside the sea-monster three days and three nights, so
will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'

41 At the judgment, the people of Nineveh will stand up with this generation, and will condemn it, because they repented at Jonah's proclamation; and
42 here is more than a Jonah! At the judgment the Queen of the South will rise up with the present generation, and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon; and here is
43 more than a Solomon! No sooner does a foul spirit leave a person, than it passes through places where there is no water, in search of rest, and does
44 not find it. Then it says "I will go back to the home which I left"; but, on
45 coming there, it finds it unoccupied, and swept, and put in order. Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in, and make their home there; and the last state of that man proves to be worse than the first. So, too, will it be with this wicked generation.'

46 While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside, asking to speak to him. Someone told him this, and Jesus replied, 'Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?' Then, stretching out his hands towards his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! For anyone who does the will of my Father who is in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.'

13 That same day, when Jesus had left the house and was sitting by the sea, such great crowds gathered round him, that he got into a boat, and sat in it, while all the people stood on the beach. Then he told them many truths in parables. 'The sower,' he began, 'went out to sow; and, as they were sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it had not much soil, and, because the soil wasn't deep, sprang up at once. As soon as the sun had risen, it was scorched, and, because their roots were not deep enough, withered away. Some, again, fell into the brambles; but the brambles shot up and choked it. Some, however, fell on good soil, and yielded a return, sometimes one hundred, sometimes sixty, sometimes thirty fold. Let those who have ears hear.'

10 Afterwards his disciples came to him, and said, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?'

11 'To you,' answered Jesus, 'the knowledge of the hidden truths of the kingdom of heaven has been imparted, but not to those. For, to all who have, more will be given, and they will have abundance; but, from all who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. That is why I speak to them in parables, because, though they have eyes, they do not see, and though they have ears, they do not hear or understand. In them is being fulfilled that prophecy of Isaiah which says -

"You will hear with your ears without ever understanding,
and, though you have eyes, you will see without ever perceiving,
for the mind of this nation has grown dense,
15 and their ears are dull of hearing,
their eyes also have they closed;
Otherwise some day they might perceive with their eyes,
and with their ears they might hear,
and in their mind they might understand,
and might turn –
and I might heal them."

16 'But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear; for
17 I tell you that many prophets and good people have longed for the sight
of the things which you are seeing, yet never saw them, and to hear the
things which you are hearing, yet never heard them.
18 'Listen, then, yourselves to the parable of the sower. When anyone hears
19 the message of the kingdom without understanding it, the evil one comes
and snatches away what has been sown in their mind. This is the person
20 meant by the seed which was sown along the path. By the seed which
was sown on rocky places is meant the person who hears the message,
21 and at once accepts it joyfully; but, as they have no root, they stand for
only a short time; and, when trouble or persecution arises because of the
22 message, they fall away at once. By the seed which was sown among the
brambles is meant the person who hears the message, but the cares of life
and the glamour of wealth completely choke the message, so that it gives
23 no return. But by the seed which was sown on the good ground is meant
the person who hears the message and understands it, and really yields a
return, sometimes one hundred, sometimes sixty, sometimes thirty fold.'
24 Another parable which Jesus told them was this – 'The kingdom of
25 heaven is compared to a person who sowed good seed in their field. But,
while everyone was asleep, their enemy came and sowed weeds among
26 the wheat, and then went away. So, when the blades of corn shot up, and
27 came into ear, the weeds made their appearance also. The owner's servants
came to them, and said "Was not it good seed that you sowed in your field?
28 Where, then, do the weeds in it come from?" "An enemy has done this,"
was the owner's answer. "Do you wish us, then," they asked, "to go and
29 gather them together?" "No," said he, "because while you are pulling up
30 the weeds you might uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow side by
side until harvest; and then I will say to the reapers, Gather the weeds

together first, and tie them in bundles for burning; but bring all the wheat into my barn.””

31 Another parable which he told them was this – ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a person took and sowed in his field. This seed is smaller than all other seeds, but, when it has grown up, it is larger than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that “the wild birds come and roost in its branches.”’

33 This was another parable which Jesus related – ‘The kingdom of heaven is like some yeast which a woman took and covered up in three pecks of flour, until the whole had risen.’ Of all this Jesus spoke to the crowd in 34 parables; indeed to them he used never to speak at all except in parables, in 35 fulfilment of these words in the prophet – “I will speak to them in parables; I will utter things kept secret since the foundation of the world.”

36 Then Jesus left the crowd, and went into the house. Presently his 37 disciples came to him, and said, ‘Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the 38 field.’ He answered, ‘The sower of the good seed is the Son of Man. The 39 field is the world. By the good seed is meant the people of the kingdom. 40 The weeds are the wicked, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. 41 The harvest time is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. And, 42 just as the weeds are gathered and burnt, so it will be at the close of the 43 age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his 44 kingdom all that hinders and those who live in sin, and will throw them 45 into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of 46 teeth. Then will the righteous shine, like the sun, in the kingdom of their 47 Father. If you have ears, listen.

48 ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a 49 person found and hid again, and then, in their delight, went and sold 50 everything that they had, and bought that field.

51 ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of choice 52 pearls. Finding one of great value, they went and sold everything that they 53 had, and bought it. Or again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net which 54 was cast into the sea, and caught fish of all kinds. When it was full, they 55 hauled it up on the beach, and sat down and sorted the good fish into 56 baskets, but threw the worthless ones away. So will it be at the close of the 57 age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous, 58 and will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping 59 and grinding of teeth.

60 ‘Have you understood all this?’ Jesus asked. ‘Yes,’ they answered. Then 61 he added, ‘So every teacher of the Law, who has received instruction about

the kingdom of heaven, is like a householder who produces from his stores things both new and old.'

53 When Jesus had finished these parables, he withdrew from that place.
54 Going to his own part of the country, he taught the people in their synagogue in such a manner that they were deeply impressed. 'Where did
55 he get this wisdom?' they said, 'and the miracles? Isn't he the carpenter's
son? Isn't his mother called Mary, and his brothers James, and Joseph, and
56 Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, too – are not they all living among us?
57 Where, then did he get all this?' These things proved a hindrance to their
58 believing in him. But Jesus said, 'A prophet is not without honour, except
in his own country and in his own house.' He did not work many miracles
there, because of their want of faith.

14 At that time Prince Herod heard of the fame of Jesus, and said to his
2 attendants, 'This must be John the Baptist; he must be risen from the dead,
3 and that is why these miraculous powers are active in him.' For Herod
had arrested John, put him in chains, and shut him up in prison, to please
4 Herodias, the wife of Herod's brother Philip. For John had said to him
5 "You have no right to be living with her." Yet, though Herod wanted to put
him to death, he was afraid of the people, because they looked on John as
6 a prophet. But, when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias
7 danced before his guests, and so pleased Herod, that he promised with
8 an oath to give her whatever she asked. Prompted by her mother, the girl
9 said "Give me here, on a dish, the head of John the Baptist." The king was
distressed at this; yet, because of his oath and of the guests at his table, he
10 ordered it to be given her. He had John beheaded in the prison and his
11 head was brought on a dish and given to the girl, and she took it to her
12 mother. Then John's disciples came, and took the body away, and buried
it; and went and told Jesus.

13 When Jesus heard of it, he left privately in a boat to a lonely spot. The
people, however, heard of his going, and followed him in crowds from
14 the towns on foot. On getting out of the boat, Jesus saw a great crowd,
and his heart was moved at the sight of them; and he cured all the sick
15 among them. In the evening the disciples came up to him, and said, 'This
is a lonely spot, and the day is now far advanced; send the crowds away
16 so that they can go to the villages, and buy themselves food.' But Jesus said,
17 'They need not go away, it is for you to give them something to eat.' 'We
have nothing here,' they said, 'except five loaves and two fish.'
18 'Bring them here to me,' was his reply. Jesus ordered the people to take
19 their seats on the grass; and, taking the five loaves and the two fish, he
looked up to heaven, and said the blessing, and, after he had broken the

loaves, gave them to his disciples; and they gave them to the crowds. Every
20 one had sufficient to eat, and they picked up enough of the broken pieces
21 that were left to fill twelve baskets. The men who ate were about five
22 thousand in number, without counting women and children. Immediately
23 afterwards Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and cross over in ad-
24 vance of him, while he dismissed the crowds. After dismissing the crowds,
25 he went up the hill by himself to pray; and, when evening fell, he was there
26 alone. The boat was by this time some miles from shore, labouring in the
27 waves, for the wind was against her. Three hours after midnight, however,
28 Jesus came towards the disciples, walking on the water. But, when they saw
29 him walking on the water, they were terrified. 'It is a ghost,' they exclaimed,
30 and cried out in fear. But Jesus at once spoke to them. 'Courage!' he said,
31 'It is I; do not be afraid!' 'Master,' Peter exclaimed, 'if it is you, tell me to
32 come to you on the water.' Jesus said, 'Come.' So Peter got down from the
33 boat, and walked on the water, and went towards Jesus; but, when he felt
the wind, he was frightened, and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Master!
Save me!' Instantly Jesus stretched out his hand, and caught hold of him.
34 'You of little faith!' he said, 'Why did you falter?' When they had got into
35 the boat, the wind dropped. But the men in the boat threw themselves on
36 their faces before him, and said, 'You are indeed God's Son.'

When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. But the people
of that place, recognising Jesus, sent out to the whole country round, and
brought to him all who were ill, begging him merely to let them touch the
tassel of his cloak; and all who touched were made perfectly well.

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the Law came to Jesus, and said,
2 'How is it that your disciples break the traditions of our ancestors? For they
3 do not wash their hands when they eat food.' His reply was, 'How is it
4 that you on your side break God's commandments out of respect for your
5 own traditions? For God said – "Honour your father and mother," and
6 "Any one who abuses his father or mother shall suffer death," but you say
7 "Whenev er anyone says to his father or mother 'Whatever of mine might
8 have been of service to you is set apart for God,' he is in no way bound
9 to honour his father." In this way you have nullified the words of God for
10 the sake of your traditions. Hypocrites! It was well said by Isaiah when he
11 prophesied about you – "This is a people that honour me with their lips,
While their hearts are far removed from me; but vainly do they worship
me, For they teach but human precepts.'" Then Jesus called the people to
him, and said, 'Listen, and mark my words. It is not what enters a person's
mouth that defiles them, but what comes out from their mouth – that does

- 12 defile them!' His disciples came up to him, and said, 'Do you know that the Pharisees were shocked on hearing what you said?'
- 13 'Every plant,' Jesus replied, 'that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Leave them be; they are but blind guides; and, if one blind person guides another, both of them will fall into a ditch.' Peter spoke up, 'Explain this saying to us.'
- 14 'What, do even you understand nothing yet?' Jesus exclaimed. 'Don't you see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is afterwards expelled? But the things that come out of the mouth proceed from the heart, and it is these that defile a person; for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts – murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, perjury, slander. These are the things that defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile a person.'
- 21 On going away from that place, Jesus went to the country round Tyre and Sidon. There, a Canaanite woman of that district came out and began calling to Jesus, 'Take pity on me, Master, Son of David; my daughter is grievously possessed by a demon.' But Jesus did not answer her a word; and his disciples came up and begged him to send her away. 'She keeps calling out after us,' they said. 'I was not sent,' replied Jesus, 'to anyone except the lost sheep of Israel.' But the woman came, and, bowing to the ground before him, said, 'Master, help me.'
- 26 'It is not fair,' replied Jesus, 'to take the children's food and throw it to dogs.' 'Yes, Master,' she said, 'for even dogs do feed on the scraps that fall from their owners' table.'
- 28 'Your faith is great,' was his reply to the woman, 'it will be as you wish!' And her daughter was cured that very hour.
- 29 On leaving that place, Jesus went to the shore of the Sea of Galilee; and then went up the hill, and sat down. Great crowds of people came to him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, or dumb, and many others. They put them down at his feet, and he cured them; and the crowds were astonished, when they saw the dumb talking, the cripples made sound, the lame walking about, and the blind with their sight restored; and they praised the God of Israel. Afterwards Jesus called his disciples to him, and said, 'My heart is moved at the sight of all these people, for they have already been with me three days and they have nothing to eat; and I am unwilling to send them away hungry; they might faint on the way home.' 'Where can we,' his disciples asked, 'in a lonely place find enough bread for such a crowd as this?'
- 34 'How many loaves have you?' said Jesus. 'Seven,' they answered, 'and a few small fish.' Telling the crowd to sit down on the ground, Jesus took the
- 36

seven loaves and the fish, and, after saying the thanksgiving, broke them, and gave them to the disciples; and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

37 Everyone had sufficient to eat, and they picked up seven baskets full of
38 the broken pieces left. The men who ate were four thousand in number
39 without counting women and children. Then, after dismissing the crowds,
Jesus got into the boat, and went to the region of Magadan.

16 Here the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and, to test Jesus, requested
2 him to show them some sign from the heavens. But Jesus answered, ‘In
the evening you say “It will be fine weather, for the sky is as red as fire.”
3 But in the morning you say “Today it will be stormy, for the sky is as red
as fire and threatening.” You learn to read the sky; yet you are unable to
4 read the signs of the times! A wicked and unfaithful generation is asking
for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah.’ So he left
them and went away.

5 Now the disciples had crossed to the opposite shore, and had forgotten
6 to take any bread. Presently Jesus said to them, ‘Take care and be on your
7 guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ But the disciples
8 began talking among themselves about their having brought no bread. On
noticing this, Jesus said, ‘Why are you talking among yourselves about your
9 being short of bread, you of little faith? Don’t you yet see, nor remember
the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you took away?
10 Nor yet the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls
11 you took away? How is it that you do not see that I was not speaking
about bread? Be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and
12 Sadducees.’ Then they understood that he had told them to be on their
guard, not against the leaven of bread, but against the teaching of the
Pharisees and Sadducees.

13 On coming into the region of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples
14 this question – ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ ‘Some say John
the Baptist,’ they answered, ‘Others, however, say that he is Elijah, while
others again say Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’

15 ‘But you,’ he said, ‘who do you say that I am?’ To this Simon Peter
16 answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

17 ‘Blessed are you, Simon, Son of Jonah,’ Jesus replied. ‘For no human
18 being has revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. Yes, and I
say to you, your name is “Peter” – a Rock, and on this rock I will build my
19 church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail over it. I will give you the
keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be held
in heaven to be forbidden, and whatever you allow on earth will be held

- 20 in heaven to be allowed.' Then he charged his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.
- 21 At that time Jesus Christ began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and undergo much suffering at the hands of the elders, and chief priests, and teachers of the Law, and be put to death, and rise on the third day. But Peter took Jesus aside, and began to rebuke him. 'Master,' he said, 'please God that will never be your fate!' Jesus, however, turning to Peter, said, 'Out of my way, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you look at things, not as God does, but as person does.' Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wishes to walk in my steps, they must renounce self, and take up their cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, and whoever, for my sake, loses his life will find it. What good will it do a person to gain the whole world, if he forfeits his life? Or what will a person give that is of equal value with his life? For the Son of Man is to come in his Father's glory, with his angels, and then he will give to everyone what his actions deserve. I tell you, some of those who are standing here will not know death until they have seen the Son of Man coming into his kingdom.'
- 17 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, and the brothers James and John, and led them up a high mountain alone. There his appearance was transformed before their eyes; his face shown like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. All at once Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. 'Master,' exclaimed Peter, interposing, 'it is good to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and there was a voice from the cloud that said – 'This is my dearly loved son, who brings me great joy; listen to him.' The disciples, on hearing this, fell on their faces, greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying as he did so, 'Rise up, and do not be afraid.' When they raised their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus himself alone. As they were going down the mountain side, Jesus gave them this warning – 'Do not speak of this vision to anyone, until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.' 'How is it,' his disciples asked, 'that our teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?'
- 11 'Elijah indeed does come,' Jesus replied, 'and will restore everything; and I tell you that Elijah has already come, and people have not recognised him, but have treated him just as they pleased. In the same way, too, the Son of Man is destined to undergo suffering at people's hands.' Then the disciples understood that it was of John the Baptist that he had spoken to them.

- 14 When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, and, kneeling down before him, said, 'Master, take pity on my son, for he is epileptic and suffers terribly; indeed, he often falls into the fire and into the water; I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.'
- 17 'Faithless and perverse generation!' Jesus exclaimed, 'how long must I be among you? How long must I have patience with you? Bring the boy here to me.' Then Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy; and he was cured from that very hour. Afterwards the disciples came up to Jesus, and asked him privately, 'Why was it that we could not drive it out?'
- 20 'Because you have so little faith!' he answered, 'For, I tell you, if your faith were only like a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain "Move from this place to that!" and it would be moved; and nothing would be impossible to you.'⁴
- 22 While Jesus and his disciples were together in Galilee, he said to them, 23 'The Son of Man is destined to be betrayed into human hands, and they will put him to death, but on the third day he will rise.' The disciples were greatly distressed.
- 24 After they had reached Capernaum, the collectors of the Temple-rate came up to Peter, and said, 'Does not your Master pay the Temple-rate?'
- 25 'Yes,' answered Peter. But, on going into the house, before he could speak, Jesus said, 'What do you think, Simon? From whom do earthly kings take taxes or tribute? From their sons, or from others?' 'From others,' answered 27 Peter. 'Well then,' continued Jesus, 'their sons go free. Still, so we don't offend them, go and throw a line into the sea; take the first fish that rises, open its mouth, and you will find in it a piece of money. Take that, and give it to the collectors for both of us.'
- 18 On the same occasion the disciples came to Jesus, and asked him, 'Who is really the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' Jesus called a little child to him, and placed it in the middle of them, and then said, 'I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven at all. Therefore, anyone who will humble themselves like this child – that person will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And anyone who, for the sake of my name, welcomes even one little child like this, is welcoming me. But, if anyone puts temptation in the way of one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be best for them to be sunk in 7 the depths of the sea with a great millstone hung round their neck. Alas for

⁴ 17:21 Some later manuscripts add: But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.

the world because of such temptations! There cannot but be temptations but sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting!

- 8 ‘If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off, and throw it away. It would be better for you to enter the life maimed or lame, than to have both hands, or both feet, and be thrown into the fire that never goes out.
- 9 If your eye causes you to sin, take it out, and throw it away. It would be better for you to enter the life with only one eye, than to have both eyes
- 10 and be thrown into the fires of Gehenna. Beware of despising one of these little ones, for in heaven, I tell you, their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.⁵
- 12 ‘What think you? If a person owns a hundred sheep, and one of them strays, will the person not leave the ninety-nine on the hills, and go and search for the one that is straying? And, if they succeed in finding it, I tell you that they rejoice more over that one sheep than over the ninety-nine
- 14 which did not stray. So, too, it is the will of my Father who is in heaven that not one of these little ones should be lost.
- 15 ‘If your brother or sister does wrong, go to them and convince them of their fault when you are both alone. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But, if they do not listen to you, take with you one or two others, so that on the evidence of two or three witnesses, every word may be put beyond dispute. If they refuse to listen to them, speak to the church; and, if they also refuse to listen to the church, treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax-gatherer.
- 18 ‘I tell you, all that you forbid on earth will be held in heaven to be forbidden, and all that you allow on earth will be held in heaven to be allowed. Again, I tell you that, if but two of you on earth agree as to what they will pray for, whatever it be, it will be granted them by my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have come together in my name, I am present with them.’
- 21 Then Peter came up, and said to Jesus, ‘Master, how often am I to forgive someone who wrongs me? As many as seven times?’ But Jesus answered,
- 23 ‘Not seven times, but seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.
- 24 When he had begun to do so, one of them was brought to him who owed him ten thousand bags of gold; and, as he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold towards the payment of the debt, together with his wife, and his children, and everything that he had. The servant threw himself down

⁵ 18:11 Some later manuscripts add: For the Son of Man has come to save the lost.

on the ground before him and said "Have patience with me, and I will pay
27 you all." The master was moved with compassion; and he let him go, and
28 forgave him the debt. But, on going out, that same servant came upon one
29 of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. Seizing him
30 by the throat, he said "Pay what you owe me." His fellow servant threw
31 himself on the ground and begged for mercy. "Have patience with me,"
32 he said, "and I will pay you." But the other would not, but went and put
33 him in prison until he should pay his debt. When his fellow servants saw
34 what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and went to their master
35 and laid the whole matter before him. So the master sent for the servant,
and said to him "You wicked servant! When you begged me for mercy, I
forgave you the whole of that debt. Shouldn't you, also, to have shown
mercy to your fellow servant, just as I showed mercy to you?" Then his
master, in anger, handed him over to the jailers, until he should pay the
whole of his debt. So, also, will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each
one of you forgives his brother or sister from your heart.'

The Journey to Jerusalem

19 At the conclusion of this teaching, Jesus withdrew from Galilee, and went
2 into that district of Judea which is on the other side of the Jordan. Great
3 crowds followed him, and he cured them there. Presently some Pharisees
came up to him, and, to test him, said, 'Has a man the right to divorce his
wife for every cause?'
4 'Haven't you read,' replied Jesus, 'that at the beginning the Creator
5 "made them male and female," and said – "For this reason a man will leave
his father and mother, and be united to his wife, and the man and his
6 wife will become one"? So that they are no longer two, but one. What God
7 himself, then, has yoked together people must not separate.' 'Why, then,'
they said, 'did Moses direct that a man should serve his wife with a notice
of separation and divorce her?'
8 'Moses, owing to the hardness of your hearts,' answered Jesus, 'permis-
9 ted you to divorce your wives, but that was not so at the beginning. But I
tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of some
10 serious sexual sin, and marries another woman, is guilty of adultery.' 'If
that,' said the disciples, 'is the position of a man with regard to his wife, it
is better not to marry.'
11 'It is not everyone,' replied Jesus, 'who can accept this teaching, but only
12 those who have been enabled to do so. Some men, it is true, have from

birth been disabled for marriage, while others have been disabled by their fellow men, and others again have disabled themselves for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Accept this if you can.'

13 Then some little children were brought to Jesus, for him to place his hands on them, and pray; but the disciples found fault with those who had brought them. Jesus, however, said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for it is to the childlike that the kingdom of heaven belongs.' So he placed his hands on them, and then went on his way.

14 A man came up to Jesus, and said, 'Teacher, what good thing must I do to obtain eternal life?'

15 'Why ask me about goodness?' answered Jesus. 'There is but One who is good. If you want to enter the life, keep the commandments.' 'What commandments?' asked the man. 'These,' answered Jesus, -- "You must not kill. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not say what is false about others. Honour your father and your mother." And 19 20 "You must love your neighbour as you love yourself." I have observed all these,' said the young man. 'What is still wanting in me?'

21 'If you wish to be perfect,' answered Jesus, 'go and sell your property, and give to the poor, and you will have wealth in heaven; then come and follow me.' On hearing these words, the young man went away distressed, 22 for he had great possessions. At this, Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you 23 that a rich person will find it hard to enter the kingdom of heaven! I say again, it is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich 24 25 person to enter the kingdom of heaven!' On hearing this, the disciples 26 exclaimed in great astonishment, 'Who then can possibly be saved?' But Jesus looked at them, and said, 'With people this is impossible, but with 27 God everything is possible.' Then Peter turned and said to Jesus, 'But we - we left everything, and followed you; what, then, will we have?'

28 'I tell you,' answered Jesus, 'that at the new creation, when the Son of Man takes his seat on his throne of glory, you who followed me will be seated on twelve thrones, as judges of the twelve tribes of Israel. Everyone 29 who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or land, for my sake, will receive many times as much, and will gain eternal 30 life. But many who are first now will then be last, and those who are last 20 will be first. For the kingdom of heaven is like an employer who went out 2 in the early morning to hire labourers for his vineyards. He agreed with the labourers to pay them the standard daily rate of two silver coins, and 3 sent them into his vineyard. On going out again, about nine o'clock, he saw 4 some others standing in the marketplace, doing nothing. "You also may 5 go into my vineyard," he said, "and I will pay you what is fair." So they

went. Going out again about midday and about three o'clock, he did as
6 before. When he went out about five, he found some others standing there,
and said to them "Why have you been standing here all day long, doing
7 nothing?" "Because no one has hired us," they answered. "You also may go
8 into my vineyard," he said. In the evening the owner of the vineyard said
9 to his steward "Call the labourers, and pay them their wages, beginning
10 with the last, and ending with the first." Now when those who had been
11 hired about five o'clock went up, they received two silver coins each. So,
when the first went up, they thought that they would receive more, but
12 they also received two silver coins each; at which they began to grumble at
13 their employer. "These last," they said, "have done only one hour's work,
and yet you have put them on the same footing with us, who have borne
14 the brunt of the day's work, and the heat." "My friend," was his reply to
one of them, "I am not treating you unfairly. Didn't you agree with me for
15 two silver coins? Take what belongs to you, and go. I choose to give to this
last man the same as to you. Don't I have the right to do as I choose with
16 what is mine? Are you envious because I am liberal?" So those who are
last will be first, and the first last.'

17 When Jesus was on the point of going up to Jerusalem, he gathered the
twelve disciples round him by themselves, and said to them as they were
18 on their way, 'Listen! We are going up to Jerusalem; and there the Son of
Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the Law, and they
19 will condemn him to death, and give him up to the Gentiles for them to
mock, and to scourge, and to crucify; and on the third day he will rise.'

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to him with her sons, bowing
21 to the ground, and begging a favour. 'What is it that you want?' he asked.
'I want you to say,' she replied, 'that in your kingdom these two sons of
mine may sit, one on your right, and the other on your left.'

22 'You do not know what you are asking,' was Jesus' answer. 'Can you
drink the cup that I am to drink?' 'Yes,' they exclaimed, 'we can.'

23 'You will indeed drink my cup,' he said, 'but as to a seat at my right
and at my left – that is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it
24 has been prepared by my Father.' On hearing of this, the ten others were
25 very indignant about the two brothers. Jesus, however, called the ten to
him, and said, 'The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them as you know,
26 and their high officials oppress them. Among you it is not so. No, whoever
27 wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever
28 wants to take the first place among you, must be your slave; just as the Son
of Man came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom
for many.'

29 As they were going out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. Two blind
30 men who were sitting by the roadside, hearing that Jesus was passing,
31 called out, 'Take pity on us, Master, Son of David!' The crowd told them to
be quiet; but the men only called out the louder, 'Take pity on us, Master,
32 Son of David!' Then Jesus stopped and called them. 'What do you want
33 me to do for you?' he said. 'Master,' they replied, 'we want our eyes to
34 be opened.' So Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes, and
immediately they recovered their sight, and followed him.

The Last Days

21 When they had almost reached Jerusalem, having come as far as Bethphage,
2 on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent on two disciples. 'Go to the village facing
3 you,' he said, 'and you will immediately find an ass tethered, with a foal by
her side; untie her, and lead her here for me. And, if anyone says anything
4 to you, you are to say this – "The Master wants them"; and he will send
5 them at once.' This happened in fulfilment of these words in the prophet –
"Say to the people of Zion – 'Your King is coming to you, gentle, and riding
on an ass, and on the foal of a beast of burden.'"

6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They led the
7 ass and the foal back, and, when they had put their cloaks on them, he
8 seated himself on them. The immense crowd of people spread their cloaks
in the road, while some cut branches off the trees, and spread them on the
9 road. The crowds that led the way, as well as those that followed behind,
kept shouting, 'God save the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in
10 the name of the Lord! God save him from on high!' When he had entered
11 Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred, and asked – 'Who is this?', to which
the crowd replied – 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

12 Jesus went into the Temple Courts, and drove out all those who were
buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers,
13 and the seats of the pigeon-dealers, and said to them, 'Scripture says "My
house will be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of
14 robbers.' While he was still in the Temple Courts, some blind and some
15 lame people came up to him, and he cured them. But, when the chief
priests and the teachers of the Law saw the wonderful things that Jesus
did, and the boys who were calling out in the Temple Courts 'God save the
16 Son of David!', they were indignant, and said to him, 'Do you hear what
these boys are saying?'

'Yes,' answered Jesus, 'but did you never read the words – "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings you have called forth perfect praise"?'

17 Then he left them, and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

18 The next morning, in returning to the city, Jesus became hungry; and, noticing a solitary fig tree by the roadside, he went up to it, but found nothing on it but leaves. So he said to it, 'Never again will fruit be gathered off you.' And suddenly the fruit tree withered up. When the disciples saw this, they exclaimed in astonishment, 'How suddenly the fig tree withered up!'

21 'I tell you,' replied Jesus, 'if you have faith, without ever a doubt, you will do what not only what has been done to the fig tree, but, even if you should say to this hill "Be lifted up and hurled into the sea!" it would be done. And whatever you ask for in your prayers will, if you have faith, be granted you.'

23 After Jesus had come into the Temple Courts, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, 'What authority have you to do these things? Who gave you this authority?'

24 'I, too,' said Jesus in reply, 'will ask you one question; if you will give me an answer to it, then I, also, will tell you what authority I have to act as I do. It is about John's baptism. What was its origin? Divine or human?' But they began arguing among themselves, 'If we say "divine," he will say to us "Why then didn't you believe him?" But if we say "human," we are afraid of the people, for everyone regards John as a prophet.' So the answer they gave Jesus was – 'We do not know.'

28 'Then I,' he said, 'refuse to tell you what authority I have to do these things. What do you think of this? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the elder and said "Go and work in the vineyard today my son." "Yes, sir," he answered; but he did not go. Then the father went to the second son, and said the same. "I will not," he answered; but afterwards he was sorry and went. Which of the two sons did as his father wished?' 'The second,' they said. 'I tell you,' added Jesus, 'that tax-gatherers and prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God before you. For when John came to you, walking in the path of righteousness, you did not believe him, but tax-gatherers and prostitutes did; and yet you, though you saw this, even then were not sorry, nor did you believe him.'

33 'Listen to another parable. A man, who was an employer, once planted a vineyard, put a fence round it, dug a winepress in it, built a tower, and then let it out to tenants and went abroad. When the time for the grape harvest drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to receive his share

35 of the produce. But the tenants seized his servants, beat one, killed another,
36 and stoned a third. A second time the owner sent some servants, a larger
37 number than before, and the tenants treated them in the same way. As a last
38 resource he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son," he said. But
39 the tenants, on seeing his son, said to each other "Here is the heir! Come,
40 let us kill him, and get his inheritance." So they seized him, and threw
41 him outside the vineyard, and killed him. Now, when the owner of the
vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" 'Miserable wretches!'
they exclaimed, 'he will put them to a miserable death, and he will let out
the vineyard to other tenants, who will pay him his share of the produce at
42 the proper times.' Then Jesus added, 'Have you never read in the scriptures?
– "The stone which the builders despised – has now itself become the
corner-stone. This corner-stone has come from the Lord, and is marvellous
43 in our eyes." That, I tell you, is why the kingdom of God will be taken from
44 you, and given to a nation that does produce the fruit of the kingdom. Yes,
and he who falls on this stone will be dashed to pieces, while anyone on
whom it falls – it will scatter him as dust.'

45 After listening to these parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees saw
46 that it was about them that he was speaking; yet, although eager to arrest
him, they were afraid of the crowds, who regarded him as a prophet.

22 Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables. 'The kingdom of heaven,'
2 he said, 'may be compared to a king who gave a banquet in honour of his
3 son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited
4 to the banquet, but they were unwilling to come. A second time he sent
some servants, with orders to say to those who had been invited "I have
5 prepared my breakfast, my cattle and fat beasts are killed and everything
is ready; come to the banquet." They, however, took no notice, but went
6 off, one to their farm, another to their business; while the rest, seizing
7 his servants, ill-treated them and killed them. The king, in anger, sent his
8 troops, put those murderers to death, and set their city on fire. Then he
9 said to his servants "The banquet is prepared, but those who were invited
10 were not worthy. So go to the cross-roads, and invite everyone you find
11 to the banquet." The servants went out into the roads and collected all
the people whom they found, whether bad or good; and the bridal-hall
12 was filled with guests. But, when the king went in to see his guests, he
13 noticed there a man who had not put on a wedding-robe. So he said to him
"My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding-robe?" The
14 man was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants "Tie him hand
and foot, and put him out into the darkness outside, where there will be
weeping and grinding of teeth." For many are called, but few chosen.'

15 Then the Pharisees went away and conferred together as to how they
16 might lay a trap for Jesus in the course of conversation. They sent their
disciples, with the Herodians, to say to him, 'Teacher, we know that you
are an honest person, and that you teach the way of God honestly, and
17 are not afraid of anyone; for you pay no regard to a person's position. Tell
us, then, what you think. Are we right in paying taxes to the Emperor, or
18 not?' Perceiving their malice, Jesus answered, 'Why are you testing me,
19 you hypocrites? Show me the coin with which the tax is paid.' And, when
20 they had brought him a coin, he asked, 'Whose head and title are these?'
21 'The Emperor's,' they answered, at which he said to them, 'Then pay to the
Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and to God what belongs to God.'

22 They wondered at his answer, and left him alone and went away.

23 That same day some Sadducees came up to Jesus, maintaining that there
24 is no resurrection. Their question was this, - 'Teacher, Moses said - "should
a man die without children, the man's brother will become the husband of
25 the widow, and raise a family for his brother." Now we had living among
us seven brothers; of whom the eldest married and died, and, as he had
26 no family, left his wife for his brother. The same thing happened to the
27 second and the third brothers, and indeed to all the seven. The woman
28 herself died last of all. At the resurrection, then, whose wife will she be
out of the seven, all of them having been married to her?'

29 'Your mistake,' replied Jesus, 'is due to your ignorance of the scriptures,
30 and of the power of God. For at the resurrection there is no marrying or
31 being married, but all who rise are as angels in heaven. As to the resurrec-
32 tion of the dead, have you not read these words of God - "I am the God of
Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? He is not the God
33 of dead people, but of living.' The crowds, who had been listening to him,
were greatly struck with his teaching.

34 When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they
35 collected together. Then one of them, a Student of the Law, to test him,
36 asked this question - 'Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the
37 Law?' His answer was, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your
38 heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great first
39 commandment. The second, which is like it, is this - You must love your
40 neighbour as you love yourself. On these two commandments hang all
41 the Law and the prophets.' Before the Pharisees separated, Jesus put this
42 question to them - 'What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?'
43 'David's,' they said. 'How is it, then,' Jesus replied, 'that David, speaking
44 under inspiration, calls him "lord," in the passage - "The Lord said to my
Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies beneath your feet"?

45 Since, then, David calls him "lord," how is he David's son?" No one could
46 say a word in answer; nor did anyone after that day venture to question
him further.

23 Then Jesus speaking to the crowds and to his disciples, said, 'The teach-
2 ers of the Law and the Pharisees now occupy the chair of Moses. Therefore
3 practice and lay to heart everything that they tell preach but do not prac-
4 tice. While they make up heavy loads and pile them on other people's
5 shoulder's they decline, themselves, to lift a finger to move them. All their
6 actions are done to attract attention. They widen their phylacteries, and
7 increase the size of their tassels, and like to have the place of honour at
8 dinner, and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted in the mar-
9 kets with respect, and to be called "Rabbi" for everybody. But do not allow
10 yourselves to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one teacher, and you
11 yourselves are all brothers and sisters. And do not call anyone on the earth
12 your "Father," for your have only one Father, the heavenly Father. Nor must
13 you allow yourselves to be called "leaders," for you have only one leader,
14 the Christ. The person who wants to be the greatest among you must be
15 your servant. Whoever exalts themselves will be humbled, and whoever
16 humbles themselves will be exalted. But alas for you, teachers of the Law
and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! You turn the key of the kingdom
of heaven in people's faces. For you do not go in yourselves, and do not
allow those who try to go in to do so.⁶ Alas for you, teachers of the law and
Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! You scour land and sea to make a single
convert, and, when they are gained, you make them twice as deserving of
17 Gehenna as you are yourselves. Alas for you, you blind guides! You say
"if any answer by the Temple, their oath counts for nothing; but, if anyone
18 swears by the gold of the Temple, their oath is binding them"! Fools that
you are and blind! Which is the more important? The gold? Or the Temple
19 which has given sacredness to the gold? You say, too, "If anyone swears
by the altar, their oath counts for nothing, but, if anyone swears by the
offering placed on it, their oath is binding on them"! Blind indeed! Which
is the more important? The offering? Or the altar which gives sacredness
20 to the offering? Therefore a person, swearing by the altar, swears by it and
21 by all that is on it, and a person, swearing by the Temple, swears by it and
22 by him who dwells in it, while a person, swearing by heaven, swears by

⁶ 23:14 Some later manuscripts add: Alas for you teachers of the law and Pharisees, hypocrites! You devour widows' property, and pray long prayers just for show! This is why you will receive a more severe punishment.

23 the throne of God, and by him who sits on it. Alas for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! You pay tithes on mint, fennel, and caraway seed, and have neglected the weightier matters of the Law – justice, mercy, and good faith. These last you ought to have put into
24 practice, without neglecting the first. You blind guides, to strain out a gnat
25 and to swallow a camel! Alas for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees,
hypocrites that you are! You clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but
26 inside they are filled with the results of greed and self-indulgence. You
27 blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the
outside may become clean as well. Alas for you, teachers of the Law and
Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! You are like whitewashed tombs, which
indeed look fair outside, while inside they are filled with dead people's
28 bones and all kinds of filth. It is the same with you. Outwardly, and to
others, you have the look of religious people, but inwardly you are full of
29 hypocrisy and sin. Alas for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, hypocrites
that you are! You build the tombs of the prophets, and decorate
30 the monuments of religious people, and say "Had we been living in the
days of our ancestors, we should have taken no part in their murder of the
31 prophets!" By doing this you are furnishing evidence against yourselves
32 that you are true children of the people who murdered the prophets. Go on
33 then, finish what your ancestors began! You snakes and children of snakes!
34 How can you escape being sentenced to Gehenna? That is why I send you
prophets, wise people, and teachers of the Law, some of whom you will
crucify and kill, and some of whom you will scourge in your synagogues,
35 and persecute from town to town; in order the blood on your heads may
fall every drop of innocent blood split on earth, from the blood of innocent
Abel down to that of Zechariah, Barachiah's son, whom you murdered
36 between the Temple and the altar. All this, I tell you, will come home to the
present generation. Jerusalem! Jerusalem! She who slays the prophets and
stones the messengers sent to her – Oh, how often have I wished to gather
your children round me, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and
38 you would not come! Verily, your house is left to you desolate! For never-
39 more, I tell you, will you see me, until you say – "Blessed is He who comes
in the name of the Lord!"'

24 Leaving the Temple Courts, Jesus was walking away, when his disciples
2 came up to draw his attention to the Temple buildings. 'Do you see all
these things?' was his answer. 'I tell you, not a single stone will be left here
3 on another, which will not be thrown down,' so, while Jesus was sitting on
the Mount of Olives, his disciples came up to him privately and said, 'Tell
us when this will be, and what will be the sign of your coming, and of the

4 close of the age.' Jesus replied to them, 'See that no one leads you astray;
5 for, many will take my name, and come saying "I am the Christ," and will
6 lead many astray. You will hear of wars and rumours of wars; take care not
7 to be alarmed, for such things must occur; but the end is not yet here. For
8 nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there
9 will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All this, however, will
10 be but the beginning of the birth pangs! When that time comes, they will
11 give you up to persecution, and will put you to death, and you will be
12 hated by all nations because of me. And then many will fall away, and will
13 betray one another, and hate one another. Many false prophets, also, will
14 appear and lead many astray; and, owing to the increase of wickedness,
15 the love of most will grow cold. Yet the person who endures to the end will
16 be saved. This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout
17 the world as a witness to all nations; and then will come the end. As soon,
18 then, as you see "the Foul Desecration," mentioned by the prophet Daniel,
19 standing in the Holy place,' (the reader must consider what this means)
20 'then those of you who are in Judea must take refuge in the mountains; and
21 a man on the housetop must not go down to get the things that are in his
22 house; nor must one who is on their farm turn back to get his cloak. Alas
23 for pregnant women, and for those who are nursing infants in those days!
24 Pray, too, that your flight may not take place in winter, nor on a Sabbath;
25 for that will be a time of great distress, the like of which has not occurred
26 from the beginning of the world down to the present time – no, nor ever
27 will again. Had not those days been limited, not a single soul would escape;
28 but for the sake of God's people a limit will be put to them. At that time, if
29 anyone should say to you "Look! Here is the Christ!" or "Here he is!", do
30 not believe it; for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will display
31 great signs and marvels, so that, were it possible, even God's people would
be led astray. Remember, I have told you beforehand. Therefore, if people
say to you "He is in the wilderness!", do not go out there; or "He is in an
inner room!", do not believe it; for, just as lightning will start from the east
and flash across to the west, so will it be with the coming of the Son of
Man. Wherever a dead body lies, there will the vultures flock. Immediately
after the distress of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will
not give her light, the stars will fall from the heavens, and the forces of the
heavens will be convulsed. Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man
in the heavens; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn, when they
see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the heavens, with power and
great glory; and he will send his angels, with a great trumpet, and they

will gather his people round him from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 ‘Learn the lesson taught by the fig tree. As soon as its branches are full
33 of sap, and it is bursting into leaf, you know that summer is near. And
34 so may you, as soon as you see all these things, know that he is at your
35 doors. I tell you, even the present generation will not pass away, until all
36 these things have taken place. The heavens and the earth will pass away,
37 but my words will never pass away. But about that day and hour, no one
38 knows – not even the angels of heaven, not even the Son – but only the
39 Father himself. For, just as in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming
40 of the Son of Man. In those days before the flood they went on eating and
41 drinking, marrying and being married, up to the very day on which Noah
42 entered the ark, taking not notice until the flood came and swept them one
43 and all away; and so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. At that
44 time, of two men on a farm one will be taken and one left; of two women
45 grinding with a hand-mill one will be taken and one left. Therefore watch;
46 for you cannot be sure on what day your Master is coming. But this you do
47 know, that, had the owner of the house known at what time of night the
48 thief was coming, they would have been on the watch, and would not have
49 allowed their house to be broken into. Therefore, you must also prepare,
50 since it is just when you are least expecting him that the Son of Man will
51 come. Who, then is that trustworthy, careful servant, who has been placed
52 by their master over his household, to give them their food at the proper
53 time? Happy will that servant be whom their master, when he comes home,
54 will find doing this. I tell you that their master will put them in charge of
55 the whole of his property. But, should the servant be a bad servant, and
56 say to themselves “My master is a long time in coming,” and begin to beat
57 their fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards, that servant’s
58 master will come on a day when they do not expect him, and at an hour
59 of which they are unaware, and will flog the servant severely, and assign
60 them their place among the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and
61 grinding of teeth.

25 ‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took
2 their lamps and went out to meet the groom. Five of them were foolish,
3 and five were prudent. The foolish ones took their lamps, but took no oil
4 with them; while the prudent ones, besides taking their lamps, took oil in
5 their jars. As the groom was late in coming, they all became drowsy, and
6 slept. But at midnight a shout was raised – “The groom is coming! Come
7 out to meet him!” Then all the bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their
8 lamps, and the foolish said to the prudent “Give us some of your oil; our

9 lamps are going out." But the prudent ones answered "No, There may not be enough for you and for us. Go instead to those who sell it, and buy for yourselves." But while they were on their way to buy it, the groom came; and the bridesmaids who were ready went in with him to the banquet, and the door was shut. Afterwards the other bridesmaids came. "Sir, Sir," they said, "open the door to us!" But the groom answered "I tell you, I do not know you." Therefore watch, since you know neither the day nor the hour.

14 'For it is as though a man, going on his travels, called his servants, and gave his property into their charge. He gave five bags of gold to one, two to another, and one bag to a third, in proportion to the ability of each. 15 Then he set out on his travels. The servant who had received the five bags of gold went at once and traded with it, and made another five bags. So, too, the servant who had received the two bags of gold made another two bags. But the servant who had received the one bag went and dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money. After a long time the 16 master of those servants returned, and settled accounts with them. The servant who had received the five bags of gold came up and brought five bags more. "Sir," he said, "you entrusted me with five bags of gold; look, 17 I have made another five bags!" "Well done, good, trustworthy servant!" said his master. "You have been trustworthy with a small sum; now I will place a large one in your hands; come and share your master's joy!" Then the one who had received the two bags of gold came up and said "Sir, you entrusted me with two bags pounds; look, I have made another two!" 18 "Well done, good, trustworthy servant!" said his master. "You have been trustworthy with a small sum; now I will place a large one in your hands; 19 come and share your master's joy!" The man who had received the single bag of gold came up, too, and said "Sir, I knew that you were a hard man; you reap where you have not sown, and gather up where you have not 20 winnowed; and, in my fear, I went and hid your money in the ground; 21 look, here is what belongs to you!" "You lazy, worthless servant!" was his master's reply. "You knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather 22 up where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have placed my money in the hands of bankers, and I, on my return, should have received my 23 money, with interest. Therefore," he continued, "take away from him the 24 one bag of gold, and give it to the one who has the ten bags. For, to him who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but, as for him 25 who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away from him. As for 26 the useless servant, put him out into the darkness outside, where there 27 will be weeping and grinding of teeth."

31 ‘When the Son of Man has come in his glory and all the angels with him,
32 then he will take his seat on his throne of glory; and all the nations will be
gathered before him, and he will separate the people – just as a shepherd
33 separates sheep from goats – placing the sheep on his right hand, and
34 the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right “Come,
you who are blessed by my Father, enter into possession of the kingdom
35 prepared for you ever since the beginning of the world. For, when I was
hungry, you gave me food; when I was thirsty, you gave me drink; when I
36 was a stranger, you took me to your homes; when I was naked, you clothed
me; when I fell ill, you visited me; and when I was in prison, you came to
37 me.” Then the righteous will answer “Lord, when did we see you hungry,
38 and feed you? Or thirsty, and give you a drink? When did we see you a
39 stranger, and take you to our homes? Or naked, and clothe you? When did
40 we see you ill, or in prison, and come to you?” And the king will reply
“I tell you, as often as you did it to one of these my brothers or sisters,
41 however unimportant they seemed, you did it to me.” Then he will say
to those on his left “Go from my presence, accursed, into the permanent
42 fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. For, when I was
hungry, you gave me no food; when I was thirsty, you gave me no drink;
43 when I was a stranger, you did not take me to your homes; when I was
naked, you did not clothe me; and, when I was ill and in prison, you did
44 not visit me.” Then they, in their turn, will answer “Lord, when did we see
you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or ill, or in prison, and did
45 not supply your wants?” And then he will reply “I tell you, as often as you
failed to do it to one of these, however unimportant, you failed to do it to
46 me.” And these last will go away into lasting correction, but the righteous
into lasting life.’

26 When Jesus had finished teaching all of that, he said to his disciples,
2 ‘You know that in two days time the Festival of the Passover will be here;
3 and that the Son of Man is to be given up to be crucified.’ Then the chief
priests and the elders of the people met in the house of the high priest,
4 who was called Caiaphas, and plotted together to arrest Jesus by stealth
5 and put him to death; but they said, ‘Not during the Festival, or the people
may riot.’

6 After Jesus had reached Bethany, and while he was in the house of
7 Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabaster jar of very
costly perfume, and poured the perfume on his head as he sat at the table.
8 The disciples were indignant at seeing this. ‘What is this waste for?’ they
9 exclaimed. ‘It could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given
to poor people.’

10 'Why are you troubling the woman?' Jesus said, when he noticed it. 'For
11 this is a beautiful deed that she has done to me. You always have the poor
12 with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this perfume on my
13 body, she has done it for my burying. I tell you, wherever, in the whole
world, this good news is proclaimed, what this woman has done will be
told in memory of her.'

14 It was then that one of the Twelve, named Judas Iscariot, made his way to
15 the chief priests, and said 'What are you willing to give me, if I betray Jesus
16 to you?' The Priests weighed him out thirty pieces of silver as payment. So
from that time Judas looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

17 On the first day of the Festival of the unleavened bread, the disciples
came up to Jesus, and said, 'Where do you wish us to make preparations
for you to eat the Passover?'

18 'Go into the city to a certain man,' he answered, 'and say to him "The
teacher says – My time is near. I will keep the Passover with my disciples at
19 your house."' The disciples did as Jesus directed them, and prepared the
20 Passover. In the evening Jesus took his place with the twelve disciples, and,
21 while they were eating, he said, 'I tell you that one of you will betray me.'

22 In great grief they began to say to him, one by one, 'Can it be I, Master?'
23 'The one who dipped his bread beside me in the dish,' replied Jesus, 'is
24 the one who will betray me. True, the Son of Man must go, as scripture says
of him, yet alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is being betrayed!
25 For that man it would be better never to have been born!' Judas, who was
betraying him, turned to him and said, 'Can it be I, Rabbi?'

'It is,' answered Jesus.

26 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and, after saying the
blessing, broke it and, as he gave it to his disciples, said, 'Take it and eat it;
27 this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and, after saying the thanksgiving,
28 gave it to them, with the words, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my
covenant blood, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
29 I tell you that I will never, after this, drink of this juice of the grape, until
that day when I will drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father.'

30 They then sang a hymn, and went out to the Mount of Olives. Then
31 Jesus said to them, 'Even you will all fall away from me tonight. Scripture
says – "I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will
32 be scattered." But, after I have risen, I will go before you into Galilee.' 'If
33 everyone else falls away from you,' Peter answered, 'I will never fall away!'

34 'I tell you,' replied Jesus, 'that this very night, before the cock crows, you
35 will disown me three times!' 'Even if I must die with you,' Peter exclaimed,
'I will never disown you!' All the disciples spoke in the same way.

36 Then Jesus came with them to a garden called Gethsemane, and he said
37 to his disciples, 'Sit down here while I go and pray over there.' Taking
with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to show signs of
38 sadness and deep distress of mind. 'I am sad at heart,' he said, 'sad even
39 to death; wait here and watch with me.' Going on a little further, he threw
himself on his face in prayer. 'My Father,' he said, 'if it is possible, let me
40 be spared this cup; only, not as I will, but as you will.' Then he came to his
disciples, and found them asleep. 'What!' he said to Peter, 'could none of
41 you watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray so that you don't fall
42 into temptation. True, the spirit is eager, but human nature is weak.' Again,
a second time, he went away, and prayed. 'My Father,' he said, 'if I cannot
43 be spared this cup, but must drink it, your will be done!' And coming back
44 again he found them asleep, for their eyes were heavy. So he left them, and
went away again, and prayed a third time, again saying the same words.
45 Then he came to the disciples, and said, 'Sleep on now, and rest yourselves.
Look – my time is close at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into
46 the hands of wicked people. Up, and let us be going. Look! My betrayer
47 is close at hand.' And, while he was still speaking, Judas, who was one of
the Twelve, came in sight; and with him was a great crowd of people, with
48 swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now
the betrayer had arranged a signal with them. 'The man whom I kiss,' he
49 had said, 'will be the one; arrest him.' So he went up to Jesus at once, and
50 exclaimed, 'Welcome, Rabbi!' and kissed him; at which Jesus said to him,
'Friend, do what you have come for.' The men went up, seized Jesus, and
51 arrested him. Suddenly one of those who were with Jesus stretched out
his hand, and drew his sword, and striking the high priest's servant, cut
52 off his ear. 'Sheathe your sword,' Jesus said, 'for all who draw the sword
53 will be put to the sword. Do you think that I cannot ask my Father for help,
when he would at once send to my aid more than twelve legions of angels?
54 But in that case how would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say that this
55 must be?' Jesus at the same time said to the crowds, 'Have you come out,
as if after a robber, with swords and clubs, to take me? I have sat teaching
56 day after day in the Temple Courts, and yet you did not arrest me.' The
whole of this occurred in fulfilment of the Prophetic scriptures. Then the
disciples all forsook him and fled.

57 Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest,
58 where the teachers of the Law and elders had assembled. Peter followed
him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the offices, to see the end.
59 Meanwhile the chief priests and the whole of the High Council were trying
to get such false evidence against Jesus, as would warrant putting him to

60 death, but they did not find any, although many came forward with false
61 evidence. Later on, however, two men came forward and said, 'This man
62 said "I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days."'
63 Then the high priest stood up, and said to Jesus, 'Have you no answer?
64 What is this evidence which these men are giving against you?' But Jesus
65 remained silent. The high priest said to him, 'I order you, by the living
66 God, to tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God.'

67 'It is true,' Jesus answered, 'Moreover I tell you all that hereafter you will
68 see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the Almighty, and coming
69 on the clouds of the heavens.' Then the high priest tore his robes. 'This
70 is blasphemy!' he exclaimed. 'Why do we want any more witnesses? You
71 have just heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?' They answered, 'He
72 deserves death.' Then they spat in his face, and struck him, while others
73 dealt blows at him, saying as they did so, 'Now play the prophet for us, you
74 Christ! Who was it that struck you?' Peter, meanwhile, was sitting outside
75 in the courtyard; and a maid-servant came up to him, and exclaimed, 'Why,
76 you were with Jesus the Galilean!' But Peter denied it before them all. 'I
77 do not know what you mean,' he replied. When he had gone out into the
78 gateway, another maid saw him, and said to those who were there, 'This
79 man was with Jesus of Nazareth!' Again he denied it with an oath, 'I do
80 not know the man!' But soon afterwards those who were standing by came
81 up and said to Peter, 'You also are certainly one of them; why, even your
82 way of speaking proves it!' Then Peter said, 'I swear that I do not know the
83 man! May God punish me if I am lying!' At that moment a cock crowed;
84 and Peter remembered the words which Jesus had said – "Before a cock
85 has crowed, you will disown me three times"; and he went outside, and
86 wept bitterly.

87 At daybreak all the chief priests and the elders of the people consulted
88 together against Jesus, to bring about his death. They put him in chains and
89 led him away, and gave him up to the Roman Governor, Pilate. Then Judas,
90 who betrayed him, seeing that Jesus was condemned, repented of what he
91 had done, and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and
92 elders. 'I did wrong in betraying a good man to his death,' he said. 'What
93 has that to do with us?' they replied. 'You must see to that yourself.' Judas
94 flung down the pieces of silver in the Temple, and left; and went away
95 and hanged himself. The chief priests took the pieces of silver, but they
96 said, 'We must not put them into the Temple treasury, because they are
97 blood-money.' So, after consultation, they bought with them the "Potter's
98 Field" for a burial-ground for foreigners; and that is why that field is called
99 the "Field of Blood" to this very day. Then it was that these words spoken

by the prophet Jeremiah were fulfilled – “They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him who was valued, whom some of the people of Israel valued, and gave them for the Potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”
10 Meanwhile Jesus was brought before the Roman Governor. ‘Are you the
11 king of the Jews?’ asked the Governor. ‘It is true,’ answered Jesus. While
12 charges were being brought against him by the chief priests and elders,
13 Jesus made no reply. Then Pilate said to him, ‘Don’t you hear how many
14 accusations they are making against you?’ Yet Jesus made no reply – not
15 even a single word; at which the Governor was greatly astonished. Now,
16 at the feast, the Governor was accustomed to grant the people the release
17 of any one prisoner whom they might choose. At that time they had a
18 notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So, when the people had collected,
19 Pilate said to them, ‘Which do you wish me to release for you? Barabbas?
20 Or Jesus who is called “Christ”?’ For he knew that it was out of jealousy
21 that they had given Jesus up to him. While he was still on the Bench, his
22 wife sent this message to him – ‘Do not have anything to do with that good
23 man, for I have been very unhappy today in a dream because of him.’ But
24 the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas, and
25 to kill Jesus. The Governor, however, said to them, ‘Which of these two do
26 you wish me to release for you?’

‘Barabbas,’ they answered. ‘What then,’ Pilate asked, ‘should I do with
27 Jesus who is called “Christ”?’ ‘Crucify him,’ they all replied. ‘Why, what
28 harm has he done?’ he asked. But they kept shouting furiously, ‘Crucify
29 him!’ When Pilate saw that his efforts were unavailing, but that, on the
30 contrary, a riot was beginning, he took some water, and washed his hands
31 in the sight of the crowd, saying as he did so, ‘I am not answerable for this
bloodshed; you must see to it yourselves.’ And all the people answered,
‘His blood be on our heads and on our children’s!’ The Pilate released
Barabbas to them; but Jesus he scourged, and gave him up to be crucified.

After that, the Governor’s soldiers took Jesus with them into the Govern-
32 ment house, and gathered the whole garrison round him. They stripped
33 him, and put on him a red military cloak, and having twisted some thorns
34 into a crown, put it on his head, and a rod in his right hand, and then,
going down on their knees before him, they mocked him. ‘Long life to you,
35 king of the Jews!’ they said. They spat at him and, taking the rod, kept
striking him on the head; and, when they had left off mocking him, they
took off the military cloak, and put his own clothes on him, and led him
away to be crucified.

As they were on their way out, they came upon a man from Cyrene of the
name of Simon; and they compelled him to go with them to carry the cross.

33 On reaching a place named Golgotha (a place named from its likeness to a
34 skull), they gave him some wine to drink which had been mixed with gall;
35 but after tasting it, Jesus refused to drink it. When they had crucified him,
36 they divided his clothes among them by casting lots. Then they sat down,
37 and kept watch over him there. Above his head they fixed the accusation
38 against him written out – “THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” At
the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right, the
39 other on the left. The passers-by railed at him, shaking their heads as they
40 said, ‘You who “destroy the Temple and build one in three days,” save
41 yourself! If you are God’s Son, come down from the cross!’ In the same way
the chief priests, with the Teachers of the Law and elders, said in mockery,
42 ‘He saved others, but he cannot save himself! He is the “king of Israel”!
Why doesn’t he come down from the cross now, then we will believe in
43 him. He has trusted in God; if God wants him, let him deliver him now;
44 for he said “I am God’s Son.”’ Even the robbers, who were crucified with
45 him, insulted him in the same way. After midday a darkness came over all
46 the country, lasting until three in the afternoon. About three Jesus called
out loudly, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lema sabacthani’ – that is to say, “My God, my God,
47 why have you forsaken me?” Some of those standing by heard this, and
48 said, ‘The man is calling for Elijah!’ One of them immediately ran and
took a sponge, and, filling it with common wine, put it on the end of a
49 rod, and offered it to him to drink. But the rest said, ‘Wait and let us see if
50 Elijah is coming to save him.’⁷ But Jesus, uttering another loud cry, gave
51 up his spirit. Suddenly the Temple curtain was torn in two from top to
52 bottom, the earth shook, the rocks were torn asunder, the tombs opened,
53 and the bodies of many of God’s people who had fallen asleep rose, and they,
leaving their tombs, went, after the resurrection of Jesus, into the
54 Holy City, and appeared to many people. The Roman captain, and the
men with him who were watching Jesus, on seeing the earthquake and all
that was happening, became greatly frightened and exclaimed, ‘This must
55 indeed have been God’s Son!’ There were many women there, watching
from a distance, who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee and had been
56 attending on him. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother
of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

57 When evening had fallen, there came a rich man belonging to Ramah,
58 named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. He went to see

⁷ 27:49 Some later manuscripts add: However another man took a spear, and pierced his side; and water and blood flowed from it.

Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate ordered it to be given him.

59 So Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen sheet, and laid it
60 in his newly made tomb which he had cut in the rock; and, before he left,
61 he rolled a great stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary of Magdala
and the other Mary remained behind, sitting in front of the grave.

62 The next day – that is, the day following the Preparation-day – the chief
63 priests and Pharisees came in a body to Pilate, and said, ‘Sir, we remember
that, during his lifetime, that impostor said “I will rise after three days.”’

64 So order the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his
disciples may come and steal him, and then say to the people “He has risen
from the dead,” when the latest imposture will be worse than the first.’

65 ‘You may have a guard,’ was Pilate’s reply. ‘Go and make the tomb as
66 secure as you can.’ So they went and made the tomb secure, by sealing the
stone, in presence of the guard.

The Risen Life

28 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary of
2 Magdala and the other Mary had gone to look at the grave, when suddenly
a great earthquake occurred. For an angel of the Lord descended from
3 heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and seated himself on it. His
appearance was as dazzling as lightning, and his clothing was as white
4 as snow; and, in their terror of him, the men on guard trembled violently
5 and became like dead men. But the angel, addressing the women, said,
‘You need not be afraid. I know that it is Jesus, who was crucified, for
6 whom you are looking. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said he would.
7 Come, and see the place where he was lying; and then go quickly and
say to his disciples “He has risen from the dead, and is going before you
8 into Galilee; there you will see him.” Remember, I have told you.’ They
left the tomb quickly, in awe and great joy, and ran to tell the news to the
9 disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. ‘Welcome!’ he said. The women went
up to him, and clasped his feet, bowing to the ground before him. Then
10 Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters
11 to set out for Galilee, and they will see me there.’ While they were still on
their way, some of the guard came into the city, and reported to the chief
12 priests everything that had happened. So they and the elders met and,
after holding a consultation, gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,
13 and told them to say that his disciples came in the night, and stole him
14 while they were asleep; ‘And should this matter come before the Governor,’

- 15 they added, 'we will satisfy him, and see that you have nothing to fear.' So the soldiers took the money, and did as they were instructed. This story spread widely; the people of Judea still tell it today.
- 16 The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to meet him; and, when they saw him, they bowed to the ground before him; although some felt doubtful. Then Jesus came up, and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority in heaven and on the earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the faith of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to lay to heart all the commands that I have given you; and, remember, I myself am with you every day until the close of the age.'

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO MARK

The Preparation

- 1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ.
- 2 It is said in the prophet Isaiah –

“I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way.
- 3 The voice of one crying aloud in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the road for the Lord,
make a straight path for him.’”
- 4 John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism
- 5 on repentance, for the forgiveness of sins. The whole of Judea, as well as all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, went out to him; and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.
- 6 John wore clothes made of camels' hair, with a leather strap round his
- 7 waist, and lived on locusts and wild honey; and he proclaimed – ‘After me is coming someone more powerful than I am, and I am not fit even to
- 8 stoop down and unfasten his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’
- 9 Now about that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was
- 10 baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens split open and the Spirit coming down to him like a
- 11 dove, and from the heavens came a voice – ‘You are my dearly loved son; you bring me great joy.’
- 12 Immediately afterwards the Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness;
- 13 and he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and among the wild beasts, while the angels helped him.

The Work in Galilee

- 14 After John had been arrested, Jesus went to Galilee, proclaiming the good
15 news of God – ‘The time has come, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repented, and believe the good news.’
- 16 As Jesus was going along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon
and his brother Andrew casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen.
- 17 ‘Come and follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will teach you to fish for people.’
- 18 They left their nets at once, and followed him.
- 19 Going on a little further, he saw James, Zebedee’s son, and his brother
20 John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Jesus called them at once,
and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the crew, and went after
him.
- 21 They walked to Capernaum. On the next Sabbath Jesus went into the
22 synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching,
for he taught them like one who had authority, and not like the teachers
23 of the Law. Now there was in their synagogue at the time a man under the
24 power of a foul spirit, who called out, ‘What do you want with us, Jesus
the Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the
25 Holy One of God!’ But Jesus rebuked the spirit, ‘Be silent! Come out from
26 him.’ The foul spirit threw the man into a fit, and with a loud cry came out
27 from him. They were all so amazed that they kept asking each other, ‘What
is this? What is this, a new kind of teaching? He gives his commands with
28 authority even to the foul spirits, and they obey him!’ His fame spread at
once in all directions, through the whole region of Galilee.
- 29 As soon as they had left the synagogue, they went to the house of Simon
30 and Andrew, along with James and John. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was
31 lying ill with a fever, and they at once told Jesus about her. Jesus went up
to her and, grasping her hand, raised her up; the fever left her, and she
began to take care of them.
- 32 In the evening, after sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who were ill
33 or possessed by demons; and the whole city was gathered round the door.
- 34 Jesus cured many who were ill with various diseases, and drove out many
demons, and would not permit them to speak, because they knew him to
be the Christ.
- 35 In the morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and went out to a
36 lonely spot, and there he began to pray. But Simon and his companions
37 went out searching for him; and, when they found him, they exclaimed,
38 ‘Everyone is looking for you!’ But Jesus said to them, ‘Let us go somewhere
else, into the country towns nearby so that I can make my proclamation

- 39 in them also; for that was why I came.' And he went about making his proclamation in their synagogues all through Galilee, and driving out the demons.
- 40 One day a leper came to Jesus and, falling on his knees, begged him for help. 'If only you are willing,' he said, 'you are able to make me clean.'
- 41 Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him,
- 42 saying as he did so, 'I am willing; become clean.' Instantly the leprosy
- 43 left the man, and he became clean; and then Jesus, after sternly warning
- 44 him, immediately sent him away, and said to him, 'Be careful not to say
- anything to anyone; but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the
- offerings for your cleansing directed by Moses, as evidence of your cure.'
- 45 The man, however, went away, and began to speak about it publicly, and to spread the story so widely, that Jesus could no longer go openly into a town, but stayed outside in lonely places; and people came to him from every direction.
- 2 Some days later, when Jesus came back to Capernaum, the news spread
- 2 that he was in a house there; and so many people collected together, that
- 3 after a while there was no room for them even round the door; and he
- 3 began to tell them his message. Some people came, bringing to him a
- 4 paralysed man, who was being carried by four of them. Being, however,
- unable to get him near to Jesus, owing to the crowd, they removed the
- roofing above Jesus; and, when they had made an opening, they let down
- 5 the mat on which the paralysed man was lying. When Jesus saw their faith,
- he said to the man, 'Child, your sins are forgiven.'
- 6 But some of the teachers of the Law who were sitting there were debating
- 7 in their minds, 'Why does this man speak like this? He is blaspheming!
- 8 Who can forgive sins except God?' Jesus, at once intuitively aware that
- they were debating with themselves in this way, said to them, 'Why are
- 9 you debating in your minds about this? Which is easier? – to say to the
- paralysed man, "Your sins are forgiven"? Or to say "Get up, and take up
- 10 your mat, and walk"? But so you may know that the Son of Man has power
- 11 to forgive sins on earth' – here he said to the paralysed man – 'To you I say,
- 12 Get up, take up your mat, and return to your home.' The man got up, and
- immediately took up his mat, and went out before them all; at which they
- were amazed, and, as they praised God, they said, 'We have never seen
- anything like this!'
- 13 Jesus went out again to the sea; and all the people came to him, and he
- 14 taught them. As he went along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting
- in the tax office, and said to him, 'Follow me.' Levi got up and followed
- him.

- 15 Later on he was in his house having dinner, and a number of tax-gatherers and outcasts took their places at the table with Jesus and his
16 disciples; for many of them were following him. When the teachers of the Law belonging to the party of the Pharisees saw that he was eating in the company of such people, they said to his disciples, 'Why does he eat with
17 the tax-gatherers and outcasts?' Hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. I did not come to call the religious, but the outcast.'
- 18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting, and people came and asked Jesus, 'Why is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the
19 Pharisees fast, while yours do not?' Jesus answered, 'Can the groom's friends fast, while the groom is with them? As long as they have the groom
20 with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the groom will be taken away from them, and they will fast then – when that day comes.'
- 21 'No one ever sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; if they do, the patch tears away from it – the new from the old – and a worse tear
22 is made. And no one ever puts new wine into old wine-skins; if they do, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are lost. But new wine is put into fresh skins.'
- 23 One Sabbath, as Jesus was walking through the cornfields, his disciples
24 began to pick the ears of wheat as they went along. 'Look!' the Pharisees said to him, 'why are they doing what is not allowed on the Sabbath?'
25 'Have you never read,' answered Jesus, 'what David did when he was in
26 need and hungry, he and his companions – how he went into the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which only the priests are allowed to eat, and gave some to his comrades as well?'
- 27 Then Jesus added, 'The Sabbath was made for people, and not people
28 for the Sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.'
- 3 On another occasion Jesus went in to a synagogue, where there was a
2 man whose hand was withered. And they watched Jesus closely, to see if he would cure the man on the Sabbath, so that they might have a charge to
3 bring against him. 'Stand out in the middle,' Jesus said to the man with the
4 withered hand; and to the people he said, 'Is it allowable to do good at the
5 Sabbath – or harm? To save a life, or destroy it?' As they remained silent, Jesus looked round at them in anger, grieving at the hardness of their hearts, and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' The man stretched it out; and
6 his hand had become sound. Immediately on leaving the synagogue, the Pharisees and the Herodians united in laying a plot against Jesus, to put him to death.

7 Then Jesus went away with his disciples to the sea, followed by a great
8 number of people from Galilee. A great number, hearing of all that he
9 was doing, came to him from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Edom, from
10 beyond the Jordan, and from the country round Tyre and Sidon. So Jesus
11 told his disciples to keep a small boat close by, so that the crowd would not
12 crush him. For he had cured many of them, and so people kept crowding
13 around him, so all who were sick might touch him. The foul spirits, too,
14 whenever they caught sight of him, flung themselves down before him,
15 and screamed out, 'You are the Son of God!' But he repeatedly warned
16 them not to make him known.

17 Jesus made his way up the hill, and called those whom he wished; and
18 they went to him. He appointed twelve – whom he also named "apostles"
19 – so that they might be with him, and that he might send them out as
20 his messengers, to preach, and with power to drive out demons. So he
21 appointed the Twelve – Peter (which was the name that Jesus gave to
22 Simon), James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John (to whom he gave
23 the name of Boanerges, which means the Thunderers), Andrew, Philip,
24 Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus,
25 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the man who betrayed him.

26 Jesus went into a house; and again a crowd collected, so that they were
27 not even able to eat their food. When his relatives heard of it, they went to
28 take charge of him, for they said that he was out of his mind.

29 The teachers of the Law, who had come down from Jerusalem, said, 'He
30 has Beelzebul in him! He drives the demons out by the help of their chief.'
31 So Jesus called them to him, and answered them in parables, 'How can
32 Satan drive out Satan? When a kingdom is divided against itself, it cannot
33 last; and when a household is divided against itself, it will not be able to
34 last. So, if Satan is in revolt against himself and is divided, he cannot last –
his end has come!

35 'No man who has broken into a strong man's house can carry off his
36 goods, without first tying him up; and not until then will he plunder his
37 house. I tell you that people will be forgiven everything – their sins, and all
38 the slanders that they utter; but whoever slanders the Holy Spirit remains
39 unforgiven to the end; he has to answer for an enduring sin.' This was
40 said in reply to the charge that he had a foul spirit in him. His mother
41 and his brothers came, and stood outside, and sent to ask him to come to
42 them. There was a crowd sitting round Jesus, and some of them said to
43 him, 'Look, your mother and your brothers are outside, asking for you.'

44 'Who is my mother? And my brothers?' was his reply. Then he looked
45 around on the people sitting in a circle round him, and said, 'Here are my

- 35 mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'
- 4 Jesus again began to teach by the sea; and, as an immense crowd was gathering round him, he got into a boat, and sat in it on the sea, while all the people were on the shore at the water's edge.
- 2 Then he taught them many truths in parables; and in the course of his teaching he said to them:
- 3 'Listen! The sower went out to sow; and presently, as he was sowing,
4 some of the seed fell along the path; and the birds came, and ate it up.
5 Some fell on rocky ground, where it had not much soil, and, because the
6 soil wasn't deep, sprang up at once; but, when the sun rose, it was scorched,
7 and, because their roots were not deep enough, withered away. Some of
8 the seed fell among brambles; but the brambles shot up and completely
9 choked it, and it yielded no return. Some fell into good soil, and, shooting
up and growing, yielded a return, amounting to thirty, sixty, and even a
hundred fold.' And Jesus said, 'Let anyone who has ears to hear with hear.'
- 10 Afterwards, when he was alone, his followers and the Twelve asked him
11 about his parables; and he said, 'To you the hidden truth of the kingdom
12 of God has been imparted; but to those who are outside it all teaching
takes the form of parables so that – "Though they have eyes, they may see
without perceiving; and though they have ears, they may hear without
understanding; otherwise some day they might turn and be forgiven."
- 13 'You do not know the meaning of this parable?' he went on, 'Then how
14 will you understand all the other parables? The sower sows the message.
15 The people meant by the seed that falls along the path are these – where
the message is sown, but, as soon as they have heard it, Satan immediately
16 comes and carries away the message that has been sown in them. So, too,
those meant by the seed sown on the rocky places are the people who,
17 when they have heard the message, at once accept it joyfully; but, as they
have no root, they stand only for a short time; and so, when trouble or
18 persecution arises because of the message, they fall away at once. Those
meant by the seed sown among the brambles are different; they are the
19 people who hear the message, but the cares of life, and the glamour of
wealth, and cravings for many other things come in and completely choke
20 the message, so that it gives no return. But the people meant by the seed
sown on the good ground are those who hear the message, and welcome
it, and yield a return, thirty, sixty, and even a hundred fold.'
- 21 Jesus said to them, 'Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under
22 the couch, instead of being put on the lamp-stand? There is nothing hidden

that will not come to light and nothing is concealed that will not be brought
23 into the open. Let all who have ears to hear with hear.

24 'Take care what you listen to,' said Jesus. 'The standard you use will be
25 used for you, and more will be added for you. For, to those who have, more
will be given; while, from those who have nothing, even what they have
will be taken away.'

26 Jesus also said, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like – like a man
27 who has scattered seed on the ground, and then sleeps by night and rises
by day, while the seed is shooting up and growing – he knows not how.
28 The ground bears the crop of itself – first the blade, then the ear, and then
29 the full grain in the ear; but, as soon as the crop is ready, immediately he
puts in the sickle because harvest has come.'

30 Jesus also said, 'To what can we liken the kingdom of God? By what can
31 we illustrate it? Perhaps by the growth of a mustard seed. This seed, when
32 sown in the ground, though it is smaller than all other seeds, yet, when
sown, shoots up, and becomes larger than any other herb, and puts out
great branches, so that even the wild birds can roost in its shelter.'

33 With many such parables Jesus used to speak to the people of his mes-
34 sage, as far as they were able to receive it; and to them he never used to
speak except in parables; but in private to his own disciples he explained
everything.

35 In the evening of the same day, Jesus said to them, 'Let us go across.' So,
36 leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them, just as he was, in the
boat; and there were other boats with him. A violent squall came on, and
the waves kept dashing into the boat, so that the boat was actually filling.
38 Jesus was in the stern asleep on the cushion; and the disciples roused him
39 and cried, 'Teacher! Is it nothing to you that we are lost?' Jesus rose and
rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Hush! Be still!' Then the wind
40 dropped, and a great calm followed. 'Why are you so timid?' he exclaimed.
41 'Have you no faith yet?' But they were struck with great awe, and said to
one another, 'Who can this be that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

5 They came to the other side of the sea – the region of the Gerasenes; and,
2 as soon as Jesus had got out of the boat, he met a man coming out of the
3 tombs, who was under the power of a foul spirit, and who made his home
in the tombs. No one had ever been able to secure him, even with a chain;
4 for, though he had many times been left secured with fetters and chains,
he had snapped the chains and broken the fetters to pieces, and no one
5 could master him. Night and day alike, he was continually shrieking in
6 the tombs and among the hills, and cutting himself with stones. Catching

7 sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed to the ground before him,
8 shrieking out in a loud voice, ‘What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of
9 the Most High God? For God’s sake do not torment me!’ For Jesus had
10 said, ‘Come out from the man, you foul spirit.’ And he asked him, ‘What
is your name?’ ‘My name,’ he said, ‘is Legion, for there are many of us;’
and he begged Jesus again and again not to send them away out of that
country.

11 There was a large drove of pigs close by, feeding on the hillside; and the
12 spirits begged Jesus, ‘Send us into the pigs so that we can take possession
13 of them.’ Jesus gave them leave. They came out, and entered into the pigs;
and the drove – about two thousand in number – rushed down the steep
slope into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

14 Then the men who tended them ran away, and carried the news to the
town, and to the country round; and the people went to see what had
15 happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the possessed man sitting
there, clothed and in his right mind – the man who had had the “Legion”
16 in him – and they were awe-struck. Then those who had seen it related
to them all that had happened to the possessed man, as well as about the
17 pigs; so they began to beg Jesus to leave their region.

18 As Jesus was getting into the boat, the possessed man begged him to
let him stay with him. But Jesus refused. ‘Go back to your home, to your
own people,’ he said, ‘and tell them of all that the Lord has done for you,
20 and how he took pity on you.’ So the man went, and began to proclaim in
the district of the Ten Towns all that Jesus had done for him; and everyone
was amazed.

21 By the time Jesus had recrossed in the boat to the opposite shore, a great
number of people had gathered to meet him, and were standing by the sea.
22 One of the leaders of the synagogue, whose name was Jairus, came and, as
soon as he saw Jesus, threw himself at his feet and begged him repeatedly,
23 saying, ‘My little daughter is at death’s door. Please come and place your
24 hands on her so that she may recover and live.’ So Jesus went with him. A
great number of people followed Jesus, and kept pressing round him.

25 Meanwhile a woman who for twelve years had suffered from haemor-
rhage, and undergone much at the hands of many doctors, (spending all
she had without obtaining any relief, but, on the contrary, growing worse),
27 heard about Jesus, came behind in the crowd, and touched his cloak. ‘If I
28 can only touch his clothes,’ she said, ‘I will get well!’ At once her bleeding
29 stopped, and she felt in herself that she was cured of her affliction. Jesus at
30 once became aware of the power that had gone out from him, and, turning
round in the crowd, he said, ‘Who touched my clothes?’

31 ‘You see the people pressing round you,’ exclaimed his disciples, ‘and yet
32 you say “Who touched me?”’ But Jesus looked about to see who had done
33 it. Then the woman, in fear and trembling, knowing what had happened
34 to her, came and threw herself down before him, and told him the whole
truth. ‘Daughter,’ he said, ‘your faith has delivered you. Go, and peace be
with you; be free from your affliction.’

35 Before he had finished speaking, some people from the house of the
synagogue leader came and said, ‘Your daughter is dead! Why should
36 you trouble the teacher further?’ But Jesus, overhearing what they were
saying, said to the synagogue leader, ‘Do not be afraid; only have faith.’
37 And he allowed no one to accompany him, except Peter, James, and John,
38 the brother of James. Presently they reached the leader’s house, where
Jesus saw a scene of confusion – people weeping and wailing incessantly.
39 ‘Why this confusion and weeping?’ he said on entering. ‘The little child
40 is not dead; she is asleep.’ They began to laugh at him; but he sent them
all out, and then, with the child’s father and mother and his companions,
41 went into the room where she was lying. Taking her hand, Jesus said to
her, ‘Talitha, koum!’ – which means “little girl, I am speaking to you –
42 Rise!” The little girl stood up at once, and began to walk about; for she
was twelve years old. And, as soon as they saw it, they were overwhelmed
43 with amazement; but Jesus repeatedly cautioned them not to let anyone
know of it, and told them to give her something to eat.

6 On leaving that place, Jesus, followed by his disciples, went to his own
2 part of the country. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the syna-
gogue; and the people, as they listened, were deeply impressed. ‘Where
3 did he get this?’ they said, ‘and what is this wisdom that has been given
him? And these miracles which he is doing? Isn’t he the carpenter, the
son of Mary, and the brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon?
And aren’t his sisters, too, living here among us?’ This proved a hindrance
4 to their believing in him; at which Jesus said, ‘A prophet is not without
honour, except in his home town, and among his own relatives, and in his
5 own home.’ And he could not work any miracle there, beyond placing his
6 hands on a few infirm persons, and curing them; and he wondered at the
want of faith shown by the people. Jesus went round the villages, one after
another, teaching.

7 He called the Twelve to him, and began to send them out as his messen-
8 gers, two and two, and gave them authority over foul spirits. He instructed
them to take nothing but a staff for the journey – not even bread, or a bag,
9 or coins in their purse; but they were to wear sandals, and not to put on a

10 second coat. ‘Whenever you go to stay at a house,’ he said, ‘remain there
11 until you leave that place; and if a place does not welcome you, or listen
to you, as you go out of it shake off the dust that is on the soles of your
12 feet, as a protest against them.’ So they set out, and proclaimed the need
13 of repentance. They drove out many demons, and anointed with oil many
who were infirm, and cured them.

14 Now King Herod heard of Jesus; for his name had become well known.
People were saying – ‘John the Baptizer must have risen from the dead, and
15 that is why these miraculous powers are active in him.’ Others again said –
‘He is Elijah,’ and others – ‘He is a prophet, like one of the great prophets.’
16 But when Herod heard of him, he said – ‘The man whom I beheaded –
John – he must be risen!’

17 For Herod himself had sent and arrested John, and put him in prison, in
chains, to please Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because Herod
18 had married her. For John had said to Herod – ‘You have no right to be
19 living with your brother’s wife.’ So Herodias was incensed against John,
20 and wanted to put him to death, but was unable to do so, because Herod
stood in fear of John, knowing him to be an upright and holy man, and
protected him. He had listened to John, but still remained much perplexed,
and yet he found pleasure in listening to him.

21 A suitable opportunity, however, occurred when Herod, on his birthday,
gave a dinner to his high officials, and his generals, and the foremost men
22 in Galilee. When his daughter – that is, the daughter of Herodias – came
in and danced, she delighted Herod and those who were dining with him.
‘Ask me for whatever you like,’ the king said to the girl, ‘and I will give it
23 to you’; and he swore to her that he would give her whatever she asked
24 him – up to half his kingdom. The girl went out, and said to her mother
‘What must I ask for?’

25 ‘The head of John the Baptizer,’ answered her mother. So she went in as
quickly as possible to the king, and made her request. ‘I want you,’ she said,
26 ‘to give me at once, on a dish, the head of John the Baptist.’ The king was
much distressed; yet, because of his oath and of the guests at his table, he
27 did not like to refuse her. He immediately dispatched one of his bodyguard,
with orders to bring John’s head. The man went and beheaded John in the
28 prison, and, bringing his head on a dish, gave it to the girl, and the girl
gave it to her mother.

29 When John’s disciples heard of it, they came and took his body away,
and laid it in a tomb.

30 When the apostles came back to Jesus, they told him all that they had
31 done and all that they had taught. ‘Come by yourselves privately to some

lonely spot,' he said, 'and rest for a while' – for there were so many people
32 coming and going that they had not time even to eat. So they set off pri-
33 vately in their boat for a lonely spot. Many people saw them going, and
recognised them, and from all the towns they flocked together to the place
34 on foot, and got there before them. On getting out of the boat, Jesus saw a
great crowd, and his heart was moved at the sight of them, because they
were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many
35 things. When it grew late, his disciples came up to him, and said, 'This is a
36 lonely spot, and it is already late. Send the people away, so that they may
go to the farms and villages around and buy themselves something to eat.'
37 But Jesus answered, 'It is for you to give them something to eat.' 'Are we
to go and spend almost a year's wages on bread,' they asked, 'to give them
to eat?'

38 'How many loaves have you?' he asked, 'Go, and see.' When they had
39 found out, they told him, 'Five, and two fish.' Jesus directed them to make
40 all the people take their seats on the green grass, in parties; and they sat
41 down in groups – in hundreds, and in fifties. Taking the five loaves and
the two fish, Jesus looked up to heaven, and said the blessing; he broke the
loaves into pieces, and gave them to his disciples for them to serve out to
42 the people, and he divided the two fish also among them all. Everyone had
43 sufficient to eat; and they picked up enough broken pieces to fill twelve
44 baskets, as well as some of the fish. The people who ate the bread were
five thousand in number.

45 Immediately afterwards Jesus made his disciples get into the boat, and
cross over in advance, in the direction of Bethsaida, while he himself was
46 dismissing the crowd. After he had taken leave of the people, he went away
47 up the hill to pray. When evening fell, the boat was out in the middle of the
48 sea, and Jesus on the shore alone. Seeing them labouring at the oars – for
the wind was against them – about three hours after midnight Jesus came
49 towards them, walking on the water, intending to join them. But, when
they saw him walking on the water, they thought it was a ghost, and cried
50 out; for all of them saw him, and were terrified. But Jesus at once spoke to
51 them. 'Courage!' he said, 'it is I; do not be afraid!' Then he got into the boat
52 with them, and the wind dropped. The disciples were utterly amazed, for
they had not understood about the loaves, their minds being slow to learn.
53 When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret, and moored the
54 boat. But they had no sooner left her than the people, recognising Jesus,
55 hurried over the whole country-side, and began to carry about on mats
56 those who were ill, wherever they heard he was. So wherever he went – to
villages, or towns, or farms – they would lay their sick in the market-places,

begging him to let them touch only the tassel of his cloak; and all who touched were made well.

7 One day the Pharisees and some of the teachers of the Law who had
2 come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus. They had noticed that some
3 of his disciples ate their food with their hands "defiled," by which they
4 meant unwashed. (For the Pharisees, and indeed all strict Jews, will not
5 eat without first scrupulously washing their hands, holding in this to the
6 traditions of their ancestors. When they come from market, they will not
7 eat without first sprinkling themselves; and there are many other customs
8 which they have inherited and hold to, such as the ceremonial washing
9 of cups, and jugs, and copper pans). So the Pharisees and the teachers
10 of the Law asked Jesus this question – 'How is it that your disciples do
11 not follow the traditions of our ancestors, but eat their food with defiled
12 hands?' His answer was, 'It was well said by Isaiah when he prophesied
13 about you hypocrites in the words – "This is a people who honour me
14 with their lips, while their hearts are far removed from me; but vainly do
15 they worship me, For they teach but human precepts." You neglect God's
16 commandments and hold to human traditions. Wisely do you set aside
17 God's commandments,' he exclaimed, 'to keep your own traditions! For
18 while Moses said "Honour your father and your mother," and "Let anyone
19 who abuses their father or mother suffer death," you say "If a person says
20 to their father or mother 'Whatever of mine might have been of service to
21 you is Corban'" (which means "Set apart for God") – why, then you do not
allow them to do anything further for their father or mother! In this way
you nullify the words of God by your traditions, which you hand down;
and you do many similar things.'

14 Then Jesus called the people to him again, and said, 'Listen to me, all of
15 you, and mark my words. There is nothing external to a person, which by
going into them can defile them; but the things that come out of a person
are the things that defile them.'⁸

17 When Jesus went indoors, away from the crowd, his disciples began
18 questioning him about this saying. 'What, do even you understand so
little?' exclaimed Jesus. 'Don't you see that there is nothing external to a
19 person, which by going into a person, can defile them, because it does not
pass into his heart, but into his stomach, and is afterwards got rid of?' – in
20 saying this Jesus pronounced all food clean. 'It is what comes out from a
21 person,' he added, 'that defiles them, for it is from within, out of the hearts

⁸ 7:16 Some later manuscripts add: Let anyone with ears to hear, listen.

of people, that there come evil thoughts – sexual immorality, theft, murder,
22 adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, haughtiness,
23 folly; all these wicked things come from within, and do defile a person.'

24 On leaving that place, Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. He
went into a house, and did not wish anyone to know it, but could not escape
25 notice. For a woman, whose little daughter had a foul spirit in her, heard
26 of him immediately, and came and threw herself at his feet – the woman
was a foreigner, from Syrian Phoenicia – and she begged him to drive the
27 demon out of her daughter. 'Let the children be satisfied first,' answered
Jesus. 'For it is not fair to take the children's food, and throw it to dogs.'

28 'Yes, Master,' she replied. 'Even the dogs under the table do feed on the
children's crumbs.'

29 'For saying that,' he answered, 'you may go. The demon has gone out of
30 your daughter.' The woman went home, and found the child lying on her
bed, and the demon gone.

31 On returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went, by way of Sidon, to the
32 Sea of Galilee, across the district of the Ten Towns. Some people brought
to him a man who was deaf and almost dumb, and they begged Jesus to
33 place his hand on him. Jesus took him aside from the crowd quietly, put
34 his fingers into the man's ears, and touched his tongue with saliva. Then,
looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said to the man, 'Ephphatha!' which
35 means "Be opened." The man's ears were opened, the string of his tongue
36 was freed, and he began to talk plainly. Jesus insisted on their not telling
anyone; but the more he insisted, the more perseveringly they made it
37 known, and a profound impression was made on the people. 'He has done
everything well!' they exclaimed. 'He makes even the deaf hear and the
dumb speak!'

8 About that time, when there was again a great crowd of people who
2 had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him, and said, 'My heart is
moved at the sight of all these people, for they have already been with me
3 three days and they have nothing to eat; and if I send them away to their
homes hungry, they will break down on the way; and some of them have
come a long distance.'

4 'Where will it be possible,' his disciples answered, 'to get sufficient bread
for these people in this lonely place?'

5 'How many loaves have you?' he asked. 'Seven,' they answered. Jesus
6 told the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves,
and, after saying the thanksgiving, broke them, and gave them to his dis-
7 ciples to serve out; and they served them out to the crowd. They had

8 also a few small fish; and, after he had said the blessing, he told the disciples to serve out these as well. The people had sufficient to eat, and they
9 picked up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left. There were
10 about four thousand people. Then Jesus dismissed them. Immediately afterwards, getting into the boat with his disciples, Jesus went to the district of Dalmanutha.

11 Here the Pharisees came out, and began to argue with Jesus, asking him
12 for some sign from the heavens, to test him. Sighing deeply, Jesus said,
'Why does this generation ask for a sign? I tell you, no sign will be given it.'
13 So he left them to themselves, and, getting into the boat again, went away to the opposite shore.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take any bread with them, one loaf
15 being all that they had in the boat. So Jesus gave them this warning. 'Take care,' he said, 'beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of
16 Herod.' They began talking to one another about their being short of bread;
17 and, noticing this, Jesus said to them, 'Why are you talking about your
18 being short of bread? Don't you yet see or understand? Are your minds
19 still so slow or comprehension? Though you have eyes, do you not see?
20 And though you have ears, do you not hear? Don't you remember, when I
broke up the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets of broken
pieces you picked up?'

21 'Twelve,' they said. 'And when the seven for the four thousand, how
many basketfuls of broken pieces did you pick up?'

22 'Seven,' they said. 'Don't you understand now?' he repeated.

23 They came to Bethsaida. There some people brought a blind man to
Jesus, and begged him to touch him. Taking the blind man's hand, Jesus
led him to the outskirts of the village, and, when he had put saliva on
the man's eyes, he placed his hands on him, and asked him, 'Do you see
24 anything?' The man looked up, and said, 'I see the people, for, as they walk
25 about, they look to me like trees.' Then Jesus again placed his hands on the
man's eyes; and the man saw clearly, his sight was restored, and he saw
26 everything with perfect distinctness. Jesus sent him to his home, and said,
'Do not go even into the village.'

27 Afterwards Jesus and his disciples went into the villages round Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples this question - 'Who do people say that I am?'

28 'John the Baptist,' they answered, 'but others say Elijah, while others say one of the prophets.'

29 ‘But you,’ he asked, ‘who do you say that I am?’ To this Peter replied,
30 ‘You are the Christ.’ At which Jesus charged them not to say this about him
31 to anyone. Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo
 much suffering, and that he must be rejected by the elders, and the chief
 priests, and the teachers of the Law, and be put to death, and rise again
32 after three days. He said all this quite openly. But Peter took Jesus aside,
33 and began to rebuke him. Jesus, however, turning round and seeing his
 disciples, rebuked Peter. ‘Out of my sight, Satan!’ he exclaimed. ‘For you
 look at things, not as God does, but as people do.’

34 Calling the people and his disciples to him, Jesus said, ‘If anyone wishes
 to walk in my steps, they must renounce self, take up their cross, and
35 follow me. For whoever wishes to save their life will lose it, and whoever,
 for my sake and for the sake of the good news, will lose their life will
36 save it. What good is it to a person to gain the whole world and forfeit
37 their life? For what could a person give that is of equal value with their
38 life? Whoever is ashamed of me and of my teaching, in this unfaithful and
 wicked generation, of them will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he
 comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.’

9 ‘I tell you,’ he added, ‘that some of those who are standing here will not
 know death until they have seen the kingdom of God come in power.’

2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John, and led them
 up a high mountain alone by themselves. There his appearance was trans-
3 formed before their eyes, and his clothes became whiter than any launderer
4 in the whole world could bleach them. And Elijah appeared to them, in
5 company with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. ‘Rabbi,’ said Peter,
 interposing, ‘it is good to be here; let us make three tents, one for you, one
6 for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ For he did not know what to say, because
7 they were much afraid. Then a cloud came down and enveloped them; and
8 from the cloud there came a voice – ‘This is my dearly loved son; listen to
 him.’ And suddenly, on looking round, they saw that there was now no
 one with them but Jesus alone.

9 As they were going down the mountainside, Jesus cautioned them not
 to relate what they had seen to anyone, until after the Son of Man had
10 risen from the dead. They seized on these words and discussed with one
11 another what this “rising from the dead” meant. ‘How is it,’ they asked
 Jesus, ‘that our teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?’

12 ‘Elijah does indeed come first,’ answered Jesus, ‘and re-establish every-
 thing; and does not scripture speak, with regard to the Son of Man, of
13 his undergoing much suffering and being utterly despised? But I tell you

that Elijah has come, and people have treated him just as they pleased, as scripture says of him.'

14 When they came to the other disciples, they saw a great crowd round
15 them, and some teachers of the Law arguing with them. But, as soon as they
saw Jesus, all the people, in great astonishment, ran up and greeted him.
16 'What are you arguing about with them?' Jesus asked. 'Teacher,' answered
17 a man in the crowd, 'I brought my son to see you, as he has a spirit in him
18 that makes him mute; and, wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; he
foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth, and he is pining away. I asked
your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they failed.'

19 'Faithless generation!' exclaimed Jesus. 'How long must I be with you?
20 How long must I have patience with you? Bring the boy to me.' They
brought him to Jesus; but no sooner did the boy see him than the spirit
threw him into convulsions; and he fell on the ground, and rolled about,
21 foaming at the mouth. 'How long has he been like this?' Jesus asked the
boy's father. 'From his childhood,' he answered. 'It has often thrown him
into fire and into water to put an end to his life; but, if you can possibly do
23 anything, take pity on us, and help us!' 'Why say "possibly"?' Jesus replied.
24 'Everything is possible for one who has faith.' The boy's father immediately
25 cried out, 'I have faith; help my want of faith!' But, when Jesus saw that a
crowd was quickly collecting, he rebuked the foul spirit, 'Deaf and dumb
spirit, it is I who command you. Come out from him and never enter him
26 again.' With a loud cry the spirit threw the boy into repeated convulsions,
and then came out from him. The boy looked like a corpse, so that most of
27 them said that he was dead. But Jesus took his hand, and lifted him; and
he stood up.

28 When Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, 'Why
couldn't we drive it out?'

29 'A spirit of this kind,' he said, 'can be driven out only by prayer.'

30 Leaving that place, Jesus and his disciples went on their way through
31 Galilee; but he did not wish anyone to know it, for he was instructing his
disciples, and telling them - 'The Son of Man is being betrayed into the
hands of his fellow men, and they will put him to death, but, when he has
32 been put to death, he will rise again after three days.' But the disciples did
not understand his meaning and were afraid to question him.

33 They came to Capernaum. When Jesus had gone into the house, he asked
34 them, 'What were you discussing on the way?' But they were silent; for on
the way they had been arguing with one another which was the greatest.
35 Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'If anyone wishes to be

- 36 first, he must be last of all, and servant of all.' Then Jesus took a little child, and placed it in the middle of them. Taking it in his arms, he said to them, 37 'Anyone who, for the sake of my name, welcomes even a little child like this is welcoming me, and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming not me, but him who sent me as his messenger.'
- 38 'Teacher,' said John, 'we saw a man driving out demons by using your name, and we tried to prevent him, because he did not follow us.'
- 39 'None of you must prevent the man,' answered Jesus, 'for no one will use 40 my name in working a miracle, and yet find it easy to speak evil of me. He 41 who is not against us is for us. If anyone gives you a cup of water because you belong to Christ, I tell you, he will assuredly not lose his reward.'
- 42 'And, if anyone puts temptation in the way of one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be far better for him if he had been thrown 43 into the sea with a great millstone round his neck. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It would be better for you to enter the life maimed, than to have both your hands and go into Gehenna, into the fire that cannot 45 be put out.⁹ If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It would be better for you to enter the life lame, than to have both your feet and be thrown into 47 Gehenna.¹⁰ If your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It would be better for you to enter the kingdom of God with only one eye, than to have both eyes 48 and be thrown into Gehenna, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out.
- 49 For it is by fire that everyone will be salted.
- 50 Salt is good, but, if the salt should lose its saltiness, what will you use to season it?
- You must have salt in yourselves, and live at peace with one another.'

The Journey to Jerusalem

- 10 On leaving that place, Jesus went into the district of Judea on the other side of the Jordan. Crowds gathered about him again; and again, as usual, 2 he began teaching them. Presently some Pharisees came up and, to test him, asked, 'Has a husband the right to divorce his wife?'

⁹ 9:44 Some later manuscripts add here or at verse 46: where their worm never dies and the fire is never quenched.

¹⁰ 9:46 See the note on verse 44.

3 ‘What direction did Moses give you?’ replied Jesus. ‘Moses,’ they said,
4 ‘permitted a man to draw up in writing a notice of separation and divorce
 his wife.’

5 ‘It was owing to the hardness of your hearts,’ said Jesus, ‘that Moses
6 gave you this direction; but, at the beginning of the Creation, “God made
7 them male and female.” “For this reason a man will leave his father and
8 mother, and the man and his wife will become one;” so that they are no
9 longer two, but one. What God himself, then, has yoked together no one
 must separate.’

10 When they were indoors, the disciples asked him again about this, and he
11 said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman is guilty
12 of adultery against his wife; and, if the woman divorces her husband and
 marries another man, she is guilty of adultery.’

13 Some of the people were bringing little children to Jesus, for him to
14 touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who had brought them. When,
 however, Jesus saw this, he was indignant. ‘Let the little children come to
15 me,’ he said, ‘do not hinder them; for it is to the childlike that the kingdom
16 of God belongs. I tell you, unless a person receives the kingdom of God
 like a child, they will not enter it at all.’ Then he embraced the children,
 and, placing his hands on them, gave them his blessing.

17 As Jesus was resuming his journey, a man came running up to him, and
 threw himself on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what
 must I do to gain eternal life?’

18 ‘Why do you call me good?’ answered Jesus. ‘No one is good but God.
19 You know the commandments – “Do not kill. Do not commit adultery. Do
 not steal. Do not say what is false about others. Do not cheat. Honour your
 father and your mother.”’

20 ‘Teacher,’ he replied, ‘I have observed all these from my childhood.’ Jesus
21 looked at the man, and his heart went out to him, and he said, ‘There is
 still one thing wanting in you; go and sell all that you have, and give to the
22 poor, and you will have wealth in heaven; then come and follow me.’ But
 the man’s face clouded at these words, and he went away distressed, for
 he had great possessions.

23 Then Jesus looked round, and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it will
24 be for people of wealth to enter the kingdom of God!’ The disciples were
 amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, ‘My children, how hard a thing
25 it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to get through a
 needle’s eye, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.’

- 26 ‘Then who can be saved?’ they exclaimed in the greatest astonishment.
- 27 Jesus looked at them, and answered, ‘With people it is impossible, but not with God; for everything is possible with God.’
- 28 ‘But we,’ began Peter, ‘we left everything and have followed you.’
- 29 ‘I tell you,’ said Jesus, ‘there is no one who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or land, for my sake and for the
- 30 good news, who will not receive a hundred times as much, even now in the present – houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and land, though not without persecutions – and in the age that is coming,
- 31 eternal life. But many who are first now will then be last, and the last will be first.’
- 32 They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, with Jesus walking in front of them. The disciples were filled with awe, while those who were following behind were overwhelmed with fear. Gathering the Twelve round him once more, Jesus began to tell them what was about to happen to him.
- 33 ‘Listen!’ he said. ‘We are going up to Jerusalem; and there the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law, and they
- 34 will condemn him to death, and they will give him up to the Gentiles, who will mock him, spit on him, and scourge him, and put him to death; and after three days he will rise again.’
- 35 James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, went to Jesus, and said, ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask.’
- 36 ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ he asked. ‘Grant us this,’ they
- 37 answered, ‘to sit, one on your right, and the other on your left, when you come in glory.’
- 38 ‘You do not know what you are asking,’ Jesus said to them. ‘Can you drink the cup that I am to drink? Or receive the baptism that I am to receive?’
- 39 ‘Yes,’ they answered, ‘we can.’
- 40 ‘You will indeed drink the cup that I am to drink,’ Jesus said, ‘and receive the baptism that I am to receive, but as to a seat at my right or at my left – that is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.’
- 41 On hearing of this, the ten others were at first very indignant about
- 42 James and John. But Jesus called the ten to him, and said, ‘Those who are regarded as ruling among the Gentiles lord it over them, as you know, and
- 43 their great men oppress them. But among you it is not so. No, whoever
- 44 wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever
- 45 wants to take the first place among you must be the servant of all; for even

the Son of Man came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

46 They came to Jericho. When Jesus was going out of the town with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, 47 was sitting by the roadside. Hearing that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he 48 began to call out, 'Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me.' Many of the people kept telling him to be quiet; but the man continued to call out all the louder, 49 'Son of David, take pity on me.' Then Jesus stopped. 'Call him,' he said. So they called the blind man. 'Have courage!' they exclaimed. 'Get up; 50 he is calling you.' The man threw off his cloak, sprang up, and came to 51 Jesus. 'What do you want me to do for you?' said Jesus, addressing him. 'Rabboni,' the blind man answered, 'I want to recover my sight.'

52 'You may go,' Jesus said, 'Your faith has delivered you.' Immediately he recovered his sight, and began to follow Jesus along the road.

The Last Days

- 11 When they had almost reached Jerusalem, as far as Bethphage and Bethany, 2 near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent on two of his disciples. 'Go to the village facing you,' he said, 'and, as soon as you get there, you will find a 3 foal tethered, which no one has ever ridden; untie it, and bring it. And, if anyone says to you "Why are you doing that?", say "The Master wants it, 4 and will be sure to send it back here at once."' The two disciples went, and, 5 finding a foal tethered outside a door in the street, they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the foal?' 6 And the two disciples answered as Jesus had told them; and they allowed 7 them to go. Then they brought the foal to Jesus, and, when they had laid 8 their cloaks on it, he seated himself on it. Many of the people spread their cloaks on the road, while some strewed boughs which they had cut from 9 the fields; and those who led the way, as well as those who followed, kept shouting, 'God save him! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! God save him from on high!'
- 11 Jesus entered Jerusalem, and went into the Temple Courts; and, after looking round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.
- 12 The next day, after they had left Bethany, Jesus became hungry; and, 13 noticing a fig-tree at a distance in leaf, he went to it to see if by any chance he could find something on it; but, on coming up to it, he found nothing

14 but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. So, addressing the tree, he exclaimed, 'May no one ever again eat of your fruit!' And his disciples heard what he said.

15 They came to Jerusalem. Jesus went into the Temple Courts, and began to drive out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers, and the seats of the pigeon-dealers, and 16 would not allow anyone to carry anything across the Temple Courts. Then 17 he began to teach. 'Does not scripture say,' he asked, "'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations'"? But you have made it a den 18 of robbers.' Now the chief priests and the teachers of the Law heard this and began to look for some way of putting Jesus to death; for they were afraid of him, since all the people were greatly impressed by his teaching.

19 As soon as evening fell, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

20 As they passed by early in the morning, they noticed that the fig-tree 21 was withered up from the roots. Then Peter recalled what had occurred. 'Look, Rabbi,' he exclaimed, 'the fig-tree which you doomed is withered up!'

22 'Have faith in God!' replied Jesus. 'I tell you that if anyone should say to 23 this hill "Be lifted up and hurled into the sea!", without ever a doubt in his mind, but in the faith that what he says will be done, he would find that it 24 would be. And therefore I say to you "Have faith that whatever you ask for in prayer is already granted you, and you will find that it will be."

25 'And, whenever you stand up to pray, forgive any grievance that you have against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven also may forgive you your offences.'¹¹

27 They came to Jerusalem again. While Jesus was walking about in the Temple Courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders 28 came up to him. 'What authority have you to do these things?' they said. 'Who gave you the authority to do them?'

29 'I will put one question to you,' said Jesus. 'Answer me that, and then I 30 will tell you what authority I have to act as I do. It is about John's baptism.'

31 'Was it of divine or human origin? Answer me that.' They began arguing together. 'If we say "divine," he will say "Why then didn't you believe him?"'

32 Yet can we say "human"? They were afraid of the people, for everyone 33 regarded John as undoubtedly a prophet. So their answer to Jesus was – 'We do not know.'

¹¹ 11:26 Some later manuscripts add: But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your offences.

'Then I,' replied Jesus, 'refuse to tell you what authority I have to do these things.'

- 12 Jesus began to speak to them in parables, 'A man once planted a vineyard, put a fence round it, dug a wine-press, built a tower, and then let it out
2 to tenants and went abroad. At the proper time he sent a servant to the tenants, to receive from them a share of the produce of the grape harvest;
3 but they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. A
4 second time the owner sent a servant to them; this man, too, the tenants
5 struck on the head, and insulted. He sent another, but him they killed; and
6 so with many others – some they beat and some they killed. He had still
one son, who was very dear to him; and him he sent to them last of all.
7 "They will respect my son," he said. But those tenants said to one another
8 "Here is the heir! Come, let us kill him, and his inheritance will be ours." So
they seized him, and killed him, and threw his body outside the vineyard.
9 What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and put the tenants
to death, and he will let the vineyard to others.
10 'Have you never read this passage of scripture? – "The stone which the
11 builders despised has now itself become the corner-stone; this corner-stone
has come from the Lord, and is marvellous in our eyes."
12 After this his enemies were eager to arrest him, but they were afraid of
the crowd; for they saw that it was at them that he had aimed the parable.
So they left him alone, and went away.
13 Afterwards they sent to Jesus some of the Pharisees and Herodians, to
14 set a trap for him in the course of conversation. These men came to him and
said, 'Teacher, we know that you are an honest man, and are not afraid of
anyone, for you pay no regard to a person's position, but teach the way of
15 God honestly; are we right in paying taxes to the Emperor, or not? Should
we pay, or should we not pay?' Knowing their hypocrisy, Jesus said to them,
16 'Why are you testing me? Bring me a coin to look at.' And, when they had
brought it, he asked, 'Whose head and title are these?'
17 'The Emperor's,' they said; and Jesus replied, 'Pay to the Emperor what
belongs to the Emperor, and to God what belongs to God.' And they won-
dered at him.
18 Next came some Sadducees – the men who maintain that there is no
19 resurrection. Their question was this – 'Teacher, in our scriptures Moses
decreed that, should a man's brother die, leaving a widow but no child,
the man should take the widow as his wife, and raise up a family for his
20 brother. There were once seven brothers. The eldest married, but died and
left no family; and the second married his widow, and died without family;

22 and so did the third. All the seven died and left no family. The woman
23 herself died last of all. At the resurrection whose wife will she be, all seven
brothers having had her as their wife?’

24 ‘Is not the reason of your mistake,’ answered Jesus, ‘your ignorance of
25 the scriptures and of the power of God? When people rise from the dead,
there is no marrying or being married; but they are as angels in heaven.

26 ‘As to the dead, and the fact that they rise, have you never read in the
book of Moses, in the passage about the Bush, how God spoke to him
saying – “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God
27 of Jacob”? He is not God of dead people, but of living. You are greatly
mistaken.’

28 Then came up one of the teachers of the Law who had heard their dis-
cussions. Knowing that Jesus had answered them wisely, he asked him
this question, ‘Which commandment is the most important of all?’

29 ‘The most important,’ answered Jesus, ‘is – “Hear, Israel; the Lord our
30 God is the one Lord; and you must love the Lord your God with all your
heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your
31 strength.” The second is this – “You must love your neighbour as you love
yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’

32 ‘Wisely answered, teacher!’ exclaimed the teacher of the Law. ‘It is true,
as you say, that there is one God, and that there is no other besides him;
33 and to love him with all one’s heart, and with all one’s understanding, and
with all one’s strength, and to love one’s neighbour as one loves oneself is
34 far beyond all burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ Seeing that he had answered
with discernment, Jesus said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of
God.’

After that no one ventured to question him further.

35 While Jesus was teaching in the Temple Courts, he asked, ‘How is it that
36 the teachers of the Law say that the Christ is to be David’s son? David said
himself, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit – “The Lord said
to my lord: Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies beneath your
37 feet.” David himself calls him “lord,” how comes it, then, that he is to be
his son?’

38 The mass of the people listened to Jesus with delight. In the course of his
teaching, Jesus said, ‘See that you are on your guard against the teachers
of the Law, who delight to walk about in long robes, and to be greeted in
39 the streets with respect, and to have the best seats in the synagogues, and
40 places of honour at dinner. They are the men who rob widows of their
homes, and make a pretence of saying long prayers. Their sentence will be
all the heavier.’

41 Then Jesus sat down opposite the chests for the Temple offerings, and
42 watched how the people put money into them. Many rich people were
43 putting in large sums; but one poor widow came and put in two small
44 coins, worth very little. Then, calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, 'I tell
you that this poor widow has put in more than all the others who were
putting money into the chests; for everyone else put in something from
what he had to spare, while she, in her need, put in all she had – everything
that she had to live on.'

13 As Jesus was walking out of the Temple Courts, one of his disciples said
to him, 'Teacher, look what fine stones and buildings these are!'

2 'Do you see these great buildings?' asked Jesus. 'Not a single stone will
be left here on another, which will not be thrown down.'

3 When Jesus had sat down on the Mount of Olives, facing the Temple,
4 Peter, James, John and Andrew questioned him privately, 'Tell us when
this will be, and what will be the sign when all this is drawing to its close.'

5 Then Jesus began, 'See that no one leads you astray. Many will take my
6 name, and come saying "I am He", and will lead many astray.'

7 'And, when you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed;
8 such things must occur; but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against
nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various
places; there will be famines. This will be but the beginning of the birth-
pangs.

9 'See to yourselves! They will betray you to courts of law; and you will
be taken to synagogues and beaten; and you will be brought up before
governors and kings for my sake, so that you can bear witness before them.

10 But the good news must first be proclaimed to every nation. Whenever
11 they betray you and hand you over for trial, do not be anxious beforehand
as to what you will say, but say whatever is given you at the moment;
12 for it will not be you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray
brother to death, and the father his child; and children will turn against
13 their parents, and cause them to be put to death; and you will be hated by
everyone because of me. Yet the person who endures to the end will be
saved.

14 'As soon, however, as you see "the Foul Desecration" standing where
it ought not' (the reader must consider what this means) 'then those of
15 you who are in Judea must take refuge in the mountains; and a person
on the house-top must not go down, or go in to get anything out of their
16 house: nor must one who is on their farm turn back to get their cloak. And
17 alas for pregnant women, and for those who are nursing infants in those

18 days! Pray, too, that this may not occur in winter. For those days will be
19 a time of distress, the like of which has not occurred from the beginning
20 of God's creation until now – and never will again. And, had not the Lord
put a limit to those days, not a single soul would escape; but, for the sake
of God's own chosen people, he did limit them.

21 'And at that time if anyone should say to you "Look, here is the Christ!"'
22 "Look, there he is!", do not believe it; for false Christs and false prophets
will arise, and display signs and marvels, to lead astray, were it possible,
23 even God's people. But see that you are on your guard! I have told you all
this beforehand.

24 'In those days, after that time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the
25 moon will not give her light, the stars will be falling from the heavens, and
26 the forces that are in the heavens will be convulsed. Then will be seen the
27 Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory; and then he will
send the angels, and gather his people from the four winds, from one end
of the world to the other.

28 'Learn the lesson taught by the fig-tree. As soon as its branches are full
29 of sap, and it is bursting into leaf, you know that summer is near. And so
may you, as soon as you see these things happening, know that he is at
30 your doors. I tell you that even the present generation will not pass away,
31 until all these things have taken place. The heavens and the earth will pass
away, but my words will not pass away.'

32 'But about that day, or the hour, no one knows – not even the angels in
heaven, not even the Son – but only the Father.

33 'See that you are on the watch; for you do not know when the time
34 will be. It is like a man going on a journey, who leaves his home, puts his
servants in charge – each having their special duty – and orders the porter
35 to watch. Therefore watch, for you cannot be sure when the Master of the
house is coming – whether in the evening, at midnight, at daybreak, or
36 in the morning – otherwise he might come suddenly and find you asleep.
37 And what I say to you I say to all – Watch!'

14 It was now two days before the Festival of the Passover and the unleavened bread. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were looking for
2 an opportunity to arrest Jesus by stealth, and to put him to death; for they
said, 'Not during the Festival, or the people may riot.'

3 When Jesus was still at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, while
he was sitting at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of choice
spikenard perfume of great value. She broke the jar, and poured the per-
4 fume on his head. Some of those who were present said to one another

- 5 indignantly, 'Why has the perfume been wasted like this? This perfume could have been sold for more than a year's wages, and the money given to the poor.'
- 6 'Leave her alone,' said Jesus, as they began to find fault with her, 'why are you troubling her? This is a beautiful deed that she has done for me.
- 7 You always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish you can do
- 8 good to them; but you will not always have me. She has done what she
- 9 could; she has perfumed my body beforehand for my burial. And I tell you, wherever, in the whole world, the good news is proclaimed, what this woman has done will be told in memory of her.'
- 10 After this, Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests, to
- 11 betray Jesus to them. They were glad to hear what he said, and promised to pay him. So he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus.
- 12 On the first day of the Festival of the unleavened bread, when it was customary to kill the Passover lambs, his disciples said to Jesus, 'Where do you wish us to go and make preparations for your eating the Passover?'
- 13 Jesus sent forward two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the city, and there a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you; follow him;
- 14 and, wherever he goes in, say to the owner of the house "The teacher says – Where is my room where I am to eat the Passover with my disciples?"'
- 15 He will himself show you a large upstairs room, set out ready; and there
- 16 make preparations for us.' So the disciples set out and went into the city, and found everything just as Jesus had told them; and they prepared the Passover.
- 17 In the evening he went there with the Twelve, and when they had taken
- 18 their places and were eating, Jesus said, 'I tell you that one of you is going
- 19 to betray me – one who is eating with me.' They were grieved at this, and began to say to him, one after another, 'Can it be I?'
- 20 'It is one of you Twelve,' said Jesus, 'the one who is dipping his bread
- 21 beside me into the dish. True, the Son of Man must go, as scripture says of him, yet alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is being betrayed! For that man it would be better never to have been born!'
- 22 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and, after saying the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take it; this is my body.'
- 23 Then he took a cup, and, after saying the thanksgiving, gave it to them,
- 24 and they all drank from it. 'This is my covenant-blood,' he said, 'which is
- 25 poured out on behalf of many. I tell you that I will never again drink of the juice of the grape, until that day when I will drink it new in the kingdom of God.'

26 They then sang a hymn, and went out up the Mount of Olives, presently
27 Jesus said to them, 'All of you will fall away; for scripture says – "I will
28 strike down the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered." Yet, after I
have risen, I will go before you into Galilee.'

29 'Even if everyone else falls away,' said Peter, 'I will not.'

30 'I tell you,' answered Jesus, 'that you yourself today – yes, this very
31 night – before the cock crows twice, will disown me three times.' But Peter
vehemently protested, 'Even if I must die with you, I will never disown
you!' And they all said the same.

32 Presently they came to a garden known as Gethsemane, and Jesus said
33 to his disciples 'Sit down here while I pray.' He took with him Peter, James,
and John; and began to show signs of great dismay and deep distress of
34 mind. 'I am sad at heart,' he said, 'sad even to death; wait here, and watch.'
35 Going on a little further, he threw himself on the ground, and began to
36 pray that, if it were possible, he might be spared that hour. 'Abba, Father,'
he said, 'all things are possible to you; take away this cup from me; yet,
not what I will, but what you will.'

37 Then he came and found the three apostles asleep. 'Simon,' he said to
38 Peter, 'are you asleep? Couldn't you watch for one hour? Watch and pray,'
he said to them all, 'so that you may not fall into temptation. True, the
39 spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Again he went away, and prayed in
40 the same words; and coming back again he found them asleep, for their
eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to say to him.

41 A third time he came, and said to them, 'Sleep on now, and rest yourselves. Enough! My time has come. Look, the Son of Man is being betrayed
42 into the hands of wicked people. Up, and let us be going. Look! My betrayer
is close at hand.'

43 And just then, while he was still speaking, Judas, who was one of the
Twelve, came up; and with him a crowd of people, with swords and clubs,
44 sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders. Now the
betrayer had arranged a signal with them. 'The man whom I kiss,' he had
45 said, 'will be the one; arrest him and take him away safely.' As soon as
Judas came, he went up to Jesus at once, and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him.
46 Then the men seized Jesus, and arrested him.

47 One of those who were standing by drew his sword, and struck at the
high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. But Jesus spoke up, and said to
the men, 'Have you come out, as if after a robber, with swords and clubs,
49 to take me? I have been among you day after day in the Temple Courts
teaching, and yet you did not arrest me; but this is in fulfilment of the

50 scriptures.' And all the apostles deserted him and fled. One young man
51 did indeed follow him, wrapped only in a linen sheet. They tried to arrest
52 him; but he left the sheet in their hands, and fled naked.

53 Then they took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, elders,
54 and the teachers of the Law assembled. Peter, who had followed Jesus at a
distance into the courtyard of the high priest, was sitting there among the
police officers, warming himself at the blaze of the fire.

55 Meanwhile the chief priest and the whole of the High Council were
trying to get such evidence against Jesus as would warrant his being put to
56 death, but they could not find any; for, though there were many who gave
57 false evidence against him, yet their evidence did not agree. Presently some
58 men stood up, and gave this false evidence against him – 'We ourselves
heard him say "I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and in three
59 days build another made without hands.'" Yet not even on that point did
their evidence agree.

60 Then the high priest stood forward, and questioned Jesus. 'Have you no
answer to make?' he asked. 'What is this evidence which these men are
61 giving against you?' But Jesus remained silent, and made no answer.

A second time the high priest questioned him. 'Are you,' he asked, 'the
Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'

62 'I am,' replied Jesus, 'and you will all see the Son of Man sitting on the
63 right hand of the Almighty, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' At this
the high priest tore his vestments. 'Why do we want any more witnesses?'
64 he exclaimed. 'You heard his blasphemy? What is your verdict?' They all
condemned him, declaring that he deserved death.

65 Some of those present began to spit at him, and to blindfold his eyes,
and strike him, saying, as they did so, 'Now play the prophet!' and even
the police officers received him with blows.

66 While Peter was in the courtyard down below, one of the high priest's
67 maidservants came up; and, seeing Peter warming himself, she looked
closely at him, and exclaimed, 'Why, you were with Jesus, the Nazarene!'
68 But Peter denied it. 'I do not know or understand what you mean,' he
69 replied. Then he went out into the porch; and there the maidservant, on
70 seeing him, began to say again to the bystanders, 'This is one of them!' But
Peter again denied it.

71 Soon afterwards the bystanders again said to him, 'You certainly are
one of them; why you are a Galilean!' But he said to them, 'I swear that
I do not know the man you are talking about! May God punish me if I
72 am lying!' At that moment, for the second time, a cock crowed; and Peter

remembered the words that Jesus had said to him – “Before a cock has crowed twice, you will disown me three times”; and, as he thought of it, he began to weep.

15 As soon as it was daylight, the chief priests, after holding a consultation with elders and teachers of the Law – that is to say, the whole High Council – put Jesus in chains, and took him away, and gave him up to Pilate. ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ asked Pilate. ‘It is true,’ replied Jesus. Then the chief priests brought a number of charges against him. So Pilate questioned Jesus again. ‘Have you no reply to make?’ he asked. ‘Listen, how many charges they are bringing against you.’ But Jesus still made no reply whatever; at which Pilate was astonished.

6 Now, at the feast, Pilate used to grant the people the release of any one prisoner whom they might ask for. A man called Barabbas was in prison, with the rioters who had committed murder during a riot. So, when the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate to follow his usual custom, he answered, ‘Do you want me to release the “king of the Jews” for you?’ For he was aware that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had given Jesus up to him. But the chief priests incited the crowd to get Barabbas released instead. Pilate, however, spoke to them again, ‘What should I do then with the man whom you call the “king of the Jews”?’ Again they shouted, ‘Crucify him!’

14 ‘Why, what harm has he done?’ Pilate kept saying to them. But they shouted furiously, ‘Crucify him!’ And Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and, after scourging Jesus, gave him up to be crucified.

16 The soldiers then took Jesus away into the courtyard – that is the Government house – and they called the whole garrison together. They dressed him in a purple robe, and, having twisted a crown of thorns, put it on him, and then began to salute him. ‘Long life to you, king of the Jews!’ they said. 19 And they kept striking him on the head with a rod, spitting at him, and 20 bowing to the ground before him – going down on their knees; and, when they had left off mocking him, they took off the purple robe, and put his own clothes on him.

21 They led Jesus out to crucify him; and they compelled a passer-by, Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to go with them to carry his cross.

22 They brought Jesus to the place which was known as Golgotha – a name which means “place of a Skull.” There they offered him drugged wine; but

24 Jesus refused it. Then they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots for them, to settle what each should take.

25 It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The words of the charge against him, written up over his head, read – “THE KING OF THE JEWS.” And with him they crucified two robbers, one on the right, and the other on the left.¹²

29 The passers-by railed at him, shaking their heads, as they said, ‘Ah! You who would destroy the Temple and build one in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!’ In the same way the chief priests, with the teachers of the Law, said to one another in mockery, ‘He saved others, but he cannot save himself! Let the Christ, the “king of Israel,” come down from the cross now so that we can see it and believe.’ Even the men who had been crucified with Jesus insulted him.

33 At midday, a darkness came over the whole country, lasting until three in the afternoon. And, at three, Jesus called out loudly, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani?’ which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” 35 Some of those standing round heard this, and said, ‘Listen! He is calling for Elijah!’ And a man ran, and, soaking a sponge in common wine, put it on the end of a rod, and offered it to him to drink, saying as he did so, 37 ‘Wait and let us see if Elijah is coming to take him down.’ But Jesus, giving a loud cry, breathed his last. The Temple curtain was torn in two from top 39 to bottom. The Roman officer, who was standing facing Jesus, on seeing the way in which he breathed his last, exclaimed, ‘This man must indeed have been God’s son!’

40 There were some women also watching from a distance, among them being Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the Little and of Joseph, 41 and Salome – all of whom used to accompany Jesus when he was in Galilee, and give him support – besides many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

42 The evening had already fallen, when, as it was the Preparation day – the day before the Sabbath – Joseph from Ramah, a councillor of good position, who was himself living in expectation of the kingdom of God, came and 44 ventured to go in to see Pilate, and to ask for the body of Jesus. But Pilate was surprised to hear that he had already died. So he sent for the officer, 45 and asked if he were already dead; and, on learning from the officer that it 46 was so, he gave the corpse to Joseph. Joseph, having bought a linen sheet,

¹² 15:28 Some later manuscripts add: And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “He was counted among outlaws.”

took Jesus down, and wound the sheet round him, and laid him in a tomb which had been cut out of the rock; and then rolled a stone up against the entrance of the tomb. Mary of Magdala and Mary, the mother of Joseph, were watching to see where he was laid.

The Risen Life Announced

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought some spices, so that they might go and anoint the body
2 of Jesus. Very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, after
3 sunrise. They were saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone
4 for us from the entrance of the tomb?' But, on looking up, they saw that
5 the stone had already been rolled back; it was a very large one. Going into
the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on their right, in a white robe, and
6 they were dismayed; but he said to them, 'Do not be dismayed; you are
looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who has been crucified; he has risen, he
7 is not here! Look! Here is the place where they laid him. But go, and say
to his disciples and to Peter "He is going before you into Galilee; there
8 you will see him, as he told you.'" They went out, and fled from the tomb,
for they were trembling and bewildered; and they did not say a word to
anyone, for they were frightened.

A late appendix

(Inserted in some manuscripts from an ancient source)

9 After his rising again, early on the first day of the week, Jesus appeared
first of all to Mary of Magdala, from whom he had driven out seven demons.
10 She went and told the news to those who had been with him and who
11 were now in sorrow and tears; yet even they, when they heard that he was
12 alive and had been seen by her, did not believe it. Afterwards, altered in
appearance, he made himself known to two of them, as they were walking,
13 on their way into the country. They also went and told the rest, but they
14 did not believe even them. Later on, he made himself known to the Eleven

themselves as they were at a meal, and reproached them with their want of faith and their stubbornness, because they did not believe those who
15 had seen him after he had risen from the dead. Then he said to them, 'Go
16 into all the world, and proclaim the good news to all creation. He who
believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who refuses to believe will
17 be condemned. Moreover these signs will attend those who believe. In my
18 name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; they
will take up snakes in their hands; and, if they drink any poison, it will
not hurt them; they will place their hands on sick people and they will
19 recover.' So the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into
20 heaven, and sat at the right hand of God. But they set out, and made the
proclamation everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming
the message by the signs which attended it.

Another appendix

But all that had been revealed to them they reported briefly to Peter and his companions. Afterwards Jesus himself sent them out, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO LUKE

Dedication

1 To his Excellency, Theophilus.

Many attempts have been already made to draw up an account of those events which have reached their conclusion among us, just as they were reported to us by those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and afterwards became bearers of the message. And, therefore, I also, since I have investigated all these events with great care from their very beginning, have resolved to write a connected history of them for you, in order that you may be able to satisfy yourself of the accuracy of the story which you have heard from the lips of others.

Birth, Parentage, Infancy and Boyhood

5 In the reign of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the division called after Abijah. His wife, whose name 6 was Elizabeth, was also a descendant of Aaron. They were both righteous people, who lived blameless lives, guiding their steps by all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. But they had no child, Elizabeth being barren; and both of them were advanced in years.

8 One day, when Zechariah was officiating as priest before God, during 9 the turn of his division, it fell to him by lot, in accordance with the practice 10 among the priests, to go into the Temple of the Lord and burn incense; and, 11 as it was the Hour of Incense, the people were all praying outside. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right of the Altar of Incense. Zechariah was startled at the sight and was awe-struck. But the 13

angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, whom you will call by the
14 name John. He will be to you a joy and a delight; and many will rejoice over
15 his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; he will not drink any
16 wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the
17 very hour of his birth, and will reconcile many of the Israelites to the Lord
18 their God. He will go before him in the spirit and with the power of Elijah,
19 to reconcile fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of
20 the righteous, and so make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him.'

21 How can I be sure of this?' Zechariah asked the angel. 'For I am an old
22 man and my wife is advanced in years.'

23 'I am Gabriel,' the angel answered, 'who stand in the presence of God,
24 and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And
25 now you will be silent and unable to speak until the day when this takes
place, because you did not believe what I said, though my words will be
fulfilled in due course.'

26 Meanwhile the people were watching for Zechariah, wondering at his
27 remaining so long in the Temple. When he came out, he was unable to
28 speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision there. But
29 Zechariah kept making signs to them, and remained dumb. And, as soon
30 as his term of service was finished, he returned home. After this his wife,
31 Elizabeth, became pregnant and lived in seclusion for five months. 'The
32 Lord has done this for me,' she said, 'he has shown me kindness and taken
33 away the public disgrace of childlessness under which I have been living.'

34 Six months later the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in
35 Galilee called Nazareth, to a maiden there who was engaged to a man
36 named Joseph, a descendant of David. Her name was Mary. Gabriel came
37 into her presence and greeted her, saying, 'You have been shown great
38 favour – the Lord is with you.'

39 Mary was much disturbed at his words, and was wondering to herself
40 what such a greeting could mean, when the angel spoke again, 'Do not
41 be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will
42 conceive and give birth to a son, and you will give him the name Jesus.
43 The child will be great and will be called "Son of the Most High," and the
44 Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David, and he will reign
over the descendants of Jacob for ever; And to his kingdom there will be
no end.'

45 'How can this be?' Mary asked the angel. 'For I have no husband.'

35 ‘The Holy Spirit will descend on you,’ answered the angel, ‘and the Power of the Most High will overshadow you; and therefore the child will
36 be called “holy,” and “Son of God.” And Elizabeth, your cousin, is herself
37 also expecting a son in her old age; and it is now the sixth month with
her, though she is called barren; for no promise from God will fail to be
fulfilled.’

38 ‘I am the servant of the Lord,’ exclaimed Mary. ‘Let it be with me as you
have said.’ Then the angel left her.

39 Soon after this Mary set out, and made her way quickly into the hill-
40 country, to a town in Judah; and there she went into Zechariah’s house and
41 greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child moved
42 within her, and Elizabeth herself was filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried
aloud, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is your unborn child!
43 But how have I this honour, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
44 For, as soon as your greeting reached my ears, the child moved within me
45 with delight! Happy indeed is she who believed that the promise which
she received from the Lord would be fulfilled.’

46 And Mary said:

‘My soul exalts the Lord,
47 and my spirit delights in God my Saviour,
48 for he has looked with favour on his humble servant girl.
 From now on all generations will call me blessed!

49 ‘For the Almighty has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name.

50 He has mercy on those who revere him
 in every generation.

51 ‘Mighty are the deeds of his arm;
 he has scattered the self-satisfied proud,
52 he has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
 and he uplifts the humble,
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he has sent away empty.

54 ‘He has stretched out his hand to his servant Israel,
 ever mindful of his mercy,
55 as he promised to our ancestors
 for Abraham and his descendants for ever.’

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to
57 her home. When Elizabeth's time came, she gave birth to a son; and her
58 neighbours and relatives, hearing of the great goodness of the Lord to her,
59 came to share her joy. A week later they met to circumcise the child, and
60 were about to call him Zechariah after his father, when his mother spoke
up, 'No, he is to be called John.'

61 'You have no relation of that name!' they exclaimed; and they made signs to
62 the child's father, to find out what he wished the child to be called. Asking
63 for a writing-tablet, he wrote the words – "His name is John." Everyone was
64 surprised and immediately Zechariah recovered his voice and the use of
65 his tongue, and began to bless God. All their neighbours were awe-struck
at this, and throughout the hill-country of Judea the whole story was much
66 talked about. All who heard it kept it in mind, asking one another – 'What
can this child be destined to become?' For the Power of the Lord was with
him.

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and, speaking
under inspiration, said:

68 'Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel,
Who has visited his people and wrought their deliverance,
69 and has raised up for us the Strength of our salvation
In the house of his servant David –

70 As he promised by the lips of his holy prophets of old –
salvation from our enemies and from the hands of all who hate
71 us,
72 showing mercy to our ancestors,
And mindful of his sacred covenant.

73 This was the oath which he swore to our ancestor Abraham –
74 That we should be rescued from the hands of our enemies,
75 and should serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness,
In his presence all our days.

76 And you, child, will be called prophet of the Most High,
For you will go before the Lord to make ready his way,
77 to give his people the knowledge of salvation
In the forgiveness of their sins,
78 through the tender mercy of our God,
Whereby the Dawn will break on us from heaven,
79 to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow of
death,

And guide our feet into the way of peace.'

80 The child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the Wilds until the time came for his appearance before Israel.

2 About that time an edict was issued by the Emperor Augustus that a census
2 should be taken of the whole Empire. (This was the first census taken while
3 Quirinius was Governor of Syria). And everyone went to his own town to
4 be registered. Among others Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in
Galilee to Bethlehem, the town of David, in Judea – because he belonged to
5 the family and house of David – To be registered with Mary, his engaged
6 wife, who was about to become a mother. While they were there her time
7 came, and she gave birth to her first child, a son. And because there was
no room for them in the inn, she swathed him round and laid him in a
8 manger. In that same country-side were shepherds out in the open fields,
9 watching their flocks that night, when an angel of the Lord suddenly stood
by them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were
10 seized with fear. 'Have no fear,' the angel said. 'For I bring you good news
11 of a great joy in store for all the nation. This day there has been born to you,
12 in the town of David, a Saviour, who is Christ and Lord. And this will be
the sign for you. You will find the infant swathed, and lying in a manger.'

13 Then suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly Host, praising God, and singing –

14 'glory to God on high,
And on earth peace among those in whom he finds pleasure.'

15 Now, when the angels had left them and gone back to heaven, the
shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go at once to Bethlehem, and see
16 this thing that has happened, of which the Lord has told us.' So they went
quickly, and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger;
17 and, when they saw it, they told of all that had been said to them about
18 this child. All who heard the shepherds were astonished at their story,
19 while Mary treasured up all that they said, and thought about it often in
20 her thoughts. And the shepherds went back, giving glory and praise to
God for all that they had heard and seen. It had all happened as they had
been told.

21 Eight days after the birth of the child, when it was time to circumcise him,
he received the name Jesus – the name given him by the angel before his
conception.

22 When the period of purification of mother and child, required by the Law of Moses, came to an end, his parents took the child up to Jerusalem
23 to present him to the Lord, in compliance with the Law of the Lord that
24 every first-born male will be dedicated to the Lord, and also to offer the sacrifice required by the Law of the Lord – a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.

25 There was at that time in Jerusalem a man named Simeon, a righteous and devout man, who lived in constant expectation of the Consolation of Israel, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, Simeon came into the Temple Courts, and, when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the Law, Simeon himself took the child in his arms, and blessed God, and said:

29 'Now, Lord, you will let your servant go,
According to your word, in peace,
30 for my eyes have seen the salvation
31 Which you have prepared in the sight of all nations –
32 A light to bring light to the Gentiles,
And to be the glory of your people Israel.'

33 While the child's father and mother were wondering at what was said about him, Simeon gave them his blessing, and said to Mary, the child's mother, 'This child is appointed to be the cause of the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign much spoken against – Yes, the sword will pierce your own heart – and so the thoughts in many minds will be disclosed.'

36 There was also a prophet named Hannah, a daughter of Phanuel and of the tribe of Asher. She was far advanced in years, having lived with her husband for seven years after marriage, and then a widow, until she had reached the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple Courts, but, 37 fasting and praying, worshiped God night and day. At that moment she came up, and began publicly to thank God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the deliverance of Jerusalem.

39 When the child's parents had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong and wise, and the blessing of God was on him.

41 Every year the child's parents used to go to Jerusalem at the Passover Festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went according to custom 42 to Jerusalem, and had finished their visit; but, when they started to return,

- the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, without their knowing it.
- 44 Thinking that he was with their fellow travellers, they went one day's journey before searching for him among their relatives and acquaintances;
- 45 and then, as they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching everywhere for him. It was not until the third day that they found him in the Temple Courts, sitting among the teachers, now listening to them,
- 46 now asking them questions. All who listened to him marvelled at his intelligence and his answers.
- 47 His parents were amazed when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.'
- 48 'What made you search for me?' he answered. 'Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?' His parents did not understand what he meant. However he went down with them to Nazareth, and submitted himself to their control; and his mother treasured all that was said in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom as he grew in years, and gained the blessing of God and people.

The Preparation

- 3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea, Herod Ruler of Galilee, his brother Philip Ruler of the territory comprising Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias
- 2 Ruler of Abilene, and when Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, a command from God came to John, the son of Zechariah, while he was in
- 3 the wilderness. And John went through the whole district of the Jordan,
- 4 proclaiming baptism on repentance, for the forgiveness of sins. This was in fulfilment of what is said in the writings of the prophet Isaiah –

"The voice of one crying aloud in the wilderness:
'Make ready the way of the Lord,
 Make his paths straight.
5 Every chasm will be filled,
 Every mountain and hill will be levelled,
The winding ways will be straightened,
 The rough roads made smooth,
6 and everyone will see the salvation of God.'"

- 7 And John said to the crowds that went to be baptized by him, 'You children of snakes! Who has prompted you to seek refuge from the coming

8 judgment? Let your lives, then, prove your repentance; and do not begin to say among yourselves "Abraham is our ancestor," for I tell you that out
9 of these stones God is able to raise descendants for Abraham! Already,
indeed, the axe is lying at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that
fails to bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.'

10 'What are we to do then?' the people asked. 'Let anyone who has two coats,'
11 answered John, 'share with the person who has none; and anyone who
has food do the same.'

12 Even tax-gatherers came to be baptized, and said to John, 'Teacher, what
are we to do?'

13 'Do not collect more than you have authority to demand,' John answered.

14 And when some soldiers on active service asked 'And we – what are we
to do?' he said, 'Never use violence, or exact anything by false accusation;
and be content with your pay.'

15 Then, while the people were in suspense, and were all debating with
16 themselves whether John could be the Christ, John, addressing them all,
said, 'I, indeed, baptize you with water; but there is coming one more
powerful than I, and I am not fit even to unfasten his sandals. He will
17 baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing-fan is in
his hand so that he may clear his threshing-floor, and store the grain in his
barn, but the chaff he will burn with a fire that cannot be put out.'

18 And so with many different appeals John told his good news to the
19 people. But Prince Herod, being rebuked by John respecting Herodias,
the wife of Herod's brother, and for all the evil things that he had done,
20 crowned them all by shutting John up in prison.

21 Now after the baptism of all the people, and when Jesus had been bap-
22 tized and was still praying, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit came
down on him in the form of a dove, and from the heavens came a voice –
'You are my dearly loved son; you bring me great joy.'

23 When beginning his work, Jesus was about thirty years old. He was
regarded as the son of Joseph, whose ancestors were –

24 Eli, Mattith, Levi, Melchiah, Janna, Joseph, Mattithiah, Amos,
25 Nahum, Azaliah, Nogah, Mattith, Mattithiah, Shimei, Joseph,
26 Josheh, Johanan, Rhesa, Zerubbabel, Salathiel, Neriah, Melchiah,
27 Addi, Cosam, Elmodam, Er, Joshua, Eliezer, Joram, Mattith, Levi,
28 Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonam, Eliakim, Meleah, Menan,
29 Mattithiah, Nathan, David, Jesse, Obed, Boaz, Salah, Nahshon,
30 Aminadab, Arni, Hezron, Perez, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham,
31 Terah, Nahor, Serug, Reu, Peleg, Eber, Shelah, Kenan, Arpachshad,

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- 37 Shem, Noah, Lamech, Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalalel, Kenan,
38 Enosh, Seth and Adam the son of God.
- 4 On returning from the Jordan, full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was led by
the power of the Spirit through the wilderness for forty days, tempted by
the devil.
- 2 All that time he ate nothing; and, when it was over, he became hungry. So
3 the devil said to him, 'If you are God's Son, tell this stone to become a loaf
4 of bread.' And Jesus answered him, 'Scripture says – "It is not on bread
alone that a person is to live."
- 5 And the devil led Jesus up, and showing him in a single moment all
6 the kingdoms of the earth, said to him, 'I will give you all this power,
and the splendour of them; for it has been given into my hands and I
7 give it to whom I wish. If you worship me, it will all be yours.' And Jesus
8 answered him, 'Scripture says – "You should worship the Lord your God,
and worship him only."
- 9 The devil next led him into Jerusalem, and, placing him on the parapet
of the Temple, said, 'If you are God's Son throw yourself down from here,
10 for scripture says – "He will give his angels commands about you, to guard
you safely," And "On their hands they will lift you up, otherwise you might
11 strike your foot against a stone.'" But Jesus answered him, 'It is said – "You
12 must not tempt the Lord your God."
- 13 When he had tried every kind of temptation, the devil left Jesus, until
another opportunity.

The Work in Galilee

- 14 Moved by the power of the Spirit, Jesus returned to Galilee. Reports about
15 him spread through all that region; and he began to teach in their syna-
gogues, and was honoured by everyone.
- 16 Coming to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, Jesus, as was his
custom, went on the Sabbath into the synagogue, and stood up to read the
17 scriptures. He was given the book of the prophet Isaiah; and Jesus opened
the book and found the place where it says –
- 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
For he has consecrated me to bring good news to the poor,
He has sent me to proclaim release to captives and restoration of
sight to the blind,

To set the oppressed at liberty,
19 to proclaim the accepted year of the Lord."

20 Then, closing the book and returning it to the attendant, he sat down.

21 The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him, and Jesus began,
'This very day this passage has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

22 All who were present spoke well of him, and were astonished at the
beautiful words that fell from his lips. 'Isn't Joseph's son?' they asked.
23 'Doubtless,' said Jesus, 'you will remind me of the saying - "Doctor, cure
yourself;" and you will say "Do here in your own country all that we
24 have heard that has been done at Capernaum." I tell you,' he continued,
25 'that no prophet is acceptable in his own country. There were, doubtless,
many widows in Israel in Elijah's days, when the heavens were closed for
three years and six months, and a severe famine prevailed throughout the
26 country; and yet it was not to one of them that Elijah was sent, but to a
27 widow at Zarephath in Sidonia. And there were many lepers in Israel in the
time of the prophet Elisha, yet it was not one of them who was made clean,
28 but Naaman the Syrian.' All the people in the synagogue, as they listened
29 to this, became enraged. Starting up, they drove Jesus out of the town, and
led him to the brow of the hill on which their town stood, intending to
30 hurl him down. But he passed through the middle of the crowd and went
on his way.

31 Then Jesus went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee. On the Sabbath
32 he taught the people. They were amazed at his teaching, because his words
33 were spoken with authority. In the synagogue there was a man with the
34 spirit of a foul demon in him, who called out loudly, 'Stop! What do you
want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know
35 who you are - the Holy One of God!' But Jesus rebuked the demon. 'Be
silent! Come out from him,' he said. The demon flung the man down in
the middle of the people, and then came out from him, without causing
36 him further harm. And they were all lost in amazement, and kept saying
37 to one another, 'What words are these? For he gives his commands to the
foul spirits with a marvellous authority, and they come out.' And rumours
about Jesus traveled through every place in the region.

38 On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went into Simon's house. Now Simon's
mother-in-law was suffering from a severe attack of fever, and they asked
39 Jesus to cure her. Bending over her, he rebuked the fever; the fever left her,
40 and she immediately got up and began to take care of them. At sunset, all
who had friends suffering from various diseases took them to Jesus; and he
41 placed his hands on everyone of them and cured them. And even demons

came out from many people, screaming "You are the Son of God." Jesus rebuked them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

42 At daybreak, Jesus went out and walked to a lonely spot. But crowds of people began to look for him; and they came to where he was and tried to
43 detain him and prevent his leaving them. Jesus, however, said to them, 'I must take the good news of the kingdom of God to the other town also,
44 for that was why I was sent.' And he continued to make his proclamation in the synagogues of Judea.

5 Once, when the people were pressing round Jesus as they listened to God's message, he happened to be standing by the shore of the Lake of
2 Gennesaret, and saw two boats close to the shore. The fishermen had gone
3 away from them and were washing the nets. So, getting into one of the boats, which belonged to Simon, Jesus asked him to push off a little way from the shore, and then sat down and taught the people from the boat.
4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Push off into deep water, and throw out your nets for a haul.'

5 'We have been hard at work all night, Sir,' answered Simon, 'and have
6 not caught anything, but, at your bidding, I will throw out the nets.' They did so, and enclosed such a great shoal of fish that their nets began to
7 break. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them; and they came and filled both the boats so full of fish that they
8 were almost sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he threw himself down
9 at Jesus' knees, exclaiming, 'Master, leave me, for I am a sinful man!' For he and all who were with him were lost in amazement at the haul of fish
10 which they had made; and so, too, were James and John, Zebedee's sons,
11 who were Simon's partners. 'Do not be afraid,' Jesus said to Simon, 'from today you will catch people.' And, when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything, and followed him.

12 On one occasion Jesus was staying in a town, when he saw a man who was covered with leprosy. When the leper saw Jesus, he threw himself on his face and implored his help, 'Master, if only you are willing, you are able to make me clean.' Stretching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying as he did so, 'I am willing; become clean.'

14 Instantly the leprosy left the man; and then Jesus impressed on him that he was not to say a word to anyone, 'but,' he added, 'set out and show yourself to the priest, and make the offerings for your cleansing, in the manner directed by Moses, as evidence of your cure.' However, the story

about Jesus spread all the more, and great crowds came together to listen
16 to him, and to be cured of their illnesses; but Jesus used to withdraw to
lonely places and pray.

17 On one of those days, when Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and
Doctors of the Law were sitting near by. (They had come from all the
villages in Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem; and the power of the
18 Lord was on Jesus, so that he could work cures.) And there some men
brought on a bed a man who was paralysed. They tried to get him in and
19 lay him before Jesus; but, finding no way of getting him in owing to the
crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him through the tiles, with
20 his pallet, into the middle of the people and in front of Jesus. When he
21 saw their faith, Jesus said, 'Friend, your sins have been forgiven you.' The
teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began debating about this. 'Who is
this man who speaks so blasphemously?' they asked. 'Who can forgive
sins except God?'

22 When Jesus became aware of the way in which they were debating, he
turned to them and exclaimed, 'What are you debating with yourselves?
23 Which is the easier? – to say "Your sins have been forgiven you"? Or to
24 say "Get up, and walk"? But so that you may know that the Son of Man
has power on earth to forgive sins' – he spoke to the paralysed man – 'To
25 you I say, Get up, and take up your pallet, and go to your home.' Instantly
the man stood up before their eyes, took up what he had been lying on,
26 and went to his home, praising God. The people, one and all, were lost in
amazement, and praised God; and in great awe they said, 'We have seen
marvellous things today!'

27 After this, Jesus went out; and he noticed a tax-gatherer, named Levi,
28 sitting in the tax office, and said to him, 'Follow me.' Levi left everything
29 and got up and followed him. And Levi gave a great entertainment at his
house, in honour of Jesus; and a large number of tax-gatherers and others
were having dinner with them.

30 The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law belonging to their party com-
31 plained of this to the disciples of Jesus. In answer Jesus said, 'It is not those
32 who are well who need a doctor, but those who are ill. I have not come to
call the religious, but the outcast, to repent.'

33 'John's disciples,' they said to Jesus, 'Often fast and say prayers, and so
do the disciples of the Pharisees, while yours are eating and drinking!'

34 But Jesus answered them, 'Can you make the groom's friends fast while
35 the groom is with them? But the days will come – a time when the groom
will be taken away from them; and they will fast then, when those days

36 come.' Then, as an illustration, Jesus said to them, 'No one ever tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old one; for, if they do, they will not only tear the new garment, but the piece from the new one will not
37 match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wine-skins; for, if they do, the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine itself will run out, and
38 the skins be lost. But new wine must be put into fresh skins. No one after
39 drinking old wine wishes for new. "No," they say, "the old is excellent."

6 One Sabbath Jesus was walking through cornfields, and his disciples were picking the ears of wheat, and rubbing them in their hands, and
2 eating them. 'Why are you doing what it is not allowable to do on the
3 Sabbath?' asked some of the Pharisees. Jesus' answer was, 'Haven't you
4 read even of what David did, when he was hungry, he and his companions
– That he went into the house of God, and took the consecrated bread
and ate it, and gave some to his companions, though only the priests are
5 allowed to eat it?' Then Jesus added, 'The Son of Man is lord even of the
Sabbath.'

6 On another Sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and taught; and there
7 was a man there whose right hand was withered. The teachers of the Law
and the Pharisees watched Jesus closely, to see if he would work cures on
8 the Sabbath, so that they might find a charge to bring against him. Jesus,
however, knew what was in the their minds, and said to the man whose
hand was withered, 'Stand up and come out into the middle.' The man
9 stood up; and Jesus said to them, 'I ask you, is it allowable to do good
10 on the Sabbath – or harm? To save a life, or let it perish?' Then, looking
round at them all, he said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' The man did
11 so; and his hand had become sound. But the teachers of the Law and the
Pharisees were mad with rage, and consulted together what they could do
to Jesus.

12 Now about that time, Jesus went out, up the hill, to pray, and spent the
13 whole night in prayer to God. When day came, he summoned his disciples,
14 and chose twelve of them, whom he also named "apostles." They were
Simon (whom Jesus also named Peter), and his brother Andrew, James,
15 John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus,
16 Simon known as the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who
17 proved a traitor. Afterwards Jesus came down the hill with them and took
his stand on a level place. With him were a large crowd of his disciples, and
great numbers of people from the whole of Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast
18 district of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be restored
19 to health. Those, too, who were troubled with foul spirits were cured; and

everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, because a power went out from him which restored them all.

20 Then, raising his eyes and looking at his disciples, Jesus said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

22 Blessed are you when people hate you,

and when they expel you from among them,

and insult you,

and reject your name as an evil thing –

because of the Son of Man.

23 Then indeed you may be glad and dance for joy, for be sure that your reward in heaven will be great; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. But

alas for you who are rich,

for you have had your comforts in full.

25 Alas for you who are sated now,

for you will hunger.

Alas for you who laugh now,

for you will mourn and weep.

26 Alas for you when everyone speaks well of you;

for this is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

27 But to you who hear I say – love your enemies, show kindness to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who insult you. When someone gives one of you a blow on the cheek, offer the other cheek as well; and, when anyone takes away your cloak, do not keep back your coat either. Give to everyone who asks of you; and, when anyone takes away what is yours, do not demand its return. Do to others as you wish them to do to you.

32 If you love only those who love you, what thanks will be due to you? Why, even the outcast love those who love them! For, if you show kindness only to those who show kindness to you, what thanks will be due to you? Even the outcast do that! If you lend only to those from whom you expect to get something, what thanks will be due to you? Even the outcast lend to the outcast in the hope of getting as much in return! But love your enemies, and show them kindness, and lend to them, never despairing. Then

your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the thankless and the bad.

36 Learn to be merciful – even as your Father is merciful. Do not
37 judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will
38 not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and
others will give to you. A generous measure, pressed and shaken
down, and running over, will they pour into your lap; For The
standard you use will be the standard used for you.'

39 Then, speaking in parables, Jesus said, 'Can one blind person guide
40 another? Will they not both fall into a ditch? A student is not above their
41 teacher; yet every finished student will be like their teacher. And why
do you look at the speck of sawdust in someone's eye, while you pay
42 no attention at all to the plank of wood in your own? How can you say
to your friend "Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye," while
you yourself do not see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take out
the plank from your own eye first, and then you will see clearly how to
43 take out the speck in your friend's. There is no such thing as a good tree
bearing worthless fruit, or, on the other hand, a worthless tree bearing
44 good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. People do not gather
45 figs off thorn bushes, nor pick a bunch of grapes off a bramble. A good
person, from the good stores of their heart, brings out what is good;
while a bad person, from their bad stores, brings out what is bad. For
46 what fills someone's heart will rise to their lips. Why do you call me
47 "Master! Master!" and yet fail to do what I tell you? Everyone who comes
to me and listens to my teaching and acts on it – I will show you to whom
48 they may be compared. They may be compared to a person building a
house, who dug, and went deep, and laid the foundation on the rock.
Then, when a flood came, the river swept down on that house, but had
49 no power to shake it, because it had been built well. But those who have
listened and not acted on what they have heard may be compared to a
person who built a house on the ground without any foundation. The
river swept down on it, and the house immediately collapsed; and great
was the crash that followed.'

- 7 When Jesus had brought to a conclusion all that he had then had to say
to the people, he entered Capernaum.
2 A captain in the Roman army had a slave whom he valued, and who was
3 seriously ill – almost at the point of death. And, hearing about Jesus, he
sent some Jewish elders to him, with the request that he would come and

4 save his slave's life. When they found Jesus, they earnestly implored him
5 to do so. 'He deserves the favour from you,' they said, 'For he is devoted
6 to our nation, and himself built our synagogue for us.' So Jesus went with
them. But, when he was no great distance from the house, the captain
sent some friends with the message – 'Do not trouble yourself, Sir; for I
7 am unworthy to receive you under my roof. That was why I did not even
venture to come to you myself; but speak, and let my manservant be cured.
8 For I myself am a man under the orders of others, with soldiers under
me; and if I say to one of them "Go," he goes, and to another "Come," he
9 comes, and to my slave "Do this," he does it.' Jesus was surprised to hear
these words from him; and, turning to the crowd which was following
him, he said, 'I tell you, nowhere in Israel have I met with such faith as
10 this!' And, when the messengers returned to the house, they found the
slave recovered.

11 Shortly after, Jesus went to a town called Nain, his disciples and a great
12 crowd going with him. Just as he approached the gate of the town, there
was a dead man being carried out for burial – an only son, and his mother
was a widow. A large number of the people of the town were with her.
13 When he saw her, the Master was moved with compassion for her, and
14 he said to her, 'Do not weep.' Then he went up and touched the bier, and
the bearers stopped; and Jesus said, 'Young man, I am speaking to you –
15 Rise!' The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus restored him to
16 his mother. Everyone was awe-struck and began praising God. 'A great
prophet has arisen among us,' they said. 'God has visited his people.'

17 And this story about Jesus spread all through Judea, and in the neighbouring countries as well.

18 All these events were reported to John by his disciples. So he summoned
19 two of them, and sent them to the Master to ask – 'Are you "the coming
one," or are we to look for someone else?'

20 When these men found Jesus, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to
you to ask – Are you "the coming one," or are we to look for somebody else?'
21 At that very time Jesus had cured many people of diseases, afflictions, and
22 wicked spirits, and had given many blind people their sight. So his answer
to the question was, 'Go and report to John what you have witnessed and
heard – the blind recover their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are made
clean, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the good news is told
23 to the poor. And blessed is the person who finds no hindrance in me.'

24 When John's messengers had left, Jesus, speaking to the crowds, began
25 to say with reference to John, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to

look at? A reed waving in the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in rich clothing? Why, those who are accustomed to fine clothes and luxury live in royal palaces. What then did you go to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet. This is the man of whom scripture says –

“I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
and he will prepare your way before you.”

28 There is, I tell you, no one born of a woman who is greater than John; and yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.’

29 (All the people, when they heard this, and even the tax-gatherers, having accepted John’s baptism, acknowledged the justice of God. But the Pharisees and the students of the Law, having rejected John’s baptism, frustrated God’s purpose in regard to them.)

31 ‘To what then,’ Jesus continued, ‘should I compare the people of the present generation? What are they like? They are like some little children who are sitting in the marketplace and calling out to one another – “We have played the flute for you, but you have not danced; We have wailed, but you have not wept!” For now that John the Baptist has come, not eating bread or drinking wine, you are saying “He has a demon in him”; and now that the Son of Man has come, eating and drinking, you are saying “Here is a glutton and a wine-drinker, a friend of tax-gatherers and outcasts.”’
35 And yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.’

36 One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to dine with him, so Jesus went to his house and took his place at the table. Just then a woman, who was an outcast in the town, having heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and placed herself behind Jesus, near his feet, weeping. Then she began to make his feet wet with her tears, and she dried them with the hair of her head, repeatedly kissing his feet and anointing them with the perfume.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he said to himself, ‘Had this man been “the prophet,” he would have known who, and what sort of woman, this is who is touching him, and that she is an outcast.’ But, addressing him, Jesus said, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’

41 ‘Pray do so, teacher,’ Simon answered; and Jesus began, ‘There were two people who were in debt to a moneylender; one owed five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. As they were unable to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them, do you think, will love him the more?’

43 ‘I suppose,’ answered Simon, ‘it will be the man to whom he forgave the greater debt.’

44 ‘You are right,’ said Jesus, and then, turning to the woman, he said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I came into your house – you gave me no water for my feet, but she has made my feet wet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You did not give me one kiss, but she, from the moment I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint even my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume. So I tell you, her great love shows that her sins, many as they are, have been pardoned. 48 One who is pardoned little loves little.’ Then he said to the woman, ‘Your sins have been pardoned.’ The other guests began to say to one another, 50 ‘Who is this man who even pardons sins?’ But Jesus said to the woman, ‘Your faith has delivered you; go, and peace be with you.’

8 Shortly afterwards, Jesus went on a journey through the towns and villages, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. With him 2 went the Twelve, as well as some women who had been cured of wicked spirits and of infirmities. They were Mary, known as Mary of Magdala 3 (from whom seven demons had been expelled), and Joanna (the wife of Herod’s steward, Chuza), and Susannah, and many others – all of whom provided for Jesus and his apostles out of their own resources.

4 Once, when a great crowd was collecting, and, when the people of town after town were flocking to Jesus, he spoke to them in the form of a parable, 5 ‘The sower went out to sow his seed; and, as he was sowing, some of the seed fell along the path and was trodden on; and the wild birds ate it up. 6 Other seed fell on rock, and, as soon as it began to grow, because it had 7 no moisture, it withered away. Other seed fell in the middle of brambles, 8 but the brambles grew up with it and choked it entirely. Other seed fell into rich soil, and grew, and gave a hundredfold return.’ After saying this, Jesus cried aloud, ‘Let those who have ears to hear with hear.’

9 His disciples asked Jesus the meaning of this parable. ‘To you,’ he said, 10 ‘the knowledge of the hidden truths of the kingdom of God has been imparted, but to others in parables only, so that though they have eyes they 11 may not see, and though they have ears, they may not understand. This is 12 the parable – The seed is God’s message. By the seed which fell along the path are meant those who hear the message; but then comes the devil and carries away the message from their minds, to prevent their believing it 13 and being saved. By the seed which fell on the rock are meant those who, as soon as they hear the message, welcome it joyfully; but they have no root, and believe it only for a time, and, when the time of temptation comes,

14 they draw back. By that which fell among the brambles are meant those who hear the message, but who, as they go on their way, are completely choked by this world's cares and wealth and pleasures, and bring nothing to perfection. But by that in the good ground are meant those who, having heard the message, keep it in the good, rich soil of their hearts, and patiently yield a return.

15
16 'No one sets light to a lamp and then covers it with a bowl or puts it underneath a couch, but they put it on a lamp-stand, so that anyone who comes in may see the light. Nothing is hidden which will not be brought into the light of day, not ever kept hidden which will not some day become known and come into the light of day. Take care, then, how you listen. For, to all those who have, more will be given; while, from all those who have nothing, even what they seem to have will be taken away.'

19 Presently Jesus' mother and brothers came where he was, but they were
20 not able to join him because of the crowd. So word was brought to him –
"Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."
21 His reply, spoken to them all, was, 'My mother and my brothers are those
who listen to God's teaching and do what it says.'

22 One day about that time, Jesus got into a boat with his disciples and
23 said to them, 'Let us go across the lake.' So they put off. While they were
sailing, Jesus fell asleep. A squall swept down on the lake, and their boat
24 was filling and they were in danger. So the disciples came and roused him.
'Sir, Sir,' they cried, 'we are lost!' Jesus rose and rebuked the wind and the
25 rushing waves, and they fell, and a calm followed. 'Where is your faith?'
he exclaimed. But in great awe and amazement they said to one another,
'Who can this be, who commands even the winds and the waves, and they
obey him?'

26 And they reached the region of the Gerasenes, which is on the opposite
27 side to Galilee; and, on getting ashore, Jesus met a man, who had demons
in him, coming out of the town. For a long time this man had worn no
28 clothing, and he had not lived in a house, but in the tombs. Catching sight
of Jesus, he shrieked out and threw himself down before him, and in a
loud voice exclaimed, 'What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most
29 High God? I beg you not to torment me.' For Jesus was commanding the
foul spirit to come out of the man. On many occasions it had seized him,
and, even when secured with chains and fetters, and watched, he would
break through anything that bound him, and be driven by the demon into
the Wilds.

30 'What is your name?' Jesus asked.

'Legion,' he answered (for many demons had taken possession of him);
31 and the demons begged Jesus not to order them away into the bottomless
32 pit. There was a drove of many pigs close by feeding on the hill-side; and
33 the demons begged Jesus to give them leave to enter into them. Jesus gave
34 them leave. They came out from the man and took possession of the pigs;
35 and the drove rushed down the steep slope into the lake and were drowned.
36 When the men who tended them saw what had happened, they ran away,
37 and carried the news to the town, and to the country round. The people
38 went out to see what had happened, and, when they came to Jesus, they
39 found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting, clothed and
40 in his right mind, at Jesus' feet; and they were awe-struck. Those who had
41 seen it told them how the possessed man had been delivered. Then all the
42 people in the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, for they
43 were terrified. Jesus got into a boat and returned. The man from whom
44 the demons had gone out begged Jesus to let him be with him; but Jesus
45 sent him away. 'Go back to your home,' he said, 'and relate the story of all
46 that God has done for you.' So the man went through the whole town and
47 proclaimed, as he went, all that Jesus had done for him.

40 On his return, Jesus was welcomed by the people; for everyone was
41 looking out for him. And a man named Jairus, who was a synagogue
42 leader, came to Jesus, and threw himself at Jesus' feet, with entreaties that
43 he would come to his house, because his only daughter, who was about
44 twelve years old, was dying. As Jesus was going, the people were pressing
45 closely round him. And a woman, who had suffered from haemorrhage for
46 twelve years, and whom no one could cure, came up behind and touched
47 the tassel of his cloak. Instantly the haemorrhage ceased.

48 'Who touched me?' Jesus asked; and, while everyone was denying having
49 done so, Peter exclaimed, 'Why, Sir, the people are crowding round
50 you and pressing against you!'

51 'Somebody touched me,' said Jesus, 'for I felt that power had gone out
52 from me.' Then the woman, when she saw that she was discovered, came
53 forward trembling, and threw herself down before him; and, in the presence
54 of all the people, she told him her reason for touching him, and that
55 she had been cured instantly.

56 'Daughter,' he said, 'your faith has delivered you. Go, and peace be with
57 you.'

58 Before he had finished speaking, someone came from the house of the
59 synagogue leader and said, 'Your daughter is dead! Do not trouble the
60 teacher further.' But Jesus, hearing this, spoke to the leader, 'Do not be

51 afraid; only have faith, and she will yet be delivered.' When he reached the house, he did not allow anyone to go in with him, except Peter, John, and
52 James, and the child's father and mother. And everyone was weeping and mourning for her.

53 'Do not weep,' Jesus said, 'she is not dead; she is asleep.' They began to
54 laugh at him, for they knew that she was dead. But, taking her by the hand,
55 Jesus said in a loud voice, 'Child, rise!' The child's spirit returned to her,
and she instantly stood up; and Jesus ordered them to give her something
56 to eat. Her parents were amazed, but Jesus impressed on them that they were not to tell anyone what had happened.

9 Jesus called the Twelve together, and gave them power and authority over
2 all demons, as well as to cure diseases. He sent them out as his messengers,
3 to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to work cures. 'Do not,' he said to them, 'take anything for your journey; not even a staff, or a bag, or bread,
4 or any silver, or a change of clothes with you. Whatever house you go to
5 stay in, remain there, and leave from that place. If people do not welcome you, as you leave that town, shake even the dust off your feet, as a protest
6 against them.' Then they set out and went from village to village, telling the good news and curing people everywhere.

7 Prince Herod heard of all that was happening, and was perplexed, because it was said by some that John must be risen from the dead. Some again said that Elijah had appeared, and others that one of the old prophets
9 had risen again. But Herod himself said, 'John I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things?' And he endeavoured to see him.

10 When the apostles returned, they related to Jesus all that they had done. Then Jesus went privately to a town called Bethsaida, taking the apostles
11 with him. But the people recognised him and followed him in crowds; and Jesus welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, while
12 he cured those who were in need of help. The day was drawing to a close, when the twelve came up to him, and said, 'Send the crowd away, so that they may make their way to the villages and farms round about, and find
13 themselves lodgings and provisions, for we are in a lonely spot here.' But Jesus said, 'It is for you to give them something to eat.'

'We have not more than five loaves and two fish,' they answered. 'Unless
14 indeed we are to go and buy food for all these people.' (For the men among them were about five thousand.) 'Get them seated in companies,' was his
15 reply, 'about fifty in each.' This they did, and got all the people seated.
16 Taking the five loaves and the two fish, Jesus looked up to heaven and said the blessing over them. Then he broke them in pieces, and gave them to

- 17 his disciples to set before the people. Everyone had sufficient to eat, and what was left of the broken pieces was picked up – twelve baskets.
- 18 Afterwards, when Jesus was alone, praying, his disciples joined him, and he asked them this question – ‘Who do the people say that I am?’
- 19 ‘John the Baptist,’ was their answer. ‘Others, however, say that you are Elijah, while others say that one of the old prophets has risen again.’
- 20 ‘But you,’ he went on, ‘who do you say that I am?’ And to this Peter answered, ‘The Christ of God.’
- 21 Jesus, however, strictly charged them not to say this to anyone; he told them that the Son of Man must undergo much suffering, and be rejected by the elders, and chief priests, and teachers of the Law, and be put to death, and rise on the third day. And to all present he said, ‘If any one wishes to walk in my steps, they must renounce self, and take up their cross daily, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save their life will lose it, and whoever, for my sake, loses his life – that person will save it. What good does it do someone if, when they have gained the whole world, they have lost or forfeited themselves? Whoever is ashamed of me and of my teaching, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them, when he comes in his glory and the glory of the father and of the holy angels. Indeed, I tell you, some who are standing before me will not know death, until they have seen the kingdom of God.’
- 28 About eight days after speaking these words, Jesus went up the mountain to pray, taking with him Peter, John, and James. As he was praying, the aspect of his face was changed, and his clothing became of a glittering whiteness. And all at once two men were talking with Jesus; they were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in a glorified state, and spoke of his departure, which was destined to take place at Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overpowered by sleep but, suddenly becoming wide awake, they saw Jesus glorified and the two men who were standing beside him.
- 33 And, as Moses and Elijah were passing away from Jesus, Peter exclaimed, ‘Sir, it is good to be here; let us make three tents, one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ He did not know what he was saying; and, while he was speaking, a cloud came down and enveloped them; and they were afraid, as they passed into the cloud; and from the cloud came a voice which said – ‘This is my Son, the Chosen One; him you must hear.’ And, as the voice ceased, Jesus was found alone. The apostles kept silence, and told no one about any of the things that they had seen.

37 The next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great
38 crowd met Jesus. And just then a man in the crowd shouted out, 'Teacher,
39 I entreat you to look at my son, for he is my only child; all at once a spirit
will seize him, suddenly shriek out, and throw him into convulsions until
40 he foams, and will leave him only when he is utterly exhausted. I entreated
your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they could not.'

41 'Faithless and perverse generation!' Jesus exclaimed, 'How long must I
42 be with you and have patience with you? Lead your son here.' While the
boy was coming up to Jesus, the demon dashed him down and threw him
into convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, and cured the boy, and
43 gave him back to his father. And all present were struck with awe at the
majesty of God.

In the midst of the general astonishment at all that Jesus was doing, he
44 said to his disciples, 'Listen carefully to my words. For the Son of Man is
45 destined to be betrayed into the hands of his fellow men.' But the disciples
did not understand the meaning of this; it had been concealed from them
so that they did not see it, and they were afraid to question him as to what
he meant.

46 A discussion arose among the disciples as to which of them was the
47 greatest; and Jesus, knowing of the discussion that was occupying their
48 thoughts, took hold of a little child, and placed it beside him, and then
said to them, 'Anyone who, for the sake of my name, welcomes even this
little child is welcoming me; and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming
him who sent me as his messenger. For whoever is least among you all –
that person is great.'

49 John said, 'Sir, we saw a man driving out demons by using your name,
and we tried to prevent him, because he does not follow you with us.'

50 'None of you must prevent him,' Jesus said to John, 'whoever's not
against you is for you.'

The Journey to Jerusalem

51 As the days before his being taken up to heaven were growing few, Jesus set
his face resolutely in the direction of Jerusalem; and he sent on messengers
52 in advance. On their way, they went into a Samaritan village to make
53 preparations for him, but the people there did not welcome him, because
54 his face was set in the direction of Jerusalem. When James and John saw
this, they said, 'Master, do you wish us to call for fire to come down from

55 the heavens and consume them?' But Jesus turned and rebuked them. And
56 they made their way to another village.

57 And, while they were on their way, a man said to Jesus, 'I will follow
you wherever you go.'

58 'Foxes have holes,' he replied, 'and wild birds their nests, but the Son of
59 Man has nowhere to lay his head.' To another man Jesus said, 'Follow me.'

60 'Let me first go and bury my father,' said the man. But Jesus said, 'Leave
the dead to bury their dead; but go yourself and carry far and wide the
news of the kingdom of God.'

61 'Master,' said another, 'I will follow you; but first let me say goodbye
62 to my family.' But Jesus answered, 'No one who looks back, after putting
their hand to the plough, is fitted for the kingdom of God.'

10 After this, the Master appointed seventy-two other disciples, and sent
them on as his messengers, two and two, in advance, to every town and
place that he was himself intending to visit.

2 'The harvest,' he said, 'is abundant, but the labourers are few. Therefore
pray to the owner of the harvest to send labourers to gather in his harvest.
3 Now, go. Remember, I am sending you out as my messengers like lambs
4 among wolves. Do not take a purse with you, or a bag, or sandals; and do
5 not stop to greet anyone on your journey. Whatever house you go to stay
6 at, begin by praying for a blessing on it. Then, if anyone there is deserving
7 of a blessing, your blessing will rest on him; but if not, it will come back
on yourselves. Remain at that same house, and eat and drink whatever
they offer you; for the worker is worth their wages. Do not keep changing
8 from one house to another. Whatever town you visit, if the people welcome
9 you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick there, and tell people that the
10 kingdom of God is close at hand. But, whatever town you go to visit, if
11 the people do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say "We wipe
off the dust of your town which has clung to Our feet; still, be assured
12 that the kingdom of God is close at Hand." I tell you that the doom of
Sodom will be more bearable on that day than the doom of that town.

13 Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For, if the Miracles which
have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have
14 sat in sackcloth and ashes and repented long ago. Yet the doom of Tyre
15 and Sidon will be more bearable at the judgment than yours. And you,
Capernaum! Will you exalt yourself to heaven? You will be flung down
16 to Hades. Anyone who listens to you is listening to me, and anyone who

rejects you is rejecting me; while the person who rejects me is rejecting him who sent me as his messenger.'

17 When the seventy-two returned, they exclaimed joyfully, 'Master, even
18 the demons submit to us when we use your name.' And Jesus replied, 'I
19 have had visions of Satan, fallen, like lightning from the heavens. Remem-
20 ber, I have given you the power to trample on snakes and scorpions, and
to meet all the strength of the Enemy. Nothing will ever harm you in any
way. Yet do not rejoice in the fact that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice
that your names have been enrolled in heaven.'

21 At that same time, moved to exultation by the Holy Spirit, Jesus said:

'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that, though you have
hidden these things from the wise and learned, you have revealed
them to the childlike! Yes, Father, I thank you that this has seemed
good to you.

22 Everything has been committed to me by my Father; nor does
anyone know who the Son is, except the Father, or who the Father
is, except the Son and those to whom the Son may choose to reveal
him.'

23 Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said to them alone, 'Blessed are the
24 eyes that see what you are seeing; for, I tell you, many prophets and kings
wished for the sight of the things which you are seeing, yet never heard
them.'

25 Just then a Student of the Law came forward to test Jesus further.
'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do if I am to gain eternal life?'

26 'What is said in the Law?' answered Jesus. 'What do you read there?' His
27 reply was –

'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all
your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and
your neighbour as you love yourself.'

28 'You have answered right,' said Jesus, 'Do that, and you will live.' But
29 the man, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, 'And who is my neigh-
bour?'

30 To which Jesus replied, 'A man was once going down from Jerusalem
to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him of
31 everything, and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. As it
chanced, a priest was going down by that road. He saw the man, but
32 passed by on the opposite side. A Levite, too, did the same; he came up to

33 the spot, but, when he saw the man, passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan, traveling that way, came upon the man, and, when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, dressing them with oil and wine, and then put him on his own mule, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. "Take care of him," he said, "and whatever more you may spend I will myself repay you on my way back." Now which, do you think, of these three men,' asked Jesus, 'proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?'

37 'The one that took pity on him,' was the answer; at which Jesus said, 'Go and do the same yourself.'

38 As they continued their journey, Jesus came to a village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him to her house. She had a sister called Mary, 39 who seated herself at the Master's feet, and listened to his teaching; but 40 Martha was distracted by the many preparations that she was making. So she went up to Jesus and said, 'Master, do you approve of my sister's leaving me to make preparations alone? Tell her to help me.'

41 'Martha, Martha,' replied the Master, 'you are anxious and trouble yourself about many things; but only a few are necessary, or rather one. Mary has chosen the good part, and it will not be taken away from her.'

11 One day Jesus was at a certain place praying, and, when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Master, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.'

2 'When you pray,' Jesus answered, 'say –

 "Father,

 May your name be held holy,
 your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day the bread that we will need;

4 and forgive us our sins,

 for we ourselves forgive everyone who wrongs us;
 and take us not into temptation."

5 Jesus also said to them, 'Suppose that one of you who has a friend were to go to him in the middle of the night and say "Friend, lend me three 6 loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house after a journey, and 7 I have nothing to offer him;" And suppose that the other should answer from inside "Do not trouble me; the door is already fastened, and my 8 children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything"; I tell

you that, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is a friend, yet because of his persistence he will rouse himself and give him what he wants.

9 'And so I say to you – Ask, and your prayer will be granted, search, and
10 you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the person
11 who asks receives, everyone who searches finds, and to the person who
12 knocks the door will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks
13 him for a fish, will give him a snake instead, or, if he asks for an egg, will
give him a scorpion? If you, then, naturally wicked though you are, know
how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in
heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

14 Once Jesus was driving out a dumb demon, and, when the demon had
15 gone out, the dumb man spoke. The people were amazed at this; but some
16 of them said, 'He drives out demons by the help of Beelzebul, the chief of
the demons'; while others, to test him, asked him for some sign from the
17 heavens. Jesus himself, however, was aware of what they were thinking,
and said to them, 'Any kingdom wholly divided against itself becomes a
18 desolation; and a divided house falls. So, too, if Satan is wholly divided
against himself, how can his kingdom last? Yet you say that I drive out
19 demons by the help of Beelzebul. But, if it is by Beelzebul's help that I
drive out demons, by whose help is it that your own sons drive them out?
20 Therefore they will themselves be your judges. But, if it is by the hand of
God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God must already be
21 upon you. When a strong man is keeping guard, fully armed, over his own
22 mansion, his property is in safety; but, when one still stronger has attacked
and overpowered him, he takes away all the weapons on which the other
23 had relied, and divides his spoil. Whoever who is not with me is against
me, and the person who does not help me to gather is scattering. No sooner
24 does a foul spirit leave someone, than it passes through places where there
is no water, in search of rest; and finding none, it says "I will go back to
25 the home which I left"; but, on coming there, it finds it unoccupied, swept,
26 and put in order. Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more
wicked than itself, and they go in, and make their home there; and the last
27 state of that person proves to be worse than the first.' As Jesus was saying
28 this, a woman in the crowd, raising her voice, exclaimed, 'Happy was the
mother who bore you and nursed you!' But Jesus replied, 'Rather, happy
are those who listen to God's message and keep it.'

29 As the crowds increased, Jesus began to speak, 'This generation is a wicked generation. It is asking a sign, but no sign will be given it except
30 the sign of Jonah. For, as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so
31 will the Son of Man be to this generation. At the judgment the Queen of the South will rise up with the people of this generation, and will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom
32 of Solomon; and here is more than a Solomon! At the judgment the men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation, and will condemn it, because
33 they repented at Jonah's proclamation; and here is more than a Jonah! No one sets light to a lamp, and then puts it in the cellar or under a basket, but he puts it on the lamp-stand, so that anyone who comes in may see the
34 light. The lamp of the body is your eye. When your eye is unclouded, your whole body, also, is lit up; but, as soon as your eye is diseased, your body,
35 also, is darkened. Take care, therefore, that the inner light is not darkness.
36 If, then, your whole body is lit up, and no corner of it darkened, the whole will be lit up, just as when a lamp gives you light by its brilliance.'

37 As Jesus finished speaking, a Pharisee asked him to breakfast with him,
38 and Jesus went in and took his place at the table. The Pharisee noticed,
39 to his astonishment, that Jesus omitted the ceremonial washing before
40 breakfast. But the Master said to him, 'You Pharisees do, it is true, clean
the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside you yourselves are filled
41 with greed and wickedness. Fools! Did not the maker of the outside make
42 the inside too? Only give away what is in them in charity, and at once you
43 have the whole clean. But alas for you Pharisees! You pay tithes on mint,
rue, and herbs of all kinds, and pass over justice and love to God. These
44 last you ought to have put into practice without neglecting the first. Alas
for you Pharisees! You delight to have the front seat in the synagogues,
and to be greeted in the markets with respect. Alas for you! You are like
unsuspected graves, over which men walk unawares.'

45 Here one of the students of the Law interrupted him by saying, 'Teacher,
46 when you say this, you are insulting us also.' But Jesus went on, 'Alas for
you, too, you students of the Law! You load people with loads that are
47 too heavy to carry, but do not, yourselves, touch them with one of your
fingers. Alas for you! You build the monuments of the prophets whom
48 your ancestors killed. You are actually witnesses to your ancestors' acts
and show your approval of them, because, while they killed the prophets,
49 you build tombs for them. That is why the wisdom of God said – "I will
50 send to them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will persecute
and kill, in order that the blood of all the prophets that has been spilt since

51 the creation of the world may be exacted from this generation – from the blood of Abel down to the blood of Zechariah, who was slain between the altar and the house of God.” Yes, I tell you, it will be exacted from this
52 generation. Alas for you students of the Law! You have taken away the key of the door of knowledge. You have not gone in yourselves and you have hindered those who try to go in.’

53 When Jesus left the house, the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees
54 began to press him hard and question him closely on many subjects, laying traps for him, so as to seize on anything that he might say.

12 Meanwhile the people had gathered in thousands, so that they trod on one another, when Jesus, addressing himself to his disciples, began by saying to them, ‘Be on your guard against the leaven – that is, the hypocrisy
2 – of the Pharisees. There is nothing, however covered up, which will not be
3 uncovered, nor anything kept secret which will not become known. So all that you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear, within closed doors, will be proclaimed on the housetops.
4 To you who are my friends I say, Do not be afraid of those who kill the
5 body, but after that can do no more. I will show you of whom you should be afraid. Be afraid of him who, after killing you, has the power to fling you
6 into Gehenna. Yes, I say, be afraid of him. Are not five sparrows sold for two
7 copper coins? Yet not one of them has escaped God’s notice. No, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not be afraid; you are of more value
8 than many sparrows. Everyone, I tell you, who publicly acknowledges me,
9 the Son of Man, also, will acknowledge before God’s angels; but the person
10 who publicly disowns me will be altogether disowned before God’s angels.
11 Whenever they take you before the synagogue Courts or the magistrates or
12 other authorities, do not be anxious as to how you will defend yourselves,
or what your defence will be, or what you will say; for the Holy Spirit will
show you at the moment what you ought to say.’

13 ‘Teacher,’ a man in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘tell my brother to share the
14 property with me.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘Man, who made me a judge or an
15 arbiter between you?’ And then he added, ‘Take care to keep yourselves free
from every form of covetousness; for even in the height of their prosperity
a person’s true life does not depend on what they have.’

16 Then Jesus told them this parable – ‘There was once a rich man whose
17 land was very fertile; and he began to ask himself “What will I do, for I
have nowhere to store my crops? This is what I will do,” he said; “I will pull

19 down my barns and build larger ones, and store all my grain and my goods
20 in them; and I will say to myself, Now you have plenty of good things put
21 by for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself." But God
said to the man "Fool! This very night your life is being demanded; and as
22 for all you have prepared – who will have it?" So it is with those who lay
by wealth for themselves and are not rich to the glory of God.'

22 And Jesus said to his disciples, 'That is why I say to you, Do not be
anxious about the life here – what you can get to eat; or about your body
23 – what you can get to wear. For life is more than food, and the body than
24 its clothes. Think of the ravens – they neither sow nor reap; they have
neither storehouse nor barn; and yet God feeds them! And how much
25 more precious are you than birds! But which of you, by being anxious, can
26 prolong your life a moment? And, if you cannot do even the smallest thing,
27 why be anxious about other things? Think of the lilies, and how they grow.
They neither toil nor spin; yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his splendour
28 was not robed like one of these. If, even in the field, God so clothes the
grass which is living today and tomorrow will be thrown into the oven,
29 how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith! And you – do not
be always seeking what you can get to eat or what you can get to drink;
30 and do not waver. These are the things for which all the nations of the
31 world are seeking, and your Father knows that you need them. No, seek
32 his kingdom, and these things will be added for you. So do not be afraid,
my little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

33 'Sell what belongs to you, and give in charity. Make yourselves purses
that will not wear out – an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief
34 comes near, or moth works ruin. For where your treasure is, there also
35 will your heart be. Make yourselves ready, with your lamps alight; and be
36 like servants who are waiting for their Master's return from his wedding,
so that, when he comes and knocks, they may open the door for him at
37 once. Happy are those servants whom, on his return, the Master will find
watching. I tell you that he will make himself ready, and have them take
38 their places at the table, and will come and serve them. Whether it is late
at night, or in the early morning that he comes, if he finds all as it should
39 be, then happy are they. This you do know, that, had the owner of the
house known at what time the thief was coming, he would have been on
40 the watch, and would not have let his house be broken into. You must also
prepare, for when you are least expecting him the Son of Man will come.'

41 'Master,' said Peter, 'are you telling this parable with reference to us or
to everyone?'

42 ‘Who, then,’ replied the Master, ‘is that trustworthy steward, the careful man, who will be placed by his master over his establishment, to give them
43 their rations at the proper time? Happy will that servant be whom his
44 master, when he comes home, will find doing this. His master, I tell you,
45 will put him in charge of the whole of his property. But should that servant
46 say to himself “My master is a long time coming,” and begin to beat the
47 menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink and get drunk,
48 that servant’s master will come on a day when he does not expect him,
49 and at an hour of which he is unaware, and will flog him severely and
50 assign him his place among the untrustworthy. The servant who knows his
51 master’s wishes and yet does not prepare and act accordingly will receive
52 many lashes; while one who does not know his master’s wishes, but acts
53 so as to deserve a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone to whom
54 much has been given much will be expected, and from the man to whom
55 much has been entrusted the more will be demanded. I came to cast fire
56 on the earth; and what more can I wish, if it is already kindled? There is a
57 baptism that I must undergo, and how great is my distress until it is over!
58 Do you think that I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but
59 to cause division. For from this time, if there are five people in a house,
60 they will be divided, three against two, and two against three. Father will
61 be opposed to son and son to father, mother to daughter and daughter to
62 mother, mother-in-law to her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law to her
63 mother-in-law.’

64 And to the people Jesus said, ‘When you see a cloud rising in the west,
65 you say at once “There is a storm coming,” and come it does. And when
66 you see that the wind is in the south, you say “It will be burning hot,”
67 and so it proves. Hypocrites! You know how to judge of the earth and the
68 sky; how is it, then, that you cannot judge of this time? Why don’t you
69 yourselves decide what is right? When, for instance, you are going with
70 your opponent before a magistrate, on your way to the court do your best
71 to be quit of him; otherwise he might drag you before the judge, then the
72 judge will hand you over to the bailiff of the court, and the bailiff throw
73 you into prison. You will not, I tell you, come out until you have paid the
74 very last cent.’

75 Just at that time some people had come to tell Jesus about the Galileans,
76 whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. ‘Do you
77 suppose,’ replied Jesus, ‘that, because these Galileans have suffered in this
78 way, they were worse sinners than any other Galileans? No, I tell you; but,
79 unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen men

5 at Siloam on whom the tower fell, killing them all, do you suppose that
they were worse offenders than any other inhabitants of Jerusalem? No, I
tell you; but, unless you repent, you will all perish in the same manner.'

6 And Jesus told them this parable – 'A man, who had a fig tree growing
7 in his vineyard, came to look for fruit on it, but could not find any. So he
said to his gardener "Three years now I have come to look for fruit on this
fig tree, without finding any! Cut it down. Why should it rob the soil?"
8 "Leave it this one year more, Sir," the man answered, "until I have dug
9 round it and manured it. Then, if it bears in future, well and good; but if
not, you can have it cut down."

10 Jesus was teaching on a Sabbath in one of the synagogues, and he saw
11 before him a woman who for eighteen years had suffered from weakness
owing to her having an evil spirit in her. She was bent double, and was
12 wholly unable to raise herself. When Jesus saw her, he called her to him,
13 and said, 'Woman, you are released from your weakness.' He placed his
hands on her, and she was instantly made straight, and began to praise
14 God. But the synagogue leader, indignant that Jesus had worked the cure
on the Sabbath, intervened and said to the people, 'There are six days on
which work ought to be done; come to be cured on one of those, and not
on the Sabbath.'

15 'You hypocrites!' the Master answered him. 'Does not everyone of you
let your ox or your ass loose from its manger, and take it out to drink, on
16 the Sabbath? But this woman, a daughter of Abraham, who has been kept
in bondage by Satan for now eighteen years, ought not she to have been
17 released from her bondage on the Sabbath?' As he said this, his opponents
all felt ashamed; but all the people rejoiced to see all the wonderful things
that he was doing.

18 So Jesus said, 'What is the kingdom of God like? And to what can I liken
it? It is like a mustard seed which a man took and put in his garden. The
seed grew and became a tree, and the wild birds roosted in its branches.'
20 And again Jesus said, 'To what can I liken the kingdom of God? It is like
21 some yeast which a woman took and covered in three pecks of flour, until
the whole had risen.'

22 Jesus went through towns and villages, teaching as he went, and making
23 his way towards Jerusalem. 'Master,' someone asked, 'are there but few in
24 the path of salvation?' And Jesus answered, 'Strive to go in by the small
25 door. Many, I tell you, will seek to go in, but they will not be able, when
once the master of the house has got up and shut the door, while you
begin to say, as you stand outside and knock, "Sir, open the door for us."

26 His answer will be – “I do not know where you come from.” Then you will begin to say “We have eaten and drunk in your presence, and you
27 have taught in our streets,” and his reply will be – “I do not know where you come from. Leave my presence, all you who are living in wickedness.”
28 There, there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham,
Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, while you
29 yourselves are being driven outside. People will come from East and West,
and from North and South, and take their places at the banquet in the
30 kingdom of God. There are some who are last now who will then be first,
and some who are first now who will then be last!”
31 Just then some Pharisees came up to Jesus and said, ‘Go away and leave
32 this place, for Herod wants to kill you.’ But Jesus answered, ‘Go and say to
that fox “Look you, I am driving out demons and will be completing cures
33 today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will have done.” But today and
tomorrow and the day after I must go on my way, because it cannot be that
34 a prophet should meet his end outside Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
You who slays the prophets and stones the messengers sent to you – Oh,
how often have I wished to gather your children round me, as a hen takes
35 her brood under her wings, and you would not come! Verily your house is
left to you desolate! And never, I tell you, will you see me, until you say –
“Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”’

14 On one occasion, as Jesus was going, on a Sabbath into the house of one
2 of the leading Pharisees to dine, they were watching him closely. There
3 he saw before him a man who was suffering from dropsy. ‘Is it allowable,’
said Jesus, addressing the students of the Law and the Pharisees, ‘to work
4 a cure on the Sabbath, or is it not?’ They remained silent. Jesus took hold of
5 the man and cured him, and sent him away. And he said to them, ‘Which
of you, finding that your son or your ox has fallen into a well, will not
6 immediately pull them out on the Sabbath day?’ And they could not make
any answer to that.
7 Observing that the guests were choosing the best places for themselves,
8 Jesus told them this parable – ‘When you are invited by anyone to a wed-
ding banquet, do not seat yourself in the best place. Someone of higher
9 rank might have been invited by your host; and the host who invited you
both will come and say to you “Make room for this person,” and then you
10 will begin in confusion to take the lowest place. No, when you are invited,
go and take the lowest place, so that, when the host who has invited you
comes, he may say to you “Friend, come higher up”; and then you will be
11 honoured in the eyes of all your fellow guests. For everyone who exalts

themselves will be humbled, and everyone who humbles themselves will be exalted.'

12 Then Jesus went on to say to the man who had invited him, 'When you give a breakfast or a dinner, do not ask your friends, or your brothers or sisters, or your relatives, or rich neighbours, because they might invite you in return, and so you should be repaid. No, when you entertain, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; and then you will be happy indeed, since they cannot reward you; for you will be rewarded at the resurrection of the good.'

15 One of the guests heard what he said and exclaimed, 'Happy will be the person who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!' But Jesus said to him, 'A man was once giving a great dinner. He invited many people, and sent his servant, when it was time for the dinner, to say to those who had been invited "Come, for everything is now ready." They all with one accord began to ask to be excused. The first said to the servant "I have bought a field and am obliged to go and look at it. I must ask you to consider me excused." The next said "I have bought five pairs of bullocks, and I am on my way to try them. I must ask you to consider me excused"; while the next said "I am just married, and for that reason I am unable to come." On his return the servant told his master all these answers. Then in anger the owner of the house said to his servant "Go out at once into the streets and alleys of the town, and bring in here the poor, and the crippled, and the blind, and the lame." Presently the servant said "Sir, your order has been carried out, and still there is room." "Go out," the master said, "into the roads and hedgerows, and make people come in, so that my house may be filled; for I tell you all that not one of those people who were invited will taste my dinner."

25 One day, when great crowds of people were walking with Jesus, he turned and said to them, 'If any one comes to me and does not hate their father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yes and even their life, he can be no disciple of mine. Whoever does not carry their own cross, and walk in my steps, can be no disciple of mine. Why, which of you, when you want to build a tower, does not first sit down and reckon the cost, to see if you have enough to complete it? – Otherwise, if you have laid the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will laugh at you, and say "Here is a person who began to build and was not able to finish!" Or what king, when he is setting out to fight another king, does not first sit down and consider if with ten thousand men he is able to meet one who is coming against him with twenty thousand? And if he cannot, then, while the other is still at a distance, he sends envoys and

33 asks for terms of peace. And so with everyone of you who does not bid
34 farewell to all you have – you cannot be a disciple of mine. Yes, salt is good;
but, if the salt itself should lose its strength, what will be used to season
35 it? It is not fit either for the land or for the manure heap. People throw it
away. Let those who have ears to hear with hear!’

15 The tax-gatherers and the outcasts were all drawing near to Jesus to
2 listen to him; but the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law found fault.

‘This man always welcomes outcasts, and takes meals with them!’ they
complained.

3 So Jesus told them this parable – ‘Who among you who has a hundred
4 sheep, and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine out in the
5 open country, and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And, when he has
6 found it, he puts it on his shoulders rejoicing; and, on reaching home, he
calls his friends and his neighbours together, and says “Come and rejoice
7 with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.” So, I tell you, there
will be more rejoicing in heaven over one outcast who repents, than over
8 ninety-nine religious people, who have no need to repent. Or again, what
woman who has ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a
9 lamp, and sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And, when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbours together, and
says “Come and rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost.”
10 So, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of God’s angels over one
outcast who repents.’

11 Then Jesus continued, ‘A man had two sons; and the younger of them
12 said to his father “Father, give me my share of the inheritance.” So the
13 father divided the property between them. A few days later the younger
son got together all that he had, and went away into a distant land; and
14 there he squandered his inheritance by leading a dissolute life. After he has
spent all that he had, there was a severe famine through all that country,
15 and he began to be in actual want. So he went and engaged himself to one
of the people of that country, who sent him into his fields to tend pigs.
16 He even longed to satisfy his hunger with the bean-pods on which the
17 pigs were feeding; and no one gave him anything. But, when he came to
himself, he said “How many of my father’s hired servants have more bread
18 than they can eat, while here am I starving to death! I will get up and go
to my father, and say to him ‘Father, I sinned against heaven and against
19 you; I am no longer fit to be called your son; make me one of your hired
servants.’” And he got up and went to his father. But, while he was still a
long way off, his father saw him and was deeply moved; he ran and threw

21 his arms round his neck and kissed him. "Father," the son said, "I sinned against heaven and against you; I am no longer fit to be called your son;
22 make me one of your hired servants." But the father turned to his servants and said "Be quick and fetch a robe – the very best – and put it on him; give
23 him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet; and bring the fattened calf
24 and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for here is my son who was dead,
and is alive again, was lost, and is found." So they began making merry.
25 Meanwhile the elder son was out in the fields; but, on coming home, when
26 he got near the house, he heard music and dancing, and he called one of
27 the servants and asked what it all meant. "Your brother has come back,"
the servant told him, "and your father has killed the fattened calf, because
28 he has him back safe and sound." This made him angry, and he would
29 not go in. But his father came out and begged him to do so. "No," he said
to his father, "look at all the years I have been serving you, without ever
once disobeying you, and yet you have never given me even a young goat,
30 so that I might have a merrymaking with my friends. But, no sooner has
this son of yours come, who has eaten up your property in the company
31 of prostitutes, than you have killed the fattened calf for him." "Child," the
father answered, "you are always with me, and everything that I have is
32 yours. We could but make merry and rejoice, for here is your brother who
was dead, and is alive; who was lost, and is found."

16 Jesus said to his disciples, 'There was a rich man who had a steward;
2 and this steward was maliciously accused to him of wasting his estate. So
the master called him and said "What is this that I hear about you? Give in
3 your accounts, for you cannot act as steward any longer." "What am I to do,"
the steward asked himself, "now that my master is taking the steward's
4 place away from me? I have not strength to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I
know what I will do, so that, as soon as I am turned out of my stewardship,
5 people may welcome me into their homes." One by one he called up his
master's debtors. "How much do you owe my master?" he asked of the
6 first. "Four hundred and forty gallons of oil," answered the man. "Here is
your agreement," he said; "sit down at once and make it two hundred and
7 twenty." And you, the steward said to the next, "how much do you owe?"
"Seventy quarters of wheat," he replied. "Here is your agreement," the
8 steward said; "make it fifty-six." His master complimented this dishonest
steward on the shrewdness of his action. And indeed men of the world are
shrewder in dealing with their fellow men than those who have the light.
9 And I say to you "Win friends for yourselves with your dishonest money,"
so that, when it comes to an end, there may be a welcome for you into the
10 Eternal Home. The person who is trustworthy in the smallest matter is

trustworthy in a great one also; and the person who is dishonest in the
11 smallest matter is dishonest in a great one also. So, if you have proved
12 untrustworthy with the dishonest money, who will trust you with the
13 true? And, if you have proved untrustworthy with what does not belong
14 to us, who will give you what is really our own? No servant can serve two
masters, for, either they will hate one and love the other, or else they will
attach themselves to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God
and Money.'

14 All this was said within hearing of the Pharisees, who were lovers of
money, and they began to sneer at Jesus.

15 'You,' said Jesus, 'are the ones who justify yourselves before the world,
but God can read your hearts; and what is highly esteemed among people
16 may be an abomination in the sight of God. The Law and the prophets
sufficed until the time of John. Since then the good news of the kingdom
17 of God has been told, and everybody has been forcing their way into it. It
would be easier for the heavens and the earth to disappear than for one
18 stroke of a letter in the Law to be lost. Everyone who divorces his wife
and marries another woman is an adulterer, and the man who marries a
19 divorced woman is an adulterer. There was once a rich man, who dressed
in purple robes and fine linen, and feasted every day in great splendour.
20 Near his gateway there had been laid a beggar named Lazarus, who was
21 covered with sores, and who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell
22 from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. After a
time the beggar died, and was taken by the angels to be with Abraham. The
23 rich man also died and was buried. In Hades he looked up in his torment,
24 and saw Abraham at a distance and Lazarus at his side. So he called out
"Pity me, Father Abraham, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in
25 water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering agony in this flame." "Child,"
answered Abraham, "remember that you in your lifetime received what
you thought desirable, just as Lazarus received what was not desirable;
26 but now he has his consolation here, while you are suffering agony. And
not only that, but between you and us there lies a great chasm, so that
those who wish to pass from here to you cannot, nor can they cross from
27 there to us." "Then, Father," he said, "I beg you to send Lazarus to my
28 father's house – For I have five brothers to warn them, so that they may not
29 come to this place of torture also." "They have the writings of Moses and
30 the prophets," replied Abraham; "let them listen to them." "But, Father
Abraham," he urged, "if someone from the dead were to go to them, they
31 would repent." "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets," answered

Abraham, "they will not be persuaded, even if someone were to rise from the dead."

17 Jesus said to his disciples, 'It is inevitable that there should be temptations but sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting! It would be good for them if they had been flung into the sea with a millstone round their neck, rather than that they should prove a trap even one of these little ones. Be on your guard! If your brother or sister does wrong, rebuke them; but if they repent, forgive them. Even if they wrong you seven times a day, but turns to you every time and says "I am sorry," you must forgive them.'

5 'Give us more faith,' said the apostles to the Master; but the Master said,

6 'If your faith were only like a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it would obey you. Which of you, if he had a servant ploughing, or tending the sheep, would say to him, when he came in from the fields, "Come at once and take your

8 place at the table," Instead of saying "Prepare my dinner, and then make yourself ready and serve me while I am eating and drinking, and after that

9 you will eat and drink yourself"? Does he feel grateful to his servant for

10 doing what he is told? And so with you – when you have done all that you have been told, still say "We are but useless servants; we have done no more than we ought to have done."

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus passed between Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met him. Standing still, some distance off, they called out loudly, 'Jesus! Sir! Pity us!' When Jesus saw them, he said, 'Go and show yourselves to the priest.' And, as they were on their way, they were made clean. One of them, finding he was cured, came back, praising God loudly, and threw himself on his face at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done; and this man was a Samaritan. 'Were not all the ten made clean?' exclaimed Jesus. But the nine – where are they? Were there none to come back and praise God except this foreigner? Get up,' he said to him, 'and go on your way. Your faith has delivered you.'

20 Being once asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was to come, Jesus answered, 'The kingdom of God does not come in a way that can be seen, nor will people say "Look, here it is!" or "There it is!"; for the kingdom of God is within you! The day will come,' he said to his disciples, 'when you will long to see but one of the days of the Son of Man, and will not see it. People will say to you "There he is!" Or "Here he is!" Do not go and follow them. For, just as lightning will lighten and flare from one side of the heavens to the other, so will it be with the Son of Man. But first

he must undergo much suffering, and he must be rejected by the present
26 generation. As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be again in the days of
27 the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being
28 married, up to the very day on which Noah entered the ark, and then the
29 flood came and destroyed them all. So, too, in the days of Lot. People were
30 eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; but, on the very day
31 on which Lot came out of Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from the skies
32 and destroyed them all. It will be the same on the day on which the Son
33 of Man reveals himself. On that day, if a person is on their house-top and
34 their goods in the house, they must not go down to get them; nor again
35 must one who is on the farm turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever is
36 eager to get the most out of their life will lose it; but whoever will lose it
37 will preserve it. On that night, I tell you, of two people on the same bed,
one will be taken and the other left; of two women grinding grain together,
one will be taken and the other left.¹³

'Where will it be, Master?' asked the disciples. 'Where there is a body,'
said Jesus, 'there will the vultures flock.'

18 Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always
2 pray and never despair. 'There was,' he said, 'in a certain town a judge,
3 who had no fear of God nor regard for people. In the same town there was
4 a widow who went to him again and again, and said "Grant me justice
5 against my opponent." For a time the judge refused, but afterwards he
6 said to himself "Although I am without fear of God or regard for people,
yet, as this widow is so troublesome, I will grant her justice, to stop her
7 from plaguing me with her endless visits."' Then the Master added, 'Listen
8 to what this iniquitous judge says! And God – won't he see that his own
people, who cry to him night and day, have justice done them – though
when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

9 Another time, speaking to people who were satisfied that they were reli-
gious, and who regarded everyone else with scorn, Jesus told this parable
10 – 'Two men went up into the Temple Courts to pray. One was a Pharisee
11 and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood forward and began pray-
ing to himself in this way – "God, I thank you that I am not like other
12 men – thieves, rogues, adulterers – or even like this tax-gatherer. I fast

¹³ 17:36 Some later manuscripts add: There will be two in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

- 13 twice a week, and give a tenth of everything I get to God." Meanwhile the tax-gatherer stood at a distance, not venturing even to raise his eyes to heaven, but he kept striking his breast and saying "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." This man, I tell you, went home pardoned, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, while everyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'
- 15 Some of the people were bringing even their babies to Jesus, for him to touch them; but, when the disciples saw it, they began to find fault with those who had brought them. Jesus, however, called the little children to him. 'Let the little children come to me,' he said, 'and do not hinder them, for it is to the childlike that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you, unless a man receives the kingdom of God like a child, he will not enter it at all.'
- 18 And one of the leaders asked Jesus this question – 'Good teacher, what must I do if I am to gain eternal life?'
- 19 'Why do you call me good?' answered Jesus. 'No one is good but God.
- 20 You know the commandments – Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not say what is false about others, Honour your father and your mother.'
- 21 'I have observed all these,' he replied, 'from childhood.' Hearing this,
- 22 Jesus said to him, 'There is one thing still lacking in you; sell everything that you have, and distribute to the poor, and you will have wealth in heaven; then come and follow me.' But the man became greatly distressed
- 23 on hearing this, for he was extremely rich. Seeing this, Jesus said to his
- 25 disciples, 'How hard it is for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier, indeed, for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God!'
- 26 Then who can be saved?" asked those who heard this. But Jesus said,
- 27 'What is impossible with people is possible with God.'
- 28 'But we,' said Peter, 'we left what belonged to us and followed you.'
- 29 'I tell you,' he answered, 'that there is no one who has left house, or wife, or brothers, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,
- 30 who will not receive many times as much in the present, and in the age that is coming eternal life.'
- 31 Gathering the Twelve round him, Jesus said to them, 'Listen! We are going up to Jerusalem; and there everything that is written in the prophets
- 32 will be done to the Son of Man. For he will be given up to the Gentiles,
- 33 mocked, insulted and spat on; they will scourge him, and then put him
- 34 to death; and on the third day he will rise again.' The apostles did not

comprehend any of this. His meaning was unintelligible to them and they did not understand what he was saying.

35 As Jesus was getting near Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside, 36 begging. Hearing a crowd going by, the man asked what was the matter; 37 and, when people told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing, he shouted 38 out, 'Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me!' Those who were in front kept 39 telling him to be quiet, but he continued to call out the louder, 'Son of 40 David, take pity on me!' Then Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. And, when he had come close up to him, Jesus asked him, 41 'What do you want me to do for you?'

42 'Master,' he said, 'I want to recover my sight.' And Jesus said, 'Recover 43 your sight, your faith has delivered you.' Instantly he recovered his sight, and began to follow Jesus, praising God. And all the people, on seeing it, gave glory to God.

19 Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was 2 a man there, known by the name of Zacchaeus, who was a commissioner 3 of taxes and a rich man. He tried to see what Jesus was like; but, being 4 short, he was unable to do so because of the crowd. So he ran on ahead 5 and climbed into a mulberry tree, to see Jesus, for he knew that he must pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, be quick and come down, for I must stop at your house today.' 6 So Zacchaeus got down quickly, and joyfully welcomed him. On seeing 7 this, everyone began to complain, 'He has gone to stay with a man who is 8 an outcast.' But Zacchaeus stood forward and said to the Master, 'Listen, Master! I will give half my property to the poor, and, if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give him back four times as much.'

9 'Salvation has come to this house today,' answered Jesus, 'for even this 10 man is a son of Abraham. The Son of Man has come to search for those who are lost and to save them.'

11 As the people were listening to this, Jesus went on to tell them a parable. He did so because he was near Jerusalem, and because they thought 12 that the kingdom of God was going to be proclaimed at once. He said, 'A nobleman once went to a distant country to receive his appointment to a 13 kingdom and then return. He called ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds of silver each, and told them to trade with them during his absence. 14 But his subjects hated him and sent envoys after him to say "We will not have this man as our king." On his return, after having been appointed king, he directed that the servants to whom he had given his money should

be summoned, so that he might learn what amount of trade they had done.

16 The first came up, and said "Sir, your ten pounds have made a hundred."

17 "Well done, good servant!" exclaimed the master. "As you have proved trustworthy in a very small matter, I appoint you governor over ten towns."

18 When the second came, he said "Your ten pounds, Sir, have produced fifty."

19 So the master said to him "And you I appoint over five towns." Another

20 servant also came and said "Sir, here are your ten pounds; I have kept them

21 put away in a handkerchief. For I was afraid of you, because you are a stern man. You take what you have not planted, and reap what you have not

22 sown." The master answered "Out of your own mouth I judge you, you

23 worthless servant. You knew that I am a stern man, that I take what I have

24 not planted, and reap what I have not sown? Then why didn't you put

25 my money into a bank? And I, on my return, could have claimed it with

26 interest. Take away from him the ten pounds," he said to those standing by,

27 "and give them to the one who has the hundred." "But, Sir," they said, "he

28 has a hundred pounds already!" "I tell you," he answered, "that, to him

29 who has, more will be given, but, from him who has nothing, even what

30 he has will be taken away. But as for my enemies, these men who would

31 not have me as their king, bring them here and put them to death in my

32 presence."

33 After saying this, Jesus went on in front, going up to Jerusalem.

The Last Days

34 It was when Jesus had almost reached Bethphage and Bethany, near the

35 Mount of Olives, that he sent on two of the disciples. 'Go to the village

36 facing us,' he said, 'and, when you get there, you will find a foal tethered,

37 which no one has yet ridden; untie it and lead it here. And, if anybody asks

38 you "Why are you untying it?", you are to say this – "The Master wants

39 it.'" So the two who were sent went and found it as Jesus had told them.

40 While they were untying the foal, the owners asked them – 'Why are you

41 untying the foal?' And the two disciples answered – 'The Master wants it.'

42 Then they led it back to Jesus, and threw their cloaks on the foal and put

43 Jesus on it. As he went along, the people kept spreading their cloaks in

44 the road. When he had almost reached the place where the road led down

45 the Mount of Olives, everyone of the many disciples began in their joy to

46 praise God loudly for all the miracles that they had seen:

47 'Blessed is He who comes –

Our king – in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
And glory on high.'

- 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, restrain your
40 disciples.' But Jesus answered, 'I tell you that if they are silent, the stones
will call out.'
- 41 When he drew near, on seeing the city, he wept over it, and said, 'If only
42 you had known, while yet there was time – even you – the things that
43 make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your sight. For a
44 time is coming when your enemies will surround you with earthworks,
and encircle you, and hem you in on all sides; they will trample you down
and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone on
another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.'
- 45 Jesus went into the Temple Courts and began to drive out those who
46 were selling, saying as he did so, 'Scripture says – "My house will be a
house of prayer"; but you have made it a den of robbers.'
- 47 Jesus continued to teach each day in the Temple Courts; but the chief
priests and teachers of the Law were eager to take his life, and so also were
48 the leaders of the people. Yet they could not see what to do, for the people
all hung on his words.
- 20 On one of these days, when Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple
Courts and telling the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the
2 Law, joined by the elders, confronted him, and addressing him, said, 'Tell
us what authority you have to do these things. Who is it who has given
you this authority?'
- 3 'I, too,' said Jesus in reply, 'will ask you one question. Give me an answer
4 to it. It is about John's baptism – was it of divine or of human origin?' But
5 they began arguing together, 'If we say "divine," he will say "Why didn't
6 you believe him?" But, if we say "human," the people will all stone us,
7 for they are persuaded that John was a prophet.' So they answered that
8 they did not know its origin. 'Then I,' said Jesus, 'refuse to tell you what
authority I have to do these things.'
- 9 But Jesus began to tell the people this parable – 'A man once planted a
vineyard, and then let it out to tenants, and went abroad for a long while.
10 At the proper time he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they could give
him a share of the produce of the vineyard. The tenants, however, beat
11 him and sent him away empty-handed. The owner afterwards sent another
servant; but the tenants beat and insulted this man too, and sent him away

12 empty-handed. He sent a third; but they wounded this man also, and threw
13 him outside. "What should I do?" said the owner of the vineyard. "I will
14 send my son, who is very dear to me. Perhaps they will respect him." But,
15 on seeing him, the tenants consulted with one another. "Here is the heir!"
16 they said. "Let us kill him, and then the inheritance will become ours." So
they threw him outside the vineyard and killed him. Now what will the
owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and put those tenants to
death, and will let the vineyard to others.'

17 'Heaven forbid!' they exclaimed when they heard it. But Jesus looked at
them and said, 'What then is the meaning of this passage? –

"The stone which the builders despised has now itself become the
corner-stone."

18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be dashed to pieces, while any-
one on whom it falls – it will scatter him as dust.'

19 After this the teachers of the Law and the chief priest were eager to lay
hands on Jesus then and there, but they were afraid of the people; for they
20 saw that it was at them that he had aimed this parable. Having watched
their opportunity, they afterwards sent some spies, who pretended to be
good men, to catch Jesus in the course of conversation, and so enable them
21 to give him up to the Governor's jurisdiction and authority. These spies
asked Jesus a question. They said, 'Teacher, we know that you are right in
what you say and teach, and that you do not take any account of a person's
22 position, but teach the way of God honestly; are we right in paying tribute
23 to the Emperor or not?' Seeing through their deceitfulness, Jesus said to
24 them, 'Show me a coin. Whose head and title are on it?'

25 'The Emperor's,' they said; and Jesus replied, 'Well then, pay to the
Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and to God what belongs to God.'

26 They could not lay hold of this answer before the people; and, in their
wonder at his reply, they held their tongues.

27 Presently there came up some Sadducees, who maintain that there is no
28 resurrection. Their question was this – 'Teacher, Moses laid down for us in
his writings that –

"Should a man's married brother die, and should he be childless,
the man should take the widow as his wife, and raise up a family
for his brother."

29 Well, there were once seven brothers; of whom the eldest, after taking a
30 wife, died childless. The second and third brothers both took her as their
31 wife; and so, too, did all seven – dying without children. The woman

32

33 herself was the last to die. About the woman, then – at the resurrection, whose wife is she to be, all seven brothers having had her as their wife?’
34 ‘The men and women of this world,’ said Jesus, ‘marry and are given in
35 marriage; but, for those who are thought worthy to attain to that other
36 world and the resurrection from the dead, there is no marrying or being
37 married, nor indeed can they die again, for they are like angels and, having
shared in the resurrection, they are God’s children. As to the fact that the
dead rise, even Moses indicated that, in the passage about the Bush, when
he calls the Lord –

“The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

38 Now he is not God of dead people, but of living. For in his sight all are
alive.’
39 ‘Well said, teacher!’ exclaimed some of the teachers of the Law, for they did
40 not venture to question him any further. But Jesus said to them, ‘How is it
41 that people say that the Christ is to be David’s son? For David, in the book
42 of Psalms, says himself –

“The Lord said to my lord: Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies as a stool for your feet.”

44 David, then, calls him “lord,” so how is he David’s son?’
45 While all the people were listening, Jesus said to the disciples, ‘Be on your
46 guard against the teachers of the Law, who delight to walk about in long
robes, and like to be greeted in the streets with respect, and to have the
47 best seats in the synagogues, and places of honour at dinner. These are the
men who rob widows of their houses, and make a pretence of saying long
prayers. Their sentence will be all the heavier.’

21 Looking up, Jesus saw the rich people putting their gifts into the chests
2 for the Temple offerings. He saw, too, a widow in poor circumstances
3 putting two small coins into them. ‘I tell you’, he said ‘that this poor
4 widow has put in more than all the others; for everyone else here put in
something from what he had to spare, while she, in her need, has put in
all she had to live on.’

5 When some of them spoke about the Temple being decorated with beauti-
6 ful stones and offerings, Jesus said, ‘As for these things that you are looking
at, a time is coming when not one stone will be left on another here. Every
7 one will be thrown down.’ So the disciples questioned Jesus, ‘But, teacher,
when will this happen? And what sign will there be when this is near?’

8 And Jesus said, ‘See that you are not led astray; for many will take my
name, and come saying “I am He,” and “The time is close at hand.” Do

9 not follow them. And, when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified, for these things must occur first; but the end will not be at once.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and plagues and famines in various places, and there will be terrible appearances and signs in the heavens. Before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you, and they will betray you to synagogues and put you in prison, when you will be brought before kings and governors for the sake of my name.

13 Then will be your opportunity of witnessing for me. Make up your minds, therefore, not to prepare your defence; for I will myself give you words, and a wisdom which all your opponents together will be unable to resist or defy. You will be betrayed even by your parents and brothers and sisters and sisters and relatives and friends, and they will cause some of you to be put to death, and you will be hated by everyone because of me my name.

18 Yet not a single hair of your heads will be lost! By your endurance you will win yourselves life. As soon, however, as you see Jerusalem surrounded by armed camps, then you may know that the hour of her desecration is at hand. Then those of you who are in Judea must take refuge in the mountains, those who are in Jerusalem must leave at once, and those who are in the country places must not go into it. For these are to be the days of vengeance, when all that scripture says will be fulfilled. Alas for pregnant women, and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great suffering in the land, and anger against this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be taken prisoners to every land, and Jerusalem will be under the heel of the Gentiles, until their day is over – as it will be. There will be signs, too, in the sun and moon and stars, and on the earth despair among the nations, in their dismay at the roar of the sea and the surge. People's hearts will fail them through dread of what is coming upon the world; for the forces of the heavens will be convulsed.

27 Then will be seen the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And, when these things begin to occur, look upwards and lift your heads, for your deliverance will be at hand.'

29 Then he taught them a lesson, saying – 'Look at the fig tree and all the other trees. As soon as they shoot, you know, as you look at them, without being told, that summer is near. And so may you, as soon as you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. I tell you that even the present generation will not pass away until all has taken place. 33 The heavens and the earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. Be on your guard or your minds will become dulled by debauches or drunkenness or the anxieties of life, and "that day" will close on you

35 suddenly like a trap. For come it will on all who are living upon the face
36 of the whole earth. Be on the watch at all times, and pray that you may
have strength to escape all that is destined to happen, and to stand in the
presence of the Son of Man.'

37 During the days, Jesus continued to teach in the Temple Courts, but he
went out and spent the nights on the hill called the "Mount of Olives."
38 And all the people would get up early in the morning and come to listen
to him in the Temple Courts.

22 The feast of the unleavened bread, known as the Passover, was near. The
2 chief priest and the teachers of the Law were looking for an opportunity
of destroying Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

3 Now Satan took possession of Judas, who was known as Iscariot, and
4 who belonged to the Twelve; and he went and discussed with the chief
priests and officers in charge at the Temple the best way of betraying Jesus
5 to them. They were glad of this, and agreed to pay him. So Judas assented,
6 and looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus to them, in the absence of a
crowd.

7 When the day of the Festival of the unleavened bread came, on which
8 the Passover lambs had to be killed, Jesus sent forward Peter and John,
saying to them, 'Go and make preparations for our eating the Passover.'

9 'Where do you wish us to make preparations?' they asked. 'Listen,' he
10 answered, 'when you have got into the city, a man carrying a pitcher of
11 water will meet you; follow him into whatever house he enters; and you
will say to the owner of the house "The teacher says to you - Where is the
12 room where I am to eat the Passover with my disciples?" The man will
show you a large upstairs room, set out; there make preparations.'

13 So Peter and John went on, and found everything just as Jesus had told
them, and they prepared the Passover.

14 When the time came, Jesus took his place at the table, and the apostles
15 with him. 'I have most earnestly wished,' he said, 'to eat this Passover with
16 you before I suffer. For I tell you that I will not eat it again, until it has
17 had its fulfilment in the kingdom of God.' Then, on receiving a cup, after
18 saying the thanksgiving, he said, 'Take this and share it among you. For
I tell you that I will not, after today, drink of the juice of the grape, until
19 the kingdom of God has come.' Then Jesus took some bread, and, after
saying the thanksgiving, broke it and gave to them, with the words, 'This

21 is my body.¹⁴ Yet see! The hand of the man who is betraying me is beside
22 me on the table! True, the Son of Man is passing, by the way ordained for
23 him, yet alas for that man by whom he is being betrayed!' Then they began
questioning one another which of them it could be who was going to do
this.

24 And a dispute arose among them as to which of them was to be regarded
25 as the greatest. Jesus, however, said, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over
26 them, and their oppressors are styled "Benefactors." But with you it must
not be so. No, let the greatest among you become like the youngest, and
27 him who leads like him who serves. Which is the greater – the master at
the table or his servant? Is not it the master at the table? Yet I myself am
28 among you as one who serves. You are the men who have stood by me in
29 my trials; and, just as my Father has assigned me a kingdom, I assign you
30 places, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and be
31 seated on twelve thrones as judges of the twelve tribes of Israel. Simon!
32 Simon! listen. Satan demanded leave to sift you all like wheat, but I prayed
for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. And you, when you have
returned to me, are to strengthen the others.'

33 'Master,' said Peter, 'with you I am ready to go both to prison and to
death.'

34 'I tell you, Peter,' replied Jesus, 'the cock will not crow today until you
35 have disowned all knowledge of me three times.' Then he said to them all,
'When I sent you out as my messengers, without either purse, or bag, or
sandals, were you in need of anything?'

36 'No; nothing,' they answered. 'Now, however,' he said, 'he who has a
purse must take it and his bag as well; and he who has not must sell his
37 cloak and buy a sword. For, I tell you, that passage of scripture must be
fulfilled in me, which says – "He was counted among the godless"; indeed
all that refers to me is finding its fulfilment.'

38 'Master,' they exclaimed, 'look, here are two swords!'

'Enough!' said Jesus.

39 Jesus then went out, and made his way as usual to the Mount of Olives,
40 followed by his disciples. And, when he reached the spot, he said to them,
41 'Pray that you may not fall into temptation.' Then he withdrew about a
42 stone's throw, and knelt down and began to pray. 'Father,' he said, 'if it

¹⁴ 22:20 Some later manuscripts add: which is now to be given on your behalf. Do this in memory
of me. And in the same way with the cup, after supper, saying: 'This cup is the New Covenant
made by my blood which is being poured out on your behalf.'

is your pleasure, spare me this cup; only, not my will but your be done.'

43 Presently there appeared to him an angel from heaven, who strengthened
44 him.¹⁵ And, as his anguish became intense, he prayed still more earnestly,
45 while his sweat was like great drops of blood falling on the ground. Then
46 he rose from praying, and came to the disciples and found them sleeping
47 for sorrow. 'Why are you asleep?' he asked them. 'Rise and pray so that you
48 don't fall into temptation.' While he was still speaking, a crowd appeared
49 in sight, led by the man called Judas, who was one of the Twelve. Judas
50 approached Jesus, to kiss him; at which Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it by
51 a kiss that you betray the Son of Man?' But when those who were round
52 Jesus saw what was going to happen, they exclaimed, 'Master, should we
53 use our swords?' And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut
54 off his right ear; at which Jesus said, 'Let me at least do this'; and, touching
55 his ear, he healed the wound. Then, turning to the chief priests and officers
56 in charge at the Temple and the elders, who had come for him, he said,
57 'Have you come out, as if after a robber, with swords and clubs? When I
58 was with you day after day in the Temple Courts, you did not lay hands
59 on me; but now your time has come, and the power of darkness.'

54 Those who had taken Jesus prisoner took him away into the house of the
55 high priest. Peter followed at a distance. But, when they had lit a fire in the
56 centre of the courtyard and had all sat down there, Peter seated himself
57 in the middle of them. Presently a maid-servant saw him sitting near the
58 blaze of the fire. She looked carefully at him and said, 'Why, this man was
59 one of his companions!' But Peter denied it. 'I do not know him,' he replied.
60 A little while afterwards someone else – a man – saw him and said, 'Why,
61 you are one of them!'

62 'No,' Peter said, 'I am not.' About an hour later another man declared
63 positively, 'This man also was certainly with him. Why, he is a Galilean!'
64 But Peter said, 'I do not know what you are speaking about.' Instantly,
65 while he was still speaking, a cock crowed. And the Master turned and
66 looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the words that the Master had said
67 to him – 'Before a cock has crowed today, you will disown me three times';
68 and he went outside and wept bitterly.

69 The men who held Jesus kept making sport of him and beating him.
70 They blindfolded him and then questioned him. 'Now play the prophet,'

¹⁵ 22:43 Some later manuscripts do not contain verses 43 or 44.

65 they said. ‘Who was it that struck you?’ And they heaped many other insults on him.

66 At daybreak the assembly of the elders of the people met – both the chief priests and the teachers of the Law – and took Jesus before their High Council. ‘If you are the Christ,’ they said, ‘tell us so.’

67 ‘If I tell you,’ replied Jesus, ‘you will not believe me; and, if I question you, you will not answer. But from this hour the Son of Man will be seated on the right hand of God Almighty.’

70 ‘Are you, then, the Son of God?’ they all asked. ‘It is true,’ answered Jesus, ‘I am.’ At this they exclaimed, ‘Why do we want any more evidence? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!’

23 Then they all rose in a body and led Jesus before Pilate. And they began 2 to accuse him, ‘This is a man whom we found misleading our people, preventing them from paying taxes to the Emperor, and giving out that he himself is “Christ, a king.”’

3 ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ Pilate asked him. ‘It is true,’ replied Jesus. 4 But Pilate, turning to the chief priests and the people, said, ‘I do not see 5 anything to find fault with in this man.’ But they insisted, ‘He is stirring up 6 the people by his teaching all through Judea; he began with Galilee and 7 has now come here.’ Hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean; 8 and, having satisfied himself that Jesus came under Herod’s jurisdiction, 9 he sent him to Herod, who also was at Jerusalem at the time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly pleased, for he had been wanting to see him 10 for a long time, having heard a great deal about him; and he was hoping 11 to see some sign given by him. So he questioned him at some length, but 12 Jesus made no reply. Meanwhile the chief priests and the teachers of the 13 Law stood by and vehemently accused him. And Herod, with his soldiers, 14 treated Jesus with scorn; he mocked him by throwing a gorgeous robe 15 round him, and then sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became 16 friends that very day, for before that there had been ill-will between them.

13 So Pilate summoned the chief priests, and the leading men, and the 14 people, and said to them, ‘You brought this man before me charged with 15 misleading the people; and yet, for my part, though I examined him before 16 you, I did not find this man to blame for any of the things of which you accuse him; nor did Herod either; for he has sent him back to us. And, as a fact, he has not done anything deserving death; so I will have him scourged, and then release him.’¹⁶ But they began to shout as one man,

¹⁶ 23:17 Some later manuscripts add: He had to release someone to them at the feast.

19 'Kill this fellow, but release Barabbas for us.' (Barabbas was a man who had been put in prison for a riot that had broken out in the city and for murder.) Pilate, however, wanting to release Jesus, called to them again; 20 but they kept calling out, 'Crucify, crucify him!'

21 'Why, what harm has this man done?' Pilate said to them for the third time. 'I have found nothing in him for which he could be condemned to death. So I will have him scourged, and then release him.' But they persisted in loudly demanding his crucifixion; and their clamour gained 22 the day. Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released 23 the man who had been put in prison for riot and murder, as they demanded, 24 and gave Jesus up to be dealt with as they pleased.

25 And, as they were leading Jesus away, they laid hold of Simon from 26 Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and they put the cross 27 on his shoulders, for him to carry it behind Jesus. There was a great crowd 28 of people following him, many being women who were beating their 29 breasts and wailing for him. So Jesus turned and said to them, 'Women of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your 30 children. A time, I tell you, is coming, when it will be said – "Happy are 31 the women who are barren, and those who have never borne children or 32 nursed them!"' At that time people will begin to say to the mountains "Fall 33 on us," and to the hills "Cover us." If what you see is done while the tree 34 is green, what will happen when it is dry?' There were two others also, 35 criminals, led out to be executed with Jesus. When they had reached the place called "The Skull," there they crucified Jesus and the criminals, one 36 on the right, and one on the left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; 37 they do not know what they are doing.' His clothes they divided among 38 them by casting lots. Meanwhile the people stood looking on. Even the leading men said with a sneer, 'He saved others, let him save himself, if he is God's Christ, his chosen one.' The soldiers, too, came up in mockery, bringing him common wine, and saying as they did so, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.' Above him were the words –

"THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

39 One of the criminals who were hanging beside Jesus railed at him. 40 'Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us,' he said. But the other rebuked him. 'Haven't you,' he said, 'any fear of God, now that you are 41 under the same sentence? And we justly so, for we are only reaping our 42 deserts, but this man has not done anything wrong. Jesus,' he went on,

43 'do not forget me when you have come to your kingdom.' And Jesus answered, 'I tell you, this very day you will be with me in Paradise.'

44 It was nearly midday, when a darkness came over the whole country, lasting
45 until three in the afternoon, the sun being eclipsed; and the Temple curtain
46 was torn down the middle. Then Jesus, with a loud cry, said, 'Father, into
47 your hands I commit my spirit.' And with these words he expired. The
Roman captain, on seeing what had happened, praised God, exclaiming,
48 'This must have been a good man!' All the people who had collected to
see the sight watched what occurred, and then went home beating their
49 breasts. All the friends of Jesus had been standing at a distance, with the
women who accompanied him from Galilee, watching all this.

50 Now there was a man of the name of Joseph, who was a member of the
51 Council, and who bore a good and upright character. (This man had not
assented to the decision and action of the Council.) He belonged to Ramah,
52 a town in Judea, and lived in expectation of the kingdom of God. He now
53 went to see Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus; and, when he had taken
it down, he wrapped it in a linen sheet, and laid him in a tomb cut out of
54 stone, in which no one had yet been buried. It was the Preparation day, and
55 just before the Sabbath began. The women who had accompanied Jesus
from Galilee followed, and saw the tomb and how the body of Jesus was
56 laid, and then went home, and prepared spices and perfumes.

The Risen Life

24 During the Sabbath they rested, as directed by the commandment. But
very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, taking with
2 them the spices that they had prepared. They found that the stone had
3 been rolled away from the tomb; and, on going into it, they could not find
4 the body¹⁷. While they were at a loss to account for this, all at once two
5 men stood beside them, in dazzling clothing. But, when in their fear the
women bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why are
you looking among the dead for him who is living?¹⁸ Remember how he
7 spoke to you before he left Galilee – How he said that the Son of Man
must be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, and be crucified, and rise
8 again on the third day.' Then they remembered the words of Jesus, and, on
9

¹⁷ 24:3 Some later manuscripts add: of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁸ 24:6 Some later manuscripts add: He is not here but he has risen.

returning from the tomb, they told all this to the Eleven and to all the rest.

10 There were Mary of Magdala, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James.

11 The other women, too, spoke about this to the apostles. What they said seemed to the apostles mere nonsense, and they did not believe them.¹⁹

13 It happened that very day that two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem, talking together, as they went, about all that had just taken place. While they were talking about these things and discussing them, Jesus himself came up and went on their way with them; but their eyes were blinded so that they could not recognise him. ‘What is this that you are saying to each other as you walk along?’ Jesus asked. They stopped, with sad looks on their faces, and then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, said to Jesus, ‘Are you staying by yourself at Jerusalem, that you have not heard of the things that have happened there within the last few days?’

19 ‘What things do you mean?’ asked Jesus. ‘Why, about Jesus of Nazareth,’ they answered, ‘who, in the eyes of God and all the people, was a prophet, whose power was felt in both his words and actions; and how the chief priests and our leading men gave him up to be sentenced to death, and afterwards crucified him. But we were hoping that he was the Destined Deliverer of Israel; yes, and besides all this, it is now three days since these things occurred. And what is more, some of the women among us have greatly astonished us. They went to the tomb at daybreak And, not finding the body of Jesus there, came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he was alive. So some of our number went to the tomb and found everything just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.’

25 Then Jesus said to them, ‘Foolish men, slow to accept all that the prophets have said! Was not the Christ bound to undergo this suffering before entering into his glory?’ Then, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them all through the scriptures the passages that referred to himself. When they got near the village to which they were walking, Jesus appeared to be going further; but they pressed him not to do so. ‘Stay with us,’ they said, ‘for it is getting towards evening, and the sun is already low.’ So Jesus went in to stay with them. After he had taken his place at the table with them, he took the bread and said the blessing, and broke

¹⁹ 24:12 Some later manuscripts add: Peter got up and ran to the tomb. Stooping down he saw nothing but the linen wrappings, and he went away, wondering to himself at what had taken place.

31 it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised
32 him; but he disappeared from their sight. ‘How our hearts glowed,’ the
disciples said to each other, ‘while he was talking to us on the road, and
when he explained the scriptures to us!’

33 Then they immediately got up and returned to Jerusalem, where they
34 found the Eleven and their companions all together, who told them that the
35 Master had really risen, and had appeared to Simon. So they also related
what had happened during their walk, and how they had recognised Jesus
36 at the breaking of the bread. While they were still talking about these
37 things, Jesus himself stood among them.²⁰ In their terror and alarm they
38 thought they saw a ghost, but Jesus said to them, ‘Why are you so startled?
39 And why do doubts arise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet,
and you will know that it is I. Feel me, and look at me, for a ghost has not
41 flesh and bones, as you see that I have.’²¹ While they were still unable to
believe it all, overcome with joy, and were wondering if it were true, Jesus
42 said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They handed him a piece of
43 broiled fish, and he took it and ate it before their eyes. ‘This is what I told
44 you,’ he said, ‘when I was still with you – that everything that had been
written about me in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms, must
be fulfilled.’

45 Then he enabled them to understand the meaning of the scriptures,
46 saying to them, ‘Scripture says that the Christ will suffer, and that he
47 will rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for
forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed on his authority to all the nations –
48 beginning at Jerusalem. You yourselves are to be witnesses to all this. And
49 now I am myself about to send you that which my Father has promised.
But you must remain in the city until you have been invested with power
from above.’

50 After this, Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and there raised his
51 hands and blessed them. As he was in the act of blessing them, he left
52 them.²² They returned²³ to Jerusalem full of joy; and they were constantly
53 in the Temple Courts, blessing God.

²⁰ 24:36 Some later manuscripts add: and said, ‘Peace be with you.’

²¹ 24:40 Some later manuscripts add: After saying this he showed them his hands and his feet.

²² 24:51 Some later manuscripts add: and was carried up into heaven.

²³ 24:52 Some later manuscripts read: They bowed to the ground before him and returned.

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO JOHN

Introduction

- 1 In the beginning the Word was;
and the Word was with God;
and the Word was God.
- 2 He was in the beginning with God;
through him all things came into being,
and nothing came into being apart from him.
- 3 That which came into being in him was life;
and the life was the light of humanity;
- 4 and the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness never overpowered it.
- 5 There appeared a man sent from God, whose name was John;
he came as a witness – to bear witness to the light
so that through him everyone might believe.
- 6 He was not the light,
but he came to bear witness to the light.
- 7 That was the true light which enlightens everyone coming into the world.
- 8 He was in the world;
and through him the world came into being –
yet the world did not know him.
- 9 He came to his own –
yet his own did not receive him.
- 10 But to all who did receive him he gave power to become children of God –
to those who believe in his name.

- 13 For not to natural conception, nor to human instincts, nor to human will did they owe the new life,
but to God.
- 14 And the Word became human, and lived among us,
(We saw his glory – the glory of the Only Son sent from the Father),
full of love and truth.
- 15 (John bears witness to him; he cried aloud – for it was he who spoke –
'He who is coming after me is now before me,
for he was ever first');
- 16 out of his fullness we have all received some gift,
gift after gift of love;
- 17 for the Law was given through Moses,
love and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- 18 No one has ever yet seen God;
God the Only Son, who is ever with the Father –
He has revealed him.

The Preparation

- 19 When the religious authorities in Jerusalem sent some Priests and Levites
20 to ask John – 'Who are you?', he told them clearly and simply, 'I am not the Christ.'
- 21 'What then?' they asked. 'Are you Elijah?'
'No,' he said, 'I am not.'
'Are you "the prophet"?' He answered, 'No.'
- 22 'Who then are you?' they continued. 'Tell us so that we have an answer to give to those who have sent us. What do you say about yourself?'
- 23 'I,' he answered, 'am –
"The voice of one crying aloud in the wilderness: make a straight road for the Lord",
as the prophet Isaiah said.'
- 24 These men had been sent from the Pharisees; and their next question
25 was, 'Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ or Elijah or "the prophet"?' John's answer was – 'I baptize with water, but among you stands
27 one whom you do not know; he is coming after me, yet I am not worthy

28 even to unfasten his sandal.' This happened at Bethany, across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him, and exclaimed, 'Here
30 is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! I was taking
about him when I said "After me there is coming a man who ranks ahead
31 of me, because before I was born he already was." I did not know who he
was, but I have come baptizing with water to make him known to Israel.'

32 John also said:

33 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and rest on him. I
myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water, he
said to me "He on whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on
34 him – he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." This I have seen myself,
and I have declared my belief that he is the Son of God.'

35 The next day, when John was standing with two of his disciples, he
36 looked at Jesus as he passed and exclaimed, 'There is the Lamb of God!'
37 The two disciples heard him say this, and followed Jesus. But Jesus turned
38 round, and saw them following. 'What are you looking for?' he asked.
'Rabbi,' they answered (or, as we should say, "Teacher"), 'where are you
staying?'

39 'Come, and you will see,' he replied. So they went, and saw where he
was staying, and spent that day with him.

40 It was then about four in the afternoon. One of the two, who heard
what John said and followed Jesus, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found
42 the Messiah!' (a word which means "Christ," or "Consecrated".) Then
he brought him to Jesus. Looking straight at him, Jesus said, 'You are
Simon, the son of John; you will be called Cephas' (which means "Peter,"
43 or "Rock"). The following day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. He found
44 Philip, and said to him, 'Follow me.' Philip was from Bethsaida, the same
45 town as Andrew and Peter. He found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have
found him of whom Moses wrote in the Law, and of whom the prophets
also wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, Joseph's son!'

46 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' asked Nathanael. 'Come
47 and see,' replied Philip. When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him,
he said, 'Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit!'

48 'How do you know me?' asked Nathanael. 'Even before Philip called
you,' replied Jesus, 'when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.'

49 'Rabbi,' Nathanael exclaimed, 'you are the Son of God, you are king of
Israel!'

50 ‘Do you believe in me,’ asked Jesus, ‘because I told you that I saw you
51 under the fig tree? You will see greater things than those! In truth I tell you,’
he added, ‘you will all see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending
and descending on the Son of Man.’

The Work in Judaea, Galilee and Samaria

2 Two days after this there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Jesus’
2 mother was there. Jesus himself, too, with his disciples, was invited to the
3 wedding. And, when the wine ran short, his mother said to him, ‘They
have no wine left.’

4 ‘What do you want with me?’ answered Jesus. ‘My time has not come
5 yet.’ His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ There
6 were standing there six stone water-jars, in accordance with the Jewish
rule of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

7 Jesus said to the servants, ‘Fill the water-jars with water.’ And, when
8 they had filled them to the brim, he added, ‘Now take some out, and carry
9 it to the Master of the feast.’ The servants did so. And, when the Master of
the feast had tasted the water which had now become wine, not knowing
10 where it had come from – although the servants who had taken out the
water knew – He called the groom and said to him, ‘Everyone puts good
wine on the table first, and inferior wine afterwards, when his guests have
11 drunk freely; but you have kept back the good wine till now!’ This, the first
sign of his mission, Jesus gave at Cana in Galilee, and by it revealed his
glory; and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this, Jesus went down to Capernaum – he, his mother, his brothers,
and his disciples; but they stayed there only a few days.

13 Then, as the Jewish Passover was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In
14 the Temple Courts he found people who were selling bullocks, sheep, and
15 pigeons, and the money changers at their counters. So he made a whip
of cords, and drove them all out of the Temple Courts, and the sheep
and bullocks as well; he scattered the money of the money changers, and
16 overturned their tables, and said to the pigeon-dealers, ‘Take these things
17 away. Do not turn my Father’s house into a market house.’ His disciples
remembered that scripture said – “Passion for your house will consume
me.”

18 Then some of the religious authorities asked Jesus, 'What sign are you going to show us, since you act in this way?'

19 'Destroy this temple,' was his answer, 'and I will raise it in three days.'

20 'This Temple,' the authorities replied, 'has been forty-six years in building, and are you going to "raise it in three days"?' But Jesus was speaking of his body as a temple. Afterwards, when he had risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the passage of scripture, and the words which Jesus had spoken.

23 While Jesus was in Jerusalem, during the Passover Festival, many came to trust in him, when they saw the signs of his mission that he was giving.

24 But Jesus did not put himself in their power because he knew what was in their hearts. He did not need anyone to tell him about people because he could read what was in them.

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who was a leading man among his people. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one could give such signs as you are giving, unless God were with him.'

3 'In truth I tell you,' exclaimed Jesus, 'unless a person is reborn, they cannot see the kingdom of God.'

4 'How can a person,' asked Nicodemus, 'be born when they are old? Can they be born a second time?'

5 'In truth I tell you,' answered Jesus, 'unless a person owes their birth to water and Spirit, they cannot enter the kingdom of God. All that owes its birth to human nature is human, and all that owes its birth to the Spirit is spiritual. Do not wonder at my telling you that you all need to be reborn.'

8 The wind blows wherever it wants, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from, or where it goes; it is the same with everyone who owes his birth to the Spirit.'

9 'How can that be?' asked Nicodemus. 'What! You a teacher of Israel,' exclaimed Jesus, 'and yet do not understand this! In truth I tell you that we speak of what we know, and state what we have seen; and yet you do not accept our statements. If, when I tell you earthly things, you do not believe me, how will you believe me when I tell you of heavenly things?'

13 No one has ascended to heaven, except him who descended from heaven – the Son of Man himself. And, as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.'

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, so that everyone
17 who believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life. For God did not
send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world
18 might be saved through him. The person who believes in him escapes
condemnation, while the person who does not believe in him is already
19 condemned, because they have not believed in the only Son of God. The
ground of their condemnation is this, that though the light has come into
the world, people preferred the darkness to the light, because their actions
20 were wicked. For the person who lives an evil life hates the light, and will
21 not come to it, fearing that their actions will be exposed; but the person
who lives by the truth comes into the light, so it can be clearly seen that
God is in all they do.

22 After this, Jesus went with his disciples into the country parts of Judea;
23 and there he stayed with them, and baptized. John, also, was baptizing
at Aenon near Salim, because there were many streams there; and people
24 were constantly coming and being baptized. (For John had not yet been
25 imprisoned). Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples
26 and a fellow Jew on the subject of purification; and the disciples came to
John and said, 'Rabbi, the man who was with you on the other side of
the Jordan, and to whom you have yourself borne testimony – he, also, is
27 baptizing, and everybody is going to him.' John's answer was – 'A person
28 can gain nothing but what is given them from heaven. You are yourselves
witnesses that I said "I am not the Christ," but "I have been sent before
29 him as a messenger." It is the groom who has the bride; but the groom's
friend, who stands by and listens to him, is filled with joy when he hears
30 the groom's voice. This joy I have felt to the full. He must become greater,
and I less.'

31 He who comes from above is above all others; but a child of earth is
earthly, and his teaching is earthly, too. He who comes from heaven is
32 above all others. He states what he has seen and what he heard, and yet
33 no one accepts his statement. They who did accept his statement confirm
34 the fact that God is true. For he whom God sent as his messenger gives
35 us God's own teaching, for God does not limit the gift of the Spirit. The
36 Father loves his Son, and has put everything in his hands. The person who
believes in the Son has eternal life, while a person who rejects the Son will
not even see that life, but remains under God's displeasure.

4 Now, when the Master heard that the Pharisees had been told that he
2 was making and baptizing more disciples than John (Though it was not

3 Jesus himself, but his disciples, who baptized), he left Judea, and set out
4 again for Galilee. He had to pass through Samaria, and, on his way, he
5 came to a Samaritan town called Shechem, near the plot of land that Jacob
6 gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's Spring was there, and Jesus, being tired
7 after his journey, sat down beside the spring, just as he was. It was then
8 about midday. A woman of Samaria came to draw water; and Jesus said
9 to her – 'Give me some to drink,' For his disciples had gone into the town
10 to buy food. 'How is it,' replied the Samaritan woman, 'that you who are
a Jew ask for water from a Samaritan woman like me?' (For Jews do not
associate with Samaritans). 'If you knew of the gift of God,' replied Jesus,
'and who it is that is saying to you "Give me some water," you would have
asked him, and he would have given you living water.'

11 'You have no bucket, Sir, and the well is deep,' she said. 'Where did you
12 get that "living water?" Surely you are not greater than our ancestor Jacob
who gave us the well, and used to drink from it himself, and his sons, and
his cattle!'

13 'All who drink of this water,' replied Jesus, 'will be thirsty again; but
14 whoever once drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst any
more; but the water that I will give him will become a spring welling up
within him – a source of eternal life.'

15 'Give me this water, Sir,' said the woman, 'so that I may not be thirsty,
nor have to come all the way here to draw water.'

16 'Go and call your husband,' said Jesus, 'and then come back.'

17 'I have no husband,' answered the woman. 'You are right in saying "I
18 have no husband,'" replied Jesus, 'For you have had five husbands, and
the man with whom you are now living is not your husband; in saying
that, you have spoken the truth.'

19 'I see, Sir, that you are a prophet!' exclaimed the woman. 'It was on this
20 mountain that our ancestors worshiped; and yet you Jews say that the
proper place for worship is in Jerusalem.'

21 'Believe me,' replied Jesus, 'a time is coming when it will be neither
22 on this mountain nor in Jerusalem that you will worship the Father. You
Samaritans do not know what you worship; we know what we worship, for
23 salvation comes from the Jews. But a time is coming, indeed it is already
here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father spiritually and
24 truly; for such are the worshipers that the Father desires. God is Spirit; and
those who worship him must worship spiritually and truly.'

25 'I know,' answered the woman, 'that the Messiah, who is called the
Christ, is coming; when once he has come, he will tell us everything.'

26 ‘I am he,’ Jesus said to her, ‘I who am speaking to you.’ At this moment his
27 disciples came up, and were surprised to find him talking with a woman;
28 but none of them asked “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking
29 with her?” So the woman, leaving her pitcher, went back to the town, and
30 said to the people, ‘Come and see someone who has told me everything
31 that I have done. Can he be the Christ?’ And the people left the town and
32 went to see Jesus.

33 Meanwhile the disciples kept saying to him, ‘Take something to eat,
34 Rabbi.’

35 ‘I have food to eat,’ he answered, ‘of which you know nothing.’
36 ‘Can anyone have brought him anything to eat?’ the disciples said to
37 one another. ‘My food,’ replied Jesus, ‘is to do the will of him who sent
38 me, and to complete his work. Don’t you say that it still wants four months
39 to harvest? Why, look up, and see how white the fields are for harvest!
40 Already the reaper is receiving wages and gathering in sheaves for eternal
41 life, so that sower and reaper rejoice together. For here the proverb holds
42 good – “One sows, another reaps.” I have sent you to reap that on which
43 you have spent no labour; others have laboured, and you have reaped the
44 results of their labour.’

45 Many from that town came to believe in Jesus – Samaritans though they
46 were – because the woman had said, “He has told me everything that I
47 have done.” And, when these Samaritans had come to Jesus, they begged
48 him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. But far more came
49 to believe in him because of what he said himself, and they said to the
50 woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you say that we believe in him, for
51 we have heard him ourselves and know that he really is the Saviour of the
52 world.’

53 After these two days Jesus went on to Galilee; for he himself declared
54 that “a prophet is not honoured in his own country.” When he entered
55 Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, for they had seen all that he did at
56 Jerusalem during the Festival, at which they also had been present. So
57 Jesus came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into
58 wine. Now there was one of the king’s officers whose son was lying ill at
59 Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had returned from Judea to
60 Galilee, he went to him, and begged him to come down and cure his son;
61 for he was at the point of death. Jesus answered, ‘Unless you all see signs
62 and wonders, you will not believe.’

63 ‘Sir,’ said the officer, ‘come down before my child dies.’ And Jesus an-
64 swered, ‘Go, your son is living.’ The man believed what Jesus said to him,

51 and went; and, while he was on his way down, his servants met him, and
52 told him that his child was living. So he asked them at what time the boy
began to get better. ‘It was yesterday, about one o’clock,’ they said, ‘that the
53 fever left him.’ By this the father knew that it was at the very time when
Jesus had said to him “Your son is living”; and he himself, with all his
54 household, believed in Jesus. This was the second occasion on which Jesus
gave a sign of his mission on coming from Judea to Galilee.

5 Sometime after this there was a Jewish Festival; and Jesus went up to
2 Jerusalem. There is in Jerusalem, near the sheep-gate, a bath with five
3 colonnades round it. It is called in Hebrew “Bethesda.” In these colonnades
5 a large number of sick people were lying – blind, lame, and crippled.²⁴ One
6 man who was there had been crippled for thirty-eight years. Jesus saw the
man lying there, and, finding that he had been in this state a long time,
said to him, ‘Do you wish to be cured?’

7 ‘I have no one, Sir,’ the sick man answered, ‘to put me into the bath when
there is a troubling of the water, and, while I am getting to it, someone else
steps down before me.’

8 ‘Stand up,’ said Jesus, ‘take up your mat, and walk.’ The man was cured
9 immediately, and took up his mat and began walking. Now it was the
10 Sabbath. So the religious authorities said to the man who had been cured,
‘This is the Sabbath; you must not carry your mat.’

11 ‘The man who cured me,’ he answered, ‘said to me “Take up your mat
and walk.”’

12 ‘Who was it,’ they asked, ‘that said to you “Take up your mat and walk”?’
13 But the man who had been restored did not know who it was; for Jesus had
14 moved away, because there was a crowd there. Afterwards Jesus found
the man in the Temple Courts, and said to him, ‘You are cured now; do not
sin again, or something worse may happen to you.’

15 The man went away, and told the authorities that it was Jesus who had
16 cured him. And that was why they began to persecute Jesus – because he
17 did things of this kind on the Sabbath. But Jesus replied, ‘My Father works
18 to this very hour, and I work also.’ This made the authorities all the more
eager to kill him, because not only was he doing away with the Sabbath,
but he actually called God his own Father – putting himself on an equality
with God.

²⁴ 5:4 Some later manuscripts add: for an angel of the Lord went down at certain times into the pool, and stirred up the water. The first person to step in after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease they had.

19 So Jesus made this further reply, 'In truth I tell you, the Son can do nothing of himself; he does only what he sees the Father doing; whatever
20 the Father does, the Son does also. For the Father loves his Son, and shows him everything that he is doing; and he will show him still greater things
21 – so that you will be filled with wonder. For, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he pleases.
22 The Father himself does not judge any one, but has entrusted the work of
23 judging entirely to his Son, so that everyone may honour the Son, just as they honour the Father. The person who does not honour the Son fails to
24 honour the Father who sent him. In truth I tell you that the person who listens to my message and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come under condemnation, but has already passed out of death
25 into life. In truth I tell you that a time is coming, indeed it is already here, when the dead will listen to the voice of the Son of God, and when those
26 who listen will live. For, just as the Father has inherent life within him,
27 so also he has granted to the Son to have inherent life within him; and, because he is Son of Man, he has also given him authority to act as judge.
28 Do not wonder at this; for the time is coming when all who are in their
29 graves will hear his voice, and will come out – those who have done good rising to life, and those who have lived evil lives rising for condemnation.
30 I can do nothing of myself; I judge as I am taught; and the judgment that I give is just, because my aim is not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

31 'If I bear testimony to myself, my testimony is not trustworthy; it is another who bears testimony to me, and I know that the testimony which he bears to me is trustworthy. You have yourselves sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. But the testimony which I receive is not from people; I am saying this for your salvation. He was the Lamp that was burning and shining, and you were ready to rejoice, for a time, in his light. But the testimony which I have is of greater weight than John's; for the work that the Father has given me to carry out – the work that I am doing – is in itself proof that the Father has sent me as his messenger. The Father who has sent me has himself borne testimony to me. You have neither listened to his voice, not seen his form; and you have not taken his message home to your hearts, because you do not believe him whom he sent as his messenger. You search the scriptures, because you think that you find in them immortal life; and, though it is those scriptures that bear testimony to me, you refuse to come to me to have life.

41 'I do not receive honour from people, but I know this of you, that you
42 have not the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father's name,
43

and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, you will
44 receive him. How can you believe in me, when you receive honour from
one another and do not desire the honour which comes from the only God?
45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; your accuser is Moses,
46 on whom you have been resting your hopes. For, had you believed Moses,
47 you would have believed me, for it was of me that Moses wrote; but, if you
do not believe his writings, how will you believe my teaching?"

6 After this, Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee – otherwise called the Lake
2 of Tiberias. A great crowd of people, however, followed him, because they
3 saw the signs of his mission in his work among those who were sick. Jesus
4 went up the hill, and sat down there with his disciples. It was near the
5 time of the Jewish Festival of the Passover. Looking up, and noticing that
a great crowd was coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are
6 we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he
7 himself knew what he meant to do. 'Even if we spent a years' wages on
bread,' answered Philip, 'it would not be enough for each of them to have
a little.'

8 'There is a boy here,' said Andrew, another of his disciples, Simon Peter's
9 brother, 'Who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that for so
many?'

10 'Make the people sit down,' said Jesus. It was a grassy spot; so the people,
11 who numbered about five thousand, sat down, and then Jesus took the
loaves, and, after saying the thanksgiving, distributed them to those who
were sitting down; and the same with the fish, giving the people as much as
12 they wanted. When they were satisfied, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Collect
13 the broken pieces that are left, so that nothing may be wasted.' The disciples
did so, and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves,
which were left after all had eaten.

14 When the people saw the signs which Jesus gave, they said, 'This is
15 certainly the prophet who was to come into the world.' But Jesus, having
discovered that they were intending to come and carry him off to make
him king, went again up the hill, quite alone.

16 When evening fell, his disciples went down to the sea, and, getting into
17 a boat, began to cross to Capernaum. By this time darkness had set in, and
18 Jesus had not yet come back to them; the sea, too, was getting rough, for a
19 strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed three or four miles, they
caught sight of him walking on the water and approaching the boat, and
20 they were frightened. But Jesus said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid!' And
21

after this they were glad to take him into the boat; and the boat at once arrived off the shore, for which they had been making.

22 The people who remained on the further side of the sea had seen that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not gone into it with his
23 disciples, but that they had left without him. Some boats, however, had come from Tiberias, from near the spot where they had eaten the bread
24 after the Master had said the thanksgiving. So, on the next day, when the people saw that Jesus was not there, or his disciples either, they themselves
25 got into the boats, and went to Capernaum to look for him. And, when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said, 'When did you get here, Rabbi?'

26 'In truth I tell you,' answered Jesus, 'it is not because of the signs which you saw that you are looking for me, but because you had the bread to eat
27 and were satisfied. Work, not for the food that perishes, but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you; for on him the Father – God himself – has set the seal of his approval.'

28 'How?' they asked, 'are we to do the work that God wants us to do?'

29 'The work that God wants you to do,' answered Jesus, 'is to believe in him whom God sent as his messenger.'

30 'What sign, then,' they asked, 'are you giving, which we may see, and
31 so believe you? What is the work that you are doing? Our ancestors had the manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says – "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

32 'In truth I tell you,' replied Jesus, 'Moses did not give you the bread from
33 heaven, but my Father does give you the true bread from heaven; for the bread that God gives is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world.'

34 'Master,' they exclaimed, 'give us that bread always!'

35 'I am the life-giving bread,' Jesus said to them, 'whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never thirst again.
36 But, as I have said already, you have seen me, and yet you do not believe in
37 me. All those whom the Father gives me will come to me; and no one who
38 comes to me will I ever turn away. For I have come down from heaven, to
39 do, not my own will, but the will of him who sent me; and his will is this –
40 that I should not lose one of all those whom he has given me, but should raise them up at the Last day. For it is the will of my Father that everyone who sees the Son, and believes in him, should have immortal life; and I myself will raise him up at the Last day.'

41 The people began murmuring against Jesus for saying – “I am the bread
42 which came down from heaven.” ‘Is not this Jesus, Joseph’s son,’ they asked,
‘whose father and mother we know? How is it that he now says that he has
come down from heaven?’

43 ‘Do not murmur among yourselves,’ said Jesus in reply. ‘No one can
44 come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him to me; and I will
45 raise him up at the Last day. It is said in the prophets – “And they will all
be taught by God.” Everyone who is taught by the Father and learns from
46 him comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father, except him who
47 is from God – he has seen the Father. In truth I tell you, the person who
48 believes in me has eternal life. I am the life-giving bread. Your ancestors
49 ate the manna in the desert, and yet died. The bread that comes down from
50 heaven is such that whoever eats of it will never die. I am the living bread
51 that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, they will
live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for
the life of the world.’

52 They began disputing with one another, ‘How is it possible for this man
to give us his flesh to eat?’

53 ‘In truth I tell you,’ answered Jesus, ‘unless you eat the flesh of the Son
54 of Man, and drink his blood, you have not life within you. Everyone who
takes my flesh for their food, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I
55 will raise them up at the Last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood
56 true drink. Everyone who takes my flesh for their food, and drinks my
57 blood, remains united to me, and I to them. As the living Father sent me
as his messenger, and as I live because the Father lives, so the person who
58 takes me for their food will live because I live. That is the bread which has
come down from heaven – not such as your ancestors ate, and yet died;
the person who takes this bread for their food will live for ever.’

59 All this Jesus said in a synagogue, when he was teaching in Capernaum.
60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, ‘This is harsh doctrine! Who can
61 bear to listen to it?’ But Jesus, aware that his disciples were murmuring
62 about it, said to them, ‘Is this a hindrance to you? What, then, if you should
63 see the Son of Man ascending where he was before? It is the Spirit that
gives life; human strength achieves nothing. In the teaching that I have
64 been giving you there is Spirit and there is life. Yet there are some of you
who do not believe in me.’ For Jesus knew from the first who they were
65 that did not believe in him, and who it was that would betray him; and he
added, ‘This is why I told you that no one can come to me, unless enabled
66 by the Father.’ After this many of his disciples drew back, and did not go
67 about with him any longer. So Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘Do you also wish

- 68 to leave me?' But Simon Peter answered, 'Master, to whom would we go?
69 Eternal life is in your teaching; and we have learned to believe and to know
that you are the Holy One of God.'
- 70 'Didn't I myself choose you to be the Twelve?' replied Jesus, 'and yet,
71 even of you, one is playing the devil's part.' He meant Judas, the son of
Simon Iscariot, who was about to betray him, though he was one of the
Twelve.
- 7 After this, Jesus went about in Galilee, for he would not do so in Judea,
because the religious authorities (in Jerusalem) were eager to put him to
2 death. When the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, his brothers said
3 to him, 'Leave this part of the country, and go into Judea, so that your
4 disciples, as well as we, may see the work that you are doing. For no one
5 does a thing privately, if they are seeking to be widely known. Since you
do these things, you should show yourself publicly to the world.' For even
his brothers did not believe in him.
- 6 'My time,' answered Jesus, 'is not come yet, but your time is always
7 here. The world cannot hate you, but it does hate me, because I testify that
8 its ways are evil. Go yourselves up to the Festival; I am not going to this
9 Festival yet, because my time has not yet come.' After telling them this, he
stayed on in Galilee.
- 10 But, when his brothers had gone up to the Festival, Jesus also went up
11 – not publicly, but privately. The authorities were looking for him at the
12 Festival and asking "Where is he?"; and there were many whispers about
him among the people, some saying "He is a good man," others, "No! He
13 is leading the people astray." No one, however, spoke freely about him,
because they were afraid of the authorities.
- 14 About the middle of the Festival week, Jesus went up into the Temple
15 Courts, and began teaching. The authorities were astonished. 'How has
16 this man got his learning,' they asked, 'when he has never studied?' So,
in reply, Jesus said, 'My teaching is not my own; it is his who sent me.
17 If anyone has the will to do God's will, they will find out whether my
18 teaching is from God, or whether I speak on my own authority. The person
who speaks on their own authority seeks honour for themselves; but the
one who seeks the honour of him who sent him is sincere, and there is
19 nothing false in him. Was not it Moses who gave you the Law? Yet not one
of you obeys it! Why are you seeking to put me to death?'
- 20 'You must be possessed by a demon!' the people exclaimed. 'Who is
seeking to put you to death?'

21 ‘There was one thing I did,’ replied Jesus, ‘at which you are all still
22 wondering. But that is why Moses has instituted circumcision among you
– not, indeed, that it began with him, but with our ancestors – and that is
23 why you circumcise even on a Sabbath. When a man receives circumcision
on a Sabbath to prevent the Law of Moses from being broken, how can
you be angry with me for making a man sound and well on a Sabbath?
24 Do not judge by appearances; judge justly.’ At this some of the people of
25 Jerusalem exclaimed, ‘Is not this the man who they are seeking to put to
26 death? Yet here he is, speaking out boldly, and they say nothing to him! Is it
possible that our leading men have really discovered that he is the Christ?
27 Yet we know where this man is from; but, when the Christ comes, no one
28 will be able to tell where he is from.’ Therefore, Jesus, as he was teaching
in the Temple Courts, raised his voice and said, ‘Yes; you know me and
you know where I am from. Yet I have not come on my own authority, but
29 he who sent me may be trusted; and him you do not know. I do know him,
30 for it is from him that I have come, and he sent me as his messenger.’ So
they sought to arrest him; but no one touched him, for his time was not
31 come yet. Many of the people, however, believed in him. ‘When the Christ
comes,’ they said, ‘will he give more signs of his mission than this man
32 has given?’ The Pharisees heard the people whispering about him in this
way, and so the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him;
33 at which Jesus said, ‘I will be with you but a little longer, and then I am
34 going to him who sent me. You will look for me, and you will not find me;
and you will not be able to come where I will be.’
35 ‘Where is this man going,’ the people asked one another, ‘that we would
not find him? Will he go to our countrymen abroad, and teach foreigners?
36 What does he mean by saying “You will look for me, and you will not find
me; and you will not be able to come where I will be”?’

37 On the last and greatest day of the Festival, Jesus, who was standing by,
38 exclaimed, ‘If anyone thirsts, they should come to me, and drink. I tell you
what I have myself seen in the presence of my Father; and you, in the same
39 way, do what you have learned from your father.’ (By this he meant the
Spirit, which those who had believed in him were to receive; for the Spirit
40 had not yet come, because Jesus had not yet been exalted.) Some of the
people, when they heard these words, said, ‘This is certainly the Prophet!’,
41 others said, ‘the Christ!'; but some asked, ‘What! Does the Christ come
42 from Galilee? Is not it said in scripture that it is of the descendants of David,
and from Bethlehem, the village to which David belonged, that the Christ
43 is to come?’ So there was a sharp division among the people because of

- 44 Jesus. Some of them wanted to arrest him, and yet no one touched him.
- 45 When the officers returned to the chief priests and Pharisees, they were asked, 'Why have you not brought him?'
- 46 'No one ever spoke as he speaks!' they answered. 'What! Have you been led astray too?' the Pharisees replied. 'Have any of our leading men believed in him, or any of the Pharisees? As for these people who do not know the Law – they are cursed!' But one of their number, Nicodemus, who before this had been to see Jesus, said to them, 'Does our Law pass judgment on a person without first giving them a hearing, and finding out what they have been doing?'
- 52 'Are you also from Galilee?' they retorted. 'Search, and you will find that no prophet is to arise in Galilee!'
- 53 And everyone went home except Jesus, who went to the Mount of Olives²⁵. But he went again into the Temple Courts early in the morning, and all the people came to him; and he sat down and taught them.
- 3 Presently, however, the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placed her in the middle of 4 the Court, and said to Jesus, 'Teacher, this woman was found in the act of 5 adultery. Now Moses, in the Law, commanded us to stone such women to death; what do you say?'
- 6 They said this to test him, in order to have a charge to bring against him. But Jesus stooped down, and wrote on the ground with his finger.
- 7 However, as they continued asking him, he raised himself, and said, 'Let the person among you who has never done wrong throw the first stone at her.'
- 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. When they heard 9 that, they went out one by one, beginning with the eldest; and Jesus was 10 left alone with the woman in the middle of the Court. Raising himself, Jesus said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?'
- 11 'No one, Sir,' she answered.
- 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go, and do not sin again.'
- 12 Jesus again addressed the people. 'I am the light of the world,' he said. 'The person who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

²⁵ 8:1 This passage is inserted in some manuscripts from an ancient source, and found either after John 7:53 or after Luke 21:38 or elsewhere.

13 ‘You are bearing testimony to yourself!’ exclaimed the Pharisees, ‘your testimony is not trustworthy.’

14 ‘Even if I bear testimony to myself,’ answered Jesus, ‘my testimony is trustworthy; for I know where I came from, and where I am going; but
15 you do not know where I come from, nor where I am going. You judge
16 by appearances; I judge no one. Yet, even if I were to judge, my judgment
17 would be trustworthy; because I am not alone, but the Father who sent me is
18 with me. Why, in your own Law it is said that the testimony of two persons
19 is trustworthy. I, who bear testimony to myself, am one, and the Father
20 who sent me also bears testimony to me.’ ‘Where is your father, then?’ they
asked. ‘You know neither me nor my Father,’ replied Jesus. ‘If you had
known me, you would have also known my Father.’ These statements Jesus
made in the Treasury, while teaching in the Temple Courts. Yet no one
arrested him, for his time had not then come.

21 Jesus again spoke to the people. ‘I am going away,’ he said, ‘and you
will look for me, but you will die in your sin; you cannot come where I am
going.’

22 ‘Is he going to kill himself,’ the people exclaimed, ‘that he says – “You
cannot go where I am going”?’ ‘You,’ added Jesus, ‘are from below, I am
from above; you are of this present world, I am not; and so I told you that
you would die in your sins, for, unless you believe that I am what I am,
you will die in your sins.’

23 ‘Who are you?’ they asked. ‘Why ask exactly what I have been telling
24 you?’ said Jesus. ‘I have still much that concerns you to speak of and to pass
judgment on; yet he who sent me may be trusted, and I speak to the world
25 only of the things which I have heard from him.’ They did not understand
26 that he meant the Father. So Jesus added, ‘When you have lifted up the
Son of Man, then you will understand that I am what I am, and that I
do nothing of myself, but that I say just what the Father has taught me.
27 Moreover, he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone; for I always
28 do what pleases him.’ While he was speaking in this way, many came to
believe in him. So Jesus went on to say to those who had believed him, ‘If
29 you remain constant to my message, you are truly my disciples; and you
30 find out the truth, and the truth will set you free.’

31 ‘We are descendants of Abraham,’ was their answer, ‘and have never yet
been in slavery to anyone. What do you mean by saying “you will be set
32 free”?’ ‘In truth I tell you,’ replied Jesus, ‘everyone who sins is a slave to
33 sin. And a slave does not remain in the home always; but a son remains
34 always. If, then, the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed! I know that
35

you are descendants of Abraham; yet you are seeking to put me to death,
38 because my message finds no place in your hearts. I tell you what I have
myself seen in the presence of my Father; and you, in the same way, do
what you have learned from your father.'

39 ‘Our father is Abraham,’ was their answer. ‘If you are Abraham’s chil-
40 dren,’ replied Jesus, ‘do what Abraham did. But, as it is, you are seeking
41 to put me to death – a man who has told you the truth as he heard it from
God. Abraham did not act in that way. You are doing what your own father
does.’

‘We are not bastards,’ they said, ‘we have one Father – God himself.’

42 ‘If God were your Father,’ Jesus replied, ‘you would have loved me, for I
came out from God, and now am here; and I have not come of myself, but
43 he sent me as his messenger. How is it that you do not understand what
44 I say? It is because you cannot bear to listen to my message. As for you,
you are children of your Father the devil, and you are determined to do
what your father loves to do. He was a murderer from the first, and did
not stand by the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies,
he does what is natural to him; because he is a liar, and the father of lying.
45 But, as for me, it is because I speak the truth to you that you do not believe
46 me. Which of you can convict me of sin? Why then don’t you believe me,
47 if I am speaking truth? The person who comes from God listens to God’s
teaching; the reason why you do not listen is because you do not come
from God.’

48 ‘Aren’t we right, after all,’ replied the people, ‘in saying that you are a
Samaritan, and are possessed by a demon?’

49 ‘I am not possessed by a demon,’ Jesus answered, ‘but I am honouring
50 my Father; and yet you dishonour me. Not that I am seeking honour for
51 myself; there is one who is seeking my honour, and he decides. In truth I
tell you, if anyone lays my message to heart, he will never really die.’

52 ‘Now we are sure that you are possessed by a demon,’ the people replied.
‘Abraham died, and so did the prophets; and yet you say “If anyone lays
53 my message to heart, they will never know death.” Are you greater than
our ancestor Abraham, who died? And the prophets died too. Whom do
you make yourself out to be?’

54 ‘If I do honour to myself,’ answered Jesus, ‘such honour counts for noth-
ing. It is my Father who does me honour – and you say that he is your God;
55 and yet you have not learned to know him; but I know him; and, if I were
to say that I do not know him, I should be a liar like you; but I do know
56 him, and I lay his message to heart. Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that
he would see my day; and he did see it, and was glad.’

57 ‘You are not fifty years old yet,’ the people exclaimed, ‘and have you seen Abraham?’

58 ‘In truth I tell you,’ replied Jesus, ‘before Abraham existed I was.’ At this
59 they took up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and left the Temple Courts.

9 As Jesus passed by, he saw a man who had been blind from his birth.

2 ‘Rabbi,’ asked his disciples, ‘who was it that sinned, this man or his parents,
that he was born blind?’

3 ‘Neither the man nor the parents,’ replied Jesus, ‘but he was born blind
4 so that the work of God should be made plain in him. We must do the
work of him who sent me, while it is day; night is coming, when no one
5 can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ Saying
6 this, Jesus spat on the ground, made clay with the saliva, and put it on the
7 man’s eyes. ‘Go,’ he said, ‘and wash your eyes in the Bath of Siloam’ (a
word which means “messenger”). So the man went and washed his eyes,
8 and returned able to see. His neighbours, and those who had formerly
known him by sight as a beggar, exclaimed, ‘Is not this the man who used
to sit and beg?’

9 ‘Yes,’ some said, ‘it is’; while others said, ‘No, but he is like him.’ The
man himself said, ‘I am he.’

10 ‘How did you get your sight, then?’ they asked. ‘The man whom they
11 call Jesus,’ he answered, ‘made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me
“Go to Siloam and wash your eyes.” So I went and washed my eyes, and
gained my sight.’

12 ‘Where is he?’ they asked. ‘I do not know,’ he answered. They took the
13 man, who had been blind, to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when
14 Jesus made the clay and gave him his sight. So the Pharisees also questioned
15 the man as to how he had gained his sight. ‘He put clay on my eyes,’ he
answered, ‘and I washed them, and I can see.’

16 ‘The man cannot be from God,’ said some of the Pharisees, ‘for he does
not keep the Sabbath.’

17 ‘How is it possible,’ retorted others, ‘for a bad man to give signs like
this?’ So there was a difference of opinion among them, and they again
questioned the man. ‘What do you yourself say about him, for it is to you
18 that he has given sight?’ The religious authorities, however, refused to
believe that he had been blind and had gained his sight, until they had
19 called his parents and questioned them. ‘Is this your son,’ they asked, ‘who
you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he can see now?’

20 ‘We know that this is our son,’ answered the parents, ‘and that he was
21 born blind; but how it is that he can see now we do not know; nor do we
know who it was that gave him his sight. Ask him – he is old enough – he
22 will tell you about himself.’ His parents spoke in this way because they
were afraid of the authorities; for the authorities had already agreed that,
if anyone should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, he should be expelled
23 from their synagogues. This was why his parents said “He is old enough;
24 ask him.” So the authorities again called the man who had been blind, and
said to him, ‘Give God the praise; we know that this is a bad man.’

25 ‘I know nothing about his being a bad man,’ he replied. ‘One thing I do
know, that although I was blind, now I can see.’

26 ‘What did he do to you?’ they asked. ‘How did he give you your sight?’

27 ‘I told you just now,’ he answered, ‘and you did not listen. Why do you
want to hear it again? Surely you also do not want to become his disciples?’

28 ‘You are his disciple,’ they retorted scornfully. ‘But we are disciples of
29 Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses; but, as for this man, we do not
know where he comes from.’

30 ‘Well,’ the man replied, ‘this is very strange; you do not know where he
31 comes from, and yet he has given me my sight! We know that God never
listens to bad people, but, when a person is god-fearing and does God’s
32 will, God listens to them. Since the world began, such a thing was never
33 heard of as anyone’s giving sight to a person born blind. If this man had
not been from God, he could not have done anything at all.’

34 ‘You,’ they retorted, ‘were born totally depraved; and are you trying to
35 teach us?’ So they expelled him. Jesus heard of their having put him out;
and, when he had found the man, he asked, ‘Do you believe in the Son of
Man?’

36 ‘Tell me who he is, Sir,’ he replied, ‘so that I may believe in him.’

37 ‘Not only have you seen him,’ said Jesus, ‘but it is he who is now speaking
to you.’

38 ‘Then, Sir, I do believe,’ said the man, bowing to the ground before him;
39 and Jesus added, ‘It was to put people to the test that I came into this world,
in order that those that cannot see should see, and that those that can see
40 should become blind.’ Hearing this, some of the Pharisees who were with
him said, ‘Then are we blind too?’

41 ‘If you had been blind,’ replied Jesus, ‘you would have had no sin to
10 answer for; but, as it is, you say “We can see,” and so your sin remains. In
truth I tell you, whoever does not go into the sheepfold through the door,
2 but climbs up at some other place, that person is a thief and a robber; but
3 the person who goes in through the door is shepherd to the sheep. For him

the watchman opens the door; and the sheep listen to his voice; and he calls
4 his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he has brought them
all out, he walks in front of them, and his sheep follow him, because they
5 know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but will run away from
6 him; because they do not know a stranger's voice.' This was the allegory
7 that Jesus told them, but they did not understand of what he was speaking.
8 So he continued, 'In truth I tell you, I am the door for the sheep. All who
9 came before me were thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not listen to
them. I am the door; he who goes in through me will be safe, and he will
10 go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal, to kill, and to
destroy; I have come so that they may have life, and may have it in greater
11 fullness. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for
12 his sheep. The hired man who is not a shepherd, and who does not own
the sheep, when he sees a wolf coming, leaves them and runs away; then
13 the wolf seizes them, and scatters the flock. He does this because he is only
14 a hired man and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd;
15 and I know my sheep, and my sheep know me – Just as the Father knows
16 me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have
other sheep besides, which do not belong to this fold; I must lead them
also, and they will listen to my voice; and they will become one flock under
17 one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life
18 – to receive it again. No one took it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I
have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This
is the command which I received from my Father.'

19 In consequence of these words a difference of opinion again arose among
20 the people. Many of them said, 'He is possessed by a demon and is mad;
21 why do you listen to him?' Others said, 'This is not the teaching of one
who is possessed by a demon. Can a demon give sight to the blind?'

22 Soon after this the Festival of the Rededication was held at Jerusalem. It
23 was winter; and Jesus was walking in the Temple Courts, in the Colonnade
24 of Solomon, when the people gathered round him, and said, 'How long are
you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us so frankly.'

25 'I have told you so,' replied Jesus, 'and you do not believe me. The work
26 that I am doing in my Father's name bears testimony to me. But you do not
27 believe me, because you are not of my flock. My sheep listen to my voice; I
28 know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they will
29 not be lost; nor will anyone snatch them out of my hands. What my Father
has entrusted to me is more than all else; and no one can snatch anything
30 out of the Father's hands. The Father and I are one.'

31 Some of the people again brought stones to throw at him; and seeing
32 this, Jesus said, 'I have done before your eyes many good actions, inspired
by the Father; for which of them would you stone me?'

33 'It is not for any good action that we would stone you,' they answered,
'but for blasphemy; and because you, who are only a man, make yourself
out to be God.'

34 'Are there not,' replied Jesus, 'these words in your Law – "I said, You
35 are gods"? If those to whom God's word were addressed were said to be
36 "gods" – and scripture cannot be set aside – do you say of one whom the
Father has consecrated and sent as his messenger to the world "You are
37 blaspheming," because I said "I am God's Son"? If I am not doing the work
38 that my Father is doing, do not believe me; if I am doing it, even though
you do not believe me, believe what that work shows; so that you may
understand, and understand more and more clearly, that the Father is in
39 union with me, and I with the Father.' The authorities again sought to
arrest him; but he escaped their hands.

40 Then Jesus again crossed the Jordan to the place where John used to
baptize at first, and stayed there some time, during which many people
41 came to see him. 'John gave no sign of his mission,' they said. 'But every-
42 thing that he said about this man was true.' And many learned to believe
in Jesus there.

11 Now a man named Lazarus, of Bethany, was lying ill; he belonged to
2 the same village as Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother
Lazarus was ill, was the Mary who anointed the Master with perfume, and
3 wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters, therefore, sent this message to
4 Jesus – "Master, your friend is ill"; and, when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This
illness is not to end in death, but is to redound to the honour of God, in
5 order that the Son of God may be honoured through it.' Jesus loved Martha
6 and her sister, and Lazarus. Yet, when he heard of the illness of Lazarus,
7 he still stayed two days in the place where he was. Then, after that, he said
to his disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.'

8 'Rabbi,' they replied, 'the authorities there were but just now seeking to
stone you; and are you going there again?'

9 'Are not there twelve hours in the day?' answered Jesus. 'If someone
walks about in the daytime, they don't stumble, because they can see the
10 light of the sun; but, if they walk about at night, they stumble, because
11 they have not the light.' And, when he had said this, he added, 'Our friend
Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going so that I may wake him.'

12 'If he has fallen asleep, Master, he will get well,' said the disciples. But Jesus meant that he was dead; they, however, supposed that he was speaking of natural sleep. Then he said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may learn to believe in me. But let us go to him.' At this, Thomas, who was called "The Twin," said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us go too, so that we may die with him.'

17 When Jesus reached the place, he found that Lazarus had been four days in the tomb already. Bethany being only about two miles from Jerusalem, a number of the people had come there to comfort Martha and Mary because of brother's death. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat quietly at home. 'Master,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now, I know that God will grant you whatever you ask him.'

23 'Your brother will rise to life,' said Jesus. 'I know that he will,' replied Martha, 'in the resurrection at the Last day.'

25 'I am the resurrection and the life,' said Jesus. 'He who believes in me will live, though he die; and he who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

27 'Yes Master,' she answered. 'I have learned to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.' After saying this, Martha went and called her sister Mary, and whispered, 'The teacher is here, and is asking for you.' As soon as Mary heard that, she got up quickly, and went to meet him. Jesus had not then come into the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. So the people, who were in the house with Mary, comforting her, when they saw her get up quickly and go out, followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she threw herself at his feet. 'Master,' she exclaimed, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died!' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the people who had come with her weeping also, he groaned deeply, and was greatly distressed.

34 'Where have you buried him?' he asked. 'Come and see, Master,' they answered. Jesus burst into tears. 'How he must have loved him!' the people exclaimed; but some of them said, 'Could not this man, who gave sight to the blind man, have also prevented Lazarus from dying?' Again groaning inwardly, Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against the mouth of it. 'Move the stone away,' said Jesus. 'Master,' said Martha, the sister of the dead man, 'by this time the smell must be offensive, for this is the fourth day since his death.'

40 'Didn't I tell you,' replied Jesus, 'that, if you would believe in me, you should see the glory of God?' So they moved the stone away; and Jesus,

with uplifted eyes, said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard my prayer;
42 I know that you always hear me; but I say this for the sake of the people
standing near, so that they may believe that you has sent me as your mes-
senger.'

43 Then, after saying this, Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus! Come out!'
44 The dead man came out, wrapped hand and foot in a winding-sheet; his
face, too, had been wrapped in a cloth. 'Set him free,' said Jesus, 'and let
him go.'

45 In consequence of this, many of the people, who had come to visit Mary
46 and had seen what Jesus did, learned to believe in him. Some of them,
47 however, went to the Pharisees, and told them what he had done. The chief
priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the High Council, and said,
48 'What are we to do, now that this man is giving so many signs? If we allow
him to continue as we are doing, everyone will believe in him; and the
Romans will come and will take from us both our city and our Nationality.'

49 One of them, however, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to
50 them, 'You are utterly mistaken. You do not consider that it is better for you
that one person should die for the people, rather than the whole nation
51 should be destroyed.' Now he did not say this of his own accord; but, as
high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was to die for the nation –
52 And not for the nation only, but also that he might unite in one body the
53 children of God now scattered far and wide. So from that day they plotted
to put Jesus to death.

54 In consequence of this, Jesus did not go about publicly among the people
any more, but left and went into the country bordering on the wilderness,
55 to a town called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples. But the Jewish
Festival of the Passover was near; and many people had gone up from the
56 country to Jerusalem, for their purification, before the Festival began. So
they looked for Jesus there, and said to one another, as they stood in the
Temple Courts, 'What do you think? Do you think he will come to the
57 Festival?' The chief priests and the Pharisees had already issued orders
that, if anyone learned where Jesus was, he should give information, so
that they might arrest him.

The Last Days

12 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus, whom
2 he had raised from the dead, was living. There a supper was given in

honour at which Martha waited, while Lazarus was one of those present
3 at the table. So Mary took a pound of choice spikenard perfume of great
value, and anointed the feet of Jesus with it, and then wiped them with
4 her hair. The whole house was filled with the scent of the perfume. One of
5 the disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was about to betray Jesus, asked, 'Why
was not this perfume sold for a year's wages, and the money given to poor
6 people?' He said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he
was a thief, and, being in charge of the purse, used to take what was put in
7 it. 'Leave her alone,' said Jesus, 'so that she may keep it until the day when
8 my body is being prepared for burial. The poor you always have with you,
but you will not always have me.'

9 Now great numbers of people found out that Jesus was at Bethany; and
they came there, not only because of him, but also to see Lazarus, whom
10 he had raised from the dead. The chief priests, however, plotted to put
11 Lazarus, as well as Jesus, to death, because it was owing to him that many
12 of the people had left them, and were becoming believers in Jesus. On
13 the following day great numbers of people who had come to the Festival,
14 hearing that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, took palm branches, and
went out to meet him, shouting as they went, 'God save Him! Blessed is He
15 who Comes in the name of the Lord – The king of Israel!' Having found
16 a young ass, Jesus seated himself on it, in accordance with the passage of
scripture – "Fear not, people of Zion; Your king is coming to you, Sitting
on the foal of an ass." His disciples did not understand all this at first; but,
when Jesus had been exalted, then they remembered that these things had
been said of him in scripture, and that they had done these things for him.
17 Meanwhile the people who were with him, when he called Lazarus out of
the tomb and raised him from the dead, were telling what they had seen.
18 This, indeed, was why the crowd met him – because people had heard that
19 he had given this sign of his mission. So the Pharisees said to one another,
'You see that you are gaining nothing! Why, all the world has run after
him!'

20 Among those who were going up to worship at the Festival were some
21 Greeks, who went to Philip of Bethsaida in Galilee, and said, 'Sir, we wish
22 to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew, and then together they went
23 and told Jesus. This was his reply – 'The time has come for the Son of
24 Man to be exalted. In truth I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the
25 ground and dies, it remains solitary; but, if it dies, it becomes fruitful. A
person who loves their life loses it; while someone who hates their life in
26 the present world will preserve it for eternal life. If someone is ready to

serve me, let them follow me; and where I am, there my servant will be
27 also. If a person is ready to serve me, my Father will honour them. Now I
am distressed at heart and what can I say? Father, bring me safe through
28 this hour – yet it was for this reason that I came to this hour – Father,
honour your own name.' At this there came a voice from heaven, which
29 said, 'I have already honoured it, and I will honour it again.' The crowd
of bystanders, who heard the sound, said that it was thundering. Others
said, 'An angel has been speaking to him.'

30 'It was not for my sake that the voice came,' said Jesus, 'but for yours.
31 Now this world is on its trial. Now the Spirit that is ruling this world will
32 be driven out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all
33 people to myself.' By these words he indicated what death he was destined
34 to die. 'We,' replied the people, 'have learned from the Law that the Christ
is to remain for ever; how is it, then, that you say that the Son of Man must
be "lifted up" Who is this "Son of Man"?"'

35 'Only a little while longer,' answered Jesus, 'will you have the light
among you. Travel on while you have the light, so that darkness may not
overtake you; he who travels in the darkness does not know where he is
36 going. While you still have the light, believe in the light, so that you may be
children of light.' After he had said this, Jesus went away, and hid himself
37 from them. But, though Jesus had given so many signs of his mission before
38 their eyes, they still did not believe in him, in fulfilment of the words of
the prophet Isaiah, where he says – "Lord, who has believed our teaching?
39 And to whom has the might of the Lord been revealed?" The reason why
they were unable to believe is given by Isaiah elsewhere, in these words
40 – "He has blinded their eyes, and blunted their mind, so that they should
not see with their eyes, and perceive with their mind, and turn – And I
41 should heal them." Isaiah said this, because he saw Christ's glory; and it
42 was of him that he spoke. Yet for all this, even among the leading men there
were many who came to believe in Jesus; but, because of the Pharisees,
they did not acknowledge it, because they were afraid that they should
43 be expelled from their synagogues; for they valued honour from people
44 more than honour from God. But Jesus had proclaimed, 'He who believes
45 in me believes, not in me, but in him who sent me; and he who sees me
46 sees him who sent me. I have come as a light into the world, so that no one
47 who believes in me should remain in the darkness. When anyone hears my
teaching and pays no heed to it, I am not his judge; for I came not to judge
48 the world, but to save the world. He who rejects me, and disregards my
teaching, has a judge already – the message which I have delivered will
49 itself be his judge at the Last day. For I have not delivered it on my own

50 authority; but the Father, who sent me, has himself given me his command as to what I should say, and what message I should deliver. And I know that eternal life lies in keeping his command. Therefore, whatever I say, I say only what the Father has taught me.'

13 Before the Passover Festival began, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave the world and go to the Father. He had loved those who were 2 his own in the world, and he loved them to the last. The devil had already put the thought of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas Iscariot, the son 3 of Simon; and at supper, Jesus – although knowing that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God, and was to 4 return to God – Rose from his place, and, taking off his upper garments, 5 tied a towel round his waist. He then poured some water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel 6 which was tied round him. When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said, 'You, Master! Are you going to wash my feet?'
7 'You do not understand now what I am doing,' replied Jesus, 'but you will learn by and by.'
8 'You will never wash my feet!' exclaimed Peter. 'Unless I wash you,' answered Jesus, 'you have nothing in common with me.'
9 'Then, Master, not my feet only,' exclaimed Simon Peter, 'but also my hands and my head.'
10 'He who has bathed,' replied Jesus, 'has no need to wash, unless it be his feet, but is altogether clean; and you,' he said to the disciples, 'are clean, 11 yet not all of you.' For he knew who was going to betray him, and that 12 was why he said "You are not all clean." When he had washed their feet, and had put on his upper garments and taken his place, he spoke to them 13 again. 'Do you understand what I have been doing to you?' he asked. 'You yourselves call me "the teacher" and "the Master", and you are right, for I 14 am both. If I, then – "the Master" and "the teacher" – have washed your 15 feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an 16 example, so that you may do just as I have done to you. In truth I tell you, a servant is not greater than their master, neither is a messenger greater 17 than the one who sends them. Now that you know these things, happy are 18 you if you do them. I am not speaking about all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but this is in fulfilment of the words of scripture – "He that 19 is eating my bread has lifted his heel against me." For the future I will tell you of things before they take place, so that, when they take place, you 20 may believe that I am what I am. In truth I tell you, the one who receives anyone that I send receives me; and the person who receives me receives

21 him who sent me.' After saying this, Jesus was much troubled, and said
22 solemnly, 'In truth I tell you that it is one of you who will betray me.' The
23 disciples looked at one another, wondering whom he meant. Next to Jesus,
24 in the place on his right hand, was one of his disciples, whom he loved. So
25 Simon Peter made signs to that disciple, and whispered, 'Tell me who it
is that he means.' Being in this position, that disciple leant back on Jesus'
shoulder, and asked him, 'Who is it, Master?'

26 'It is the one,' answered Jesus, 'to whom I will give a piece of bread after
dipping it in the dish.' And, when Jesus had dipped the bread, he took it
27 and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot; and it was then, after he had
received it, that Satan took possession of him. So Jesus said to him, 'Do at
28 once what you are going to do.' But no one at the table understood why
29 he said this to Judas. Some thought that, as Judas kept the purse, Jesus
meant that he was to buy some things needed for the Festival, or to give
30 something to the poor. After taking the piece of bread, Judas went out
immediately; and it was night.

31 When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been
exalted, and God has been exalted through him; and God will exalt him
33 with himself – yes, he will exalt him forthwith. My children, I am to be
with you but a little while longer. You will look for me; and what I said to
34 the people – "You cannot come where I am going" – I now say to you. I give
you a new commandment – love one another; love one another as I have
loved you. It is by this that everyone will recognise you as my disciples –
by your loving one another.'

36 'Where are you going, Master?' asked Peter. 'I am going where you
cannot now follow me,' answered Jesus, 'but you will follow me later.'

37 'Why cannot I follow you now, Master?' asked Peter. 'I will lay down my
life for you.'

38 'Will you lay down your life for me?' replied Jesus. 'In truth I tell you,
14 the cock will not crow until you have disowned me three times. Do not let
2 your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's
Home there are many dwellings. If it had not been so, I should have told
3 you, for I am going to prepare a place for you. And, since I go and prepare
a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me, so that you may
4 be where I am; and you know the way to the place where I am going.'

5 'We do not know where you are going, Master,' said Thomas. 'So how
6 can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way, and the truth, and
7 the life; no one ever comes to the Father except through me. If you had

recognised me, you would have known my Father also; for the future you will recognise him, indeed you have already seen him.'

8 'Master, show us the Father,' said Philip, 'and we will be satisfied.'

9 'Have I been all this time among you,' said Jesus, 'and yet you, Philip, have not recognised me? The person who has seen me has seen the Father, 10 how can you say, then, "Show us the Father"? Don't you believe that I am in union with the Father, and the Father with me? In giving you my teaching I am not speaking on my own authority; but the Father himself, always in 11 union with me, does his own work. Believe me,' he said to them all, 'when I say that I am in union with the Father and the Father with me, or else 12 believe me because of the work itself. In truth I tell you, the person who believes in me will themselves do the work that I am doing; and they will 13 do greater work still, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask, 14 in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be honoured in the Son. If 15 you ask anything, in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will lay my 16 commands to heart, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another 17 helper, to be with you always – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive this Spirit, because it does not see him or recognise him, but you recognise 18 him, because he is always with you, and is within you. I will not leave you 19 bereaved; I will come to you. In a little while the world will see me no more, 20 but you will still see me; because I am living, you will be living also. At that time you will recognise that I am in union with the Father, and you 21 with me, and I with you. It is they who have my commands and lays them to heart who loves me; and the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them, and will reveal myself to them.'

22 'What has happened, Master,' said Judas (not Judas Iscariot), 'that you are going to reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?'

23 'Whoever loves me,' Jesus answered, 'will lay my message to heart; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with 24 him. The person who does not love me will not lay my message to heart; and the message to which you are listening is not my own, but comes from 25 the Father who sent me. I have told you all this while still with you, but 26 the helper – the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name – will teach you all things, and will recall to your minds all that I have said to you. 27 Peace be with you! My own peace I give you. I do not give to you as the 28 world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, or dismayed. You heard me say that I was going away and would return to you. Had you loved me, you would have been glad that I was going to the Father, because the 29 Father is greater than I. And this I have told you now before it happens, so 30 that, when it does happen, you may still believe in me. I will not talk with

you much more, for the Spirit that is ruling the world is coming. He has
31 nothing in common with me; but he is coming so that the world may see
that I love the Father, and that I do as the Father commanded me. Come,
let us be going.

15 ‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. Any unfruitful
2 branch in me he takes away, and he cleanses every fruitful branch, so that
3 it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the message that I
4 have given you. Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. As
a branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains united to the vine;
5 no more can you, unless you remain united to me. I am the vine, you are
the branches. If you remain united to me, while I remain united to you –
6 you bear fruit plentifully; for you can do nothing apart from me. If anyone
does not remain united to me, they are thrown away, as a branch would be,
7 and withers up. Such branches are collected and thrown into the fire, and
8 are burnt. If you remain united to me, and my teaching remains in your
hearts, ask whatever you wish, and it will be yours. It is by your bearing
fruit plentifully, and so showing yourselves my disciples, that my Father
9 is honoured. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; remain in
10 my love. If you lay my commands to heart, you will remain in my love;
just as I have laid the Father’s commands to heart and remain in his love.
11 I have told you all this so that my own joy may be yours, and that your
12 joy may be complete. This is my command – love one another, as I have
13 loved you. No one can give greater proof of love than by laying down their
14 life for their friends. And you are my friends, if you do what I command
15 you. I no longer call you “servants,” because a servant does not know what
their master is doing; but I have given you the name of “friends,” because
16 I made known to you everything that I learned from my Father. It wasn’t
you who chose me, but I who chose you, and I appointed you to go and
bear fruit – fruit that should remain, so that the Father might grant you
17 whatever you ask in my name. I am giving you these commands that you
18 may love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it has first
19 hated me. If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own.
Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the
20 world – that is why the world hates you. Remember what I said to you –
“A servant is not greater than their master.” If they have persecuted me,
they will also persecute you; if they have laid my message to heart, they
21 will lay yours to heart also. But they will do all this to you, because you
22 believe in my name, for they do not know him who sent me. If I had not
come and spoken to them, they would have had no sin to answer for; but

23 as it is, they have no excuse for their sin. The person who hates me hates
24 my Father also. If I had not done among them such work as no one else
ever did, they would have had no sin to answer for; but, as it is, they have
25 both seen and hated both me and my Father. And so is fulfilled what is
26 said in their Law – “They hated me without cause.” But, when the helper
27 comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth, who
16 to bear testimony, because you have been with me from the first. ‘I have
2 spoken to you in this way so that you may not falter. They will expel you
from their synagogues; indeed the time is coming when anyone who kills
3 you will think that they are making an offering to God. They will do this,
4 because they have not learned to know the Father, or even me. But I have
spoken to you of these things so that, when the time for them comes, you
5 may remember that I told you about them myself. I did not tell you all this
at first, because I was with you. But now I am to return to him who sent
6 me; and yet not one of you asks me – “Where are you going?” Although
7 your hearts are full of sorrow at all that I have been saying to you. Yet I am
only telling you the truth; it is for your good that I should go away. For
otherwise the helper will never come to you, but, if I leave you, I will send
8 him to you. And he, when he comes, will bring conviction to the world as
9 to sin, and as to righteousness, and as to judgment; as to sin, for people
10 do not believe in me; as to righteousness, for I am going to the Father, and
11 you will see me no longer; as to judgment, for the Spirit that is ruling this
12 world has been condemned. I have still much to say to you, but you cannot
13 bear it now. Yet when he – The Spirit of truth – comes, he will guide you
into all truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but he will speak
14 of all that he hears; and he will tell you of the things that are to come. He
will honour me; because he will take of what is mine, and will tell it to you.
15 Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I said that he takes of
16 what is mine, and will tell it to you. In a little while you will no longer see
me; and then in a little while you will see me indeed.’

17 At this some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean
by saying to us “In a little while you will not see me, and then in a little
while you will see me indeed”; and by saying “Because I am going to the
18 Father”? What does he mean by “In a little while”? they said. ‘We do not
19 know what he is speaking about.’ Jesus saw that they were wanting to ask
him a question, and said, ‘Are you trying to find out from one another
what I meant by saying “In a little while you will not see me; and then in a
20 little while you will see me indeed”? In truth I tell you that you will weep
and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will suffer pain, but your pain

21 will turn to joy. A woman in labour is in pain because her time has come; but no sooner is the child born, than she forgets her trouble in her joy that
22 a child has been born into the world. You, in the same way, are sorry now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will rob
23 you of your joy. And at that time you will not ask me anything; in truth I tell you, if you ask the Father for anything, he will grant it to you in my
24 name. So far you have not asked for anything, in my name; ask, and you
25 will receive, so that your joy may be complete. I have spoken to you of all this in figures; a time is coming, however, when I will not speak any longer
26 to you in figures, but will tell you about the Father plainly. You will ask, at that time, in my name; and I do not say that I will intercede with the
27 Father for you; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved
28 me, and have believed that I came from the Father. I came out from the Father, and have come into the world; and now I am to leave the world,
and go to the Father.'

29 'At last,' exclaimed the disciples, 'you are using plain words and not
30 speaking in figures at all. Now we are sure that you know everything, and need not wait for anyone to question you. This makes us believe that you did come from God.'

31 'Do you believe that already?' Jesus answered. 'Listen! A time is coming
32 – indeed it has already come – when you are to be scattered, each going his own way, and to leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the
33 Father is with me. I have spoken to you in this way, so that in me you may find peace. In the world you will find trouble; yet, take courage! I have conquered the world.'

17 After saying this, Jesus raised his eyes heaven-wards, and said:

'Father, the hour has come; honour your Son, so that your Son may honour you; even as you gave him power over all humanity, so that he should give eternal life to all those whom you have given him.
2 And the eternal life is this – to know you the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent as your messenger. I have honoured you on earth by completing the work which you have given me to do; and now do you honour me, Father, at your own side, with the honour which I had at your side before the world began. I have revealed you to those whom you gave me from the world; they were your own, and you gave them to me; and they have laid your message to heart.
3 They recognise now that everything that you gave me was from you; for I have given them the teaching which you gave me, and they received it, and clearly understood that I came from you, and

9 they believed that you has sent me as your messenger. I intercede
10 for them; I am not interceding for the world, but for those whom
11 you has given me, for they are your own – All that is mine is yours,
12 and all that is yours is mine – and I am honoured in them. Now I
13 am to be in this world no longer, but they are still to be in the world,
14 and I am to come to you. Holy Father, keep them by that revelation
15 of your name which you has given me, so that they may be one,
16 as we are. Whilst I was with them, I kept them by that revelation,
17 and I have guarded them; and not one of them has been lost, except
18 that lost soul – in fulfilment of scripture. But now I am to come to
19 you; and I am speaking like this, while still in the world, so that
20 they may have my own joy, in all its fullness, in their hearts. I have
21 given them your message; and the world hated them, because they
22 do not belong to the world, even as I do not belong to the world.
23 I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to keep them
24 from evil. They do not belong to the world, even as I do not belong
25 to the world. Consecrate them by the truth; your message is truth.
26 Just as you has sent me as your messenger to the world, so I send
27 them as my messengers to the world. And it is for their sakes that I
28 am consecrating myself, so that they also may be truly consecrated.
29 But it is not only for them that I am interceding, but also for those
30 who believe in me through their message, that they all may be one
31 – that as you, Father, are in union with us – and so the world may
32 believe that you have sent me as your messenger. I have given them
33 the honour which you has given me, so that they may be one as we
34 are one – I in union with them and you with me – that so they may
35 be perfected in their union, and so that the world may know that
36 you have sent me as your messenger, and that you have loved them
37 as you have loved me. Father, my desire for all those whom you
38 have given me is that they may be with me where I am, so that they
39 may see the honour which you have given me; for thou did love
40 me before the beginning of the world. Righteous Father, though the
41 world did not know you, I knew you; and these people knew that
42 you have sent me as your messenger. I have made you known to
43 them, and will do so still; that the love that you have had for me
44 may be in their hearts, and that I may be in them also.'

- 18 When Jesus had said this, he went out with his disciples and crossed the brook Kedron to a place where there was a garden, into which he and
2 his disciples went. The place was well known to Judas, the betrayer, for

- 3 Jesus and his disciples had often met there. So Judas, who had obtained the soldiers of the Roman garrison, and some police officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.
- 4 Jesus, aware of all that was coming upon him, went to meet them, and said to them, 'For whom are you looking?'
- 5 'Jesus of Nazareth,' was their answer. 'I am he,' said Jesus. (Judas, the betrayer, was also standing with them.) When Jesus said "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. So he again asked for whom they were looking, and they answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'
- 6 'I have already told you that I am he,' replied Jesus, 'so, if it is for me that you are looking, let these people go.' This was in fulfilment of his words – "Of those whom you have given me I have not lost one." At this, Simon Peter, who had a sword with him, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. But Jesus said to Peter, 'Sheathe your sword. Should I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?'
- 7 So the soldiers of the garrison, with their commanding officer and the Jewish police, arrested Jesus and bound him, and took him first of all to Annas. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had counselled the religious authorities, that it was best that one person should die for the people. Meanwhile Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple, being well-known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, while Peter stood outside by the door. Presently the other disciple – the one well-known to the high priest – went out and spoke to the portress, and brought Peter in. So the maid-servant said to Peter, 'Aren't you also one of this man's disciples?'
- 8 'No, I am not,' he said. The servants and police officers were standing round a charcoal fire (which they had made because it was cold), and were warming themselves. Peter, too, was with them, standing and warming himself. The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 'For my part,' answered Jesus, 'I have spoken to all the world openly. I always taught in some synagogue, or in the Temple Courts, places where everyone assembles, and I never spoke of anything in secret. Why question me? Question those who have listened to me as to what I have spoken about to them. They must know what I said.' When Jesus said this, one of the police officers, who was standing near, gave him a blow with his hand. 'Do you answer the high priest like that?' he exclaimed. 'If I said anything wrong, give evidence about it,' replied Jesus, 'but if not,

- 24 why do you strike me?' Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.
25 Meanwhile Simon Peter was standing there, warming himself; so they said
to him, 'Aren't you also one of his disciples?' Peter denied it. 'No, I am
not,' he said. One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose
ear Peter had cut off, exclaimed, 'Didn't I myself see you with him in the
garden?' Peter again denied it; and at that moment a cock crowed.
- 28 From Caiaphas they took Jesus to the Government house. It was early
in the morning. But they did not enter the Government house themselves,
otherwise they might become defiled, and so be unable to eat the Passover.
29 Therefore Pilate came outside to speak to them. 'What charge do you bring
30 against this man?' he asked. 'If he had not been a criminal, we should not
31 have given him up to you,' they answered. 'Take him yourselves,' said
Pilate, 'and try him by your own Law.'
- 32 'We have no power to put anyone to death,' the authorities replied – In
fulfilment of what Jesus had said when indicating the death that he was
33 destined to die. After that, Pilate went into the Government house again,
and calling Jesus up, asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?'
- 34 'Do you ask me that yourself?' replied Jesus, 'or did others say it to you
about me?'
- 35 'Do you take me for a Jew?' was Pilate's answer. 'It is your own nation
and the chief priests who have given you up to me. What have you done?'
- 36 'My kingly power,' replied Jesus, 'is not due to this world. If it had been
so, my servants would be doing their utmost to prevent my being given
up to the authorities; but my kingly power is not from the world.'
- 37 'So you are a king after all!' exclaimed Pilate. 'Yes, it is true I am a king,'
answered Jesus. 'I was born for this, I have come into the world for this –
to bear testimony to the truth. Everyone who is on the side of truth listens
to my voice.'
- 38 'What is truth?' exclaimed Pilate. After saying this, he went out to the
crowd again, and said, 'For my part, I find nothing with which he can be
39 charged. It is, however, the custom for me to grant you the release of one
man at the Passover Festival. Do you wish for the release of the king of the
Jews?'
- 40 'No, not this man,' they shouted again, 'but Barabbas!' This Barabbas
was a robber.
- 19 After that, Pilate had Jesus scourged. The soldiers made a crown with
2 some thorns and put it on his head and threw a purple robe round him.
3 They kept coming up to him and saying, 'Long live the king of the Jews!'

- 4 and they gave him blow after blow with their hands. Pilate again came outside, and said to the people, 'Look! I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find nothing with which he can be charged.'
- 5 Then Jesus came outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe;
- 6 and Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' When the chief priests and the police officers saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'

'Take him yourselves and crucify him,' said Pilate. 'For my part, I find nothing with which he can be charged.'

- 7 'But we,' replied the crowd, 'have a Law, under which he deserves death for making himself out to be the Son of God.' When Pilate heard what 8 they said, he became still more alarmed; and, going into the Government 9 house again, he said to Jesus, 'Where do you come from?' But Jesus made 10 no reply. So Pilate said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me? Don't you know that I have power to release you, and have power to crucify you?'

- 11 'You would have no power over me at all,' answered Jesus, 'if it had not been given you from above; and, therefore, the man who betrayed me to 12 you is guilty of the greater sin.' This made Pilate anxious to release him; but the crowd shouted, 'If you release that man, you are no friend of the Emperor! Anyone who makes himself out to be a king is setting himself 13 against the Emperor!' On hearing what they said, Pilate brought Jesus out, and took his seat on the Bench at a place called "The Stone Pavement" – in 14 Hebrew "Gabbatha." It was the Passover Preparation day, and about noon. 15 Then he said to the crowd, 'Here is your king!' At that the people shouted, 'Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!'

- 16 'What! Should I crucify your king?' exclaimed Pilate. 'We have no king but the Emperor,' replied the chief priests; so Pilate gave Jesus up to them to be crucified.

- 17 So they took Jesus; and he went out, carrying his cross himself, to the 18 place which is named from a scull, or, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they 19 crucified him, and two others with him – one on each side, and Jesus 20 between them. Pilate also had these words written and put up over the 21 cross – "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." These words 22 were read by many people, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and they were written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. The chief priests said to Pilate, 'Do not write "The king of the Jews", but write what the man said – "I am the king of the Jews."' But Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.'

- 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares – a share for each soldier – and they took the coat also. The coat had no seam, being woven in one piece from top to bottom.
- 24 So they said to one another, 'Do not let us tear it, but let us cast lots for it, to see who will have it.' This was in fulfilment of the words of scripture –

"They shared my clothes among them,
And over my clothing they cast lots."

- 25 That was what the soldiers did. Meanwhile near the cross of Jesus were standing his mother and his mother's sister, as well as Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved, standing near, he said to his mother, 'There is your son.' Then he said to that disciple, 'There is your mother.' And from that very hour the disciple took her to live in his house.

- 28 Afterwards, knowing that everything was now finished, Jesus said, in fulfilment of the words of scripture, 'I am thirsty.' There was a bowl standing there full of common wine; so they put a sponge soaked in the wine on 29 the end of a hyssop-stalk, and held it up to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he exclaimed, 'All is finished!' Then, bowing his head, 31 he resigned his spirit to God. It was the Preparation day, and so, to prevent the bodies from remaining on the crosses during the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a great day), the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken 32 and the bodies removed. Accordingly the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man, and then those of the other who had been crucified with 33 Jesus; but, on coming to him, when they saw that he was already dead, 34 they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers, however, pierced his side 35 with a spear, and blood and water immediately flowed from it. This is the statement of one who actually saw it – and his statement may be relied on, and he knows that he is speaking the truth – and it is given in order that 36 you also may be convinced. For all this happened in fulfilment of the words 37 of scripture – "Not one of its bones will be broken." And there is another 38 passage which says – "They will look on him whom they pierced." After this, Joseph of Ramah, a disciple of Jesus – but a secret one, owing to his fear of the religious authorities – begged Pilate's permission to remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him leave; so Joseph went and removed the body. 39 Nicodemus, too – the man who had formerly visited Jesus by night – came 40 with a roll of myrrh and aloes, weighing nearly a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen with the spices, according 41 to the Jewish mode of burial. At the place where Jesus had been crucified

42 there was a garden, and in the garden a newly made tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because of its being the Preparation day, and as the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

The Risen Life

- 20 On the first day of the week, early in the morning, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb, and saw that the stone had been
2 removed. So she came running to Simon Peter, and to that other disciple
3 who was Jesus' friend, and said to them, 'They have taken away the Master
4 out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him!' So, Peter
5 started off with that other disciple, and they went to the tomb. The two
6 began running together; but the other disciple ran faster than Peter, and
7 reached the tomb first. Stooping down, he saw the linen wrappings lying
8 there, but did not go in. Presently Simon Peter came following behind him,
9 and went into the tomb; and he looked at the linen wrappings lying there,
10 and the cloth which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the wrappings,
11 but rolled up on one side, separately. Then the other disciple, who had
12 reached the tomb first, went inside too, and he saw for himself and was
13 convinced. For they did not then understand the passage of scripture which
14 says that Jesus must rise again from the dead. The disciples then returned
15 to their companions.
16 Meanwhile Mary was standing close outside the tomb, weeping. Still
17 weeping, she leant forward into the tomb, and perceived two angels clothed
18 in white sitting there, where the body of Jesus had been lying, one where
the head and the other where the feet had been. 'Why are you weeping?'
asked the angels. 'They have taken my Master away,' she answered, 'and I
do not know where they have laid him.' After saying this, she turned round,
and looked at Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.
'Why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?' he asked. Supposing him
to be the gardener, Mary answered, 'If it was you, Sir, who carried him
away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away myself.'
'Mary!' said Jesus. She turned round, and exclaimed in Hebrew, 'Rab-
boni!' (or, as we should say, "teacher"). 'Do not hold me,' Jesus said, 'for I
have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers, and tell them
that I am ascending to him who is my Father and their Father, my God and
their God.' Mary of Magdala went and told the disciples that she had seen
the Master, and that he had said this to her.

19 In the evening of the same day – the first day of the week – after the doors of the room, in which the disciples were, had been shut because they were afraid of the religious authorities, Jesus came and stood among
20 them and said, ‘Peace be with you’; after which he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Master.
21 Again Jesus said to them, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me
22 as his messenger, so I am sending you.’ After saying this, he breathed on
23 them, and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit; if you remit anyone’s sins, they have been remitted; and, if you retain them, they have been retained.’

24 But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called “The Twin,” was not with them
25 when Jesus came; so the rest of the disciples said to him, ‘We have seen
the Master!’

26 Unless I see the marks of the nails in his hands,’ he exclaimed, ‘and put my finger into the marks, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’ A week later the disciples were again in the house, and Thomas with them. After the doors had been shut, Jesus came and stood among them,
27 and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Place your finger here, and look at my hands; and place your hand here, and put it into my side; and do not refuse to believe, but believe.’ And Thomas exclaimed, ‘My Master, and my God!’

29 ‘Is it because you have seen me that you have believed?’ said Jesus. ‘Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed!’

30 There were many other signs of his mission that Jesus gave in presence
31 of the disciples, which are not recorded in this book; but these have been recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God – and that, through your belief in his name, you may have life.

21 Later on, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of
2 Tiberias. It was in this way, – Simon Peter, Thomas, who was called “The Twin,” Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, Zebedee’s sons, and two other disci-
3 ples of Jesus, were together, when Simon Peter said, ‘I am going fishing.’

4 ‘We will come with you,’ said the others. They went out and got into the boat, but caught nothing that night. Just as day was breaking, Jesus came
5 and stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was he. ‘My
children,’ he said, ‘have you anything to eat?’

6 ‘No,’ they answered. ‘Cast your net to the right of the boat,’ he said, ‘and
7 you will find fish.’ So they cast the net, and now they could not haul it in because of the quantity of fish. The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, ‘It is the Master!’ When Simon Peter heard that it was the Master, he

fastened his coat round him (for he had taken it off), and threw himself into
8 the sea. But the rest of the disciples came in the boat (for they were only
9 about a hundred yards from shore), dragging the net full of fish. When
10 they had come ashore, they found a charcoal fire ready, with some fish
11 already on it, and some bread as well. ‘Bring some of the fish which you
12 have just caught,’ said Jesus. So Simon Peter got into the boat and hauled
13 the net ashore full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and yet,
14 although there were so many, the net had not been torn. ‘Come and have
breakfast.’, Jesus said. None of the disciples dared ask him who he was,
because they knew it was the Master. Jesus went and took the bread and
gave it to them, and the fish too. This was the third time that Jesus showed
himself to the disciples after he had risen from the dead.

15 When breakfast was over, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John,
do you love me more than the others?’

‘Yes, Master,’ he answered, ‘you know that I am your friend.’

16 ‘Feed my lambs,’ said Jesus. Then, a second time, Jesus asked, ‘Simon,
son of John, do you love me?’

‘Yes, Master,’ he answered, ‘you know that I am your friend.’

17 ‘Tend my sheep,’ said Jesus. The third time, Jesus said to him, ‘Simon,
son of John, are you my friend?’ Peter was hurt at his third question being
“Are you my friend?”; and exclaimed, ‘Master, you know everything! You
can tell that I am your friend.’

18 ‘Feed my sheep,’ said Jesus. ‘In truth I tell you,’ he continued, ‘when
you were young, you used to put on your own clothes, and walk wherever
you wished; but, when you have grown old, you will have to stretch out
your hands, while someone else puts on your clothes, and takes you where
19 you do not wish.’ Jesus said this to show the death by which Peter was
20 to honour God, and then he added, ‘Follow me.’ Peter turned round, and
saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following – the one who at the supper
leant back on the Master’s shoulder, and asked him who it was who would
21 betray him. Seeing him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, what about this man?’

22 ‘If it is my will that he should wait until I come,’ answered Jesus, ‘what
23 has that to do with you? Follow me yourself.’ So the report spread among
his followers that that disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say that he
was not to die, but said ‘If it is my will that he should wait until I come,
what has that to do with you?’

24 It is this disciple who states these things, and who recorded them; and
we know that his statement is true.

25 There are many other things which Jesus did; but, if every one of them were to be recorded in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not hold the books that would be written.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The Church and the Jews

The Acts of the Apostles Peter and John

- 1 THE FIRST ACCOUNT WHICH I DREW UP, Theophilus, dealt with all that Jesus did and taught from the very first, down to that day on which he was taken up to heaven, after he had, by the help of the Holy Spirit, given instructions to the apostles whom he had chosen. With abundant proofs, he showed himself to them, still living, after his death; appearing to them from time to time during forty days, and speaking of all that related to the kingdom of God. And once, when he had gathered them together, he charged them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the fulfilment of the Father's promise – 'that promise,' he said, 'of which you have heard me speak; for, while John baptized with water, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit before many days have passed.'
- 2 So, when the apostles had met together, they asked Jesus this question – 'Master, is this the time when you intend to re-establish the kingdom for Israel?' His answer was, 'It is not for you to know times or hours, for the Father has reserved these for his own decision; but you will receive power, when the Holy Spirit will have descended on you, and will be witnesses for me not only in Jerusalem, but throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'
- 3 No sooner had Jesus said this than he was caught up before their eyes, and a cloud received him from their sight. While they were still gazing up into the heavens, as he went, suddenly two men, clothed in white, stood beside them, and said, 'People of Galilee, why are you standing here looking up into the heavens? This same Jesus, who has been taken from

you into the heavens, will come in the same way in which you have seen him go into the heavens.'

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called Olivet, which
13 is about three quarters of a mile from the city. When they reached Jerusalem,
they went to the upstairs room, where they were staying. There were there
Peter, John, James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and
Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son
14 of James. They all united in devoting themselves to prayer, and so did some
women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

15 About this time, at a meeting of the Lord's followers, when there were
16 about a hundred and twenty present, Peter rose to speak. 'Friends,' he said,
'it was necessary that the prediction of scripture should be fulfilled, which
the Holy Spirit made by the lips of David about Judas, who acted as guide
17 to the men who arrested Jesus, for he was one of our number and had
18 his part allotted him in this work of ours.' (This man had bought a piece
of land with the price of his treachery; and, falling heavily, his body had
19 burst open, and all his bowels protruded. This became known to everyone
living in Jerusalem, so that the field came to be called, in their language,
"Akeldama," which means the "Field of Blood.")

20 'For in the book of Psalms,' Peter continued, 'it is said –

"Let his home become desolate,
And let no one live in it";

and also –

"His office let another take."

21 Therefore, from among the men who have been with us all the time
22 that Jesus, our Master, went in and out among us – from his baptism by
John down to that day on which he was taken from us – someone must be
23 found to join us as a witness of his resurrection.' So they put forward two
men, Joseph called Barsabas, whose other name was Justus, and Matthias;
24 and they offered this prayer –

'Lord, who reads all hearts, show which of these two men you have
25 chosen to take the place in this apostolic work, which Judas has
abandoned, to go to his proper place.'

26 Then they drew lots between them; and, the lot having fallen to
Matthias, he was added to the number of the eleven apostles.

- 2 In the course of the Festival at the close of the Harvest the disciples had all
2 met together, when suddenly there came from the heavens a noise like a
3 strong wind rushing by; it filled the whole house in which they were sitting.
3 Then there appeared tongues of what seemed to be flame, separating, so
4 that one settled on each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy
Spirit, and began to speak in different languages as the Spirit prompted
their utterances.
- 5 Now there were then staying in Jerusalem religious Jews from every
6 country in the world; and, when this sound was heard, numbers of people
collected, in the greatest excitement, because each of them heard the disci-
7 ples speaking in his own language. They were utterly amazed, and kept
8 asking in astonishment, 'What! Are not all these people who are speaking
9 Galileans? Then how is it that we each of us hear them in our own lan-
10 guage? Some of us are Parthians, some Medes, some Elamites; and some
11 of us live in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Roman
Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the districts of Libya ad-
joining Cyrene; some of us are visitors from Rome, either Jews by birth or
converts, and some are Cretans and Arabians – yet we all alike hear them
speaking in our own languages of the great things that God has done.'
- 12 They were all utterly amazed and bewildered.
- 13 'What does it mean?' they asked one another. But there were some who
said with a sneer, 'They have had too much new wine.'
- 14 Then Peter, surrounded by the eleven other apostles, stood up, and,
raising his voice, addressed the crowd. 'People of Judea,' he began, 'and all
you who are staying in Jerusalem, let me tell you what this means. Mark
15 well my words. These people are not drunk, as you suppose; for it is only
16 now nine in the morning! No! This is what is spoken of in the prophet Joel
-
- 17 "It will come about in the last days," God says,
 "That I will pour out my Spirit on all humanity;
Your sons and your daughters will become prophets,
Your young men will see visions,
And your old men dream dreams;
- 18 Yes, even on the slaves – for they are mine – both men and
 women,
I will in those days pour out my Spirit,
 And they will become prophets;
- 19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above,
 And signs on the earth below –

Blood and fire and mist of smoke;
20 The sun will become darkness,
And the moon blood-red,
Before the day of the Lord comes – that great and awful day.
21 Then will everyone who invokes the name of the Lord be
saved."

22 People of Israel, listen to what I am saying. Jesus of Nazareth, a man whose mission from God to you was proved by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God showed among you through him, as you know full well – He, I say, in accordance with God's definite plan and with his previous knowledge, was betrayed, and you, by the hands of lawless men, 24 nailed him to a cross and put him to death. But God released him from the pangs of death and raised him to life, it being impossible for death 25 to retain its hold on him. Indeed he was the one David was referring to when he said –

"I have had the Lord ever before my eyes,
For he stands at my right hand, so that I should not be disquieted.

26 Therefore my heart was cheered, and my tongue told its delight;
Yes, even my body, too, will rest in hope;
27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
Nor surrender me, your holy one, to undergo corruption.
28 You have shown me the path to life,
You will fill me with gladness in your presence."

29 Friends, I can speak to you the more confidently about the patriarch David, because he is dead and buried, and his tomb is here among us 30 to this very day. David, then, prophet as he was, knowing that God had solemnly sworn to him to set one of his descendants on his throne, 31 looked into the future, and referred to the resurrection of the Christ when he said that he had not been abandoned to Hades, nor had his body undergone corruption. It was this Jesus, whom God raised to life; and of 33 that we are ourselves all witnesses. And now that he has been exalted to the right hand of God, and has received from the Father the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, he has begun to pour out that gift, as you yourselves now see and hear. It was not David who went up into heaven; for he himself says –

35 "The Lord said to my master, 'Sit on my right hand,
Until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet.'"

- 36 So let the whole nation of Israel know beyond all doubt, that God has made him both Lord and Christ – this Jesus whom you crucified.'
- 37 When the people heard this, they were conscience-smitten, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Friends, what can we do?'
- 38 'Repent,' answered Peter, 'and be baptized every one of you in the faith of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and then you will receive
- 39 the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and also for all those now far away, who may be called by the Lord our God.'
- 40 Peter spoke to them for a long time using many other arguments and pleaded with them – 'Save yourselves from the perverse spirit of this age.' So those who accepted his teaching were baptized, and about three thousand people joined the disciples on that day alone. They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the Common life of the church, to the breaking of the bread and to the Prayers.
- 43 A deep impression was made on everyone, and many wonders and signs were done at the hands of the apostles. All who became believers in
- 44 Christ held everything for the common use; they sold their property and
- 45 their goods, and shared the proceeds among them all, according to their
- 46 individual needs. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the Temple Courts, and to the breaking of bread at their homes, while they partook of their food in simple-hearted gladness, praising God, and
- 47 winning the goodwill of all the people. And the Lord daily added to their company those who were in the path of salvation.
- 3 One day, as Peter and John were going up into the Temple Courts for the
- 2 three o'clock Prayers, a man, who had been lame from his birth, was being
- 3 carried by. This man used to be set down every day at the gate of the Temple
- 4 called "the Beautiful Gate," to beg of those who went in. Seeing Peter and
- 5 John on the point of entering, he asked them to give him something. Peter
- fixed his eyes on him, and so did John, and then Peter said, 'Look at us.'
- 5 The man was all attention, expecting to get something from them; but
- 6 Peter added, 'I have no gold or silver, but I give you what I have. In the
- 7 name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk.' Grasping the lame man
- 8 by the right hand, Peter lifted him up. Instantly the man's feet and ankles
- 9 became strong, and, leaping up, he stood and began to walk about, and
- then went with them into the Temple Courts, walking, and leaping, and
- 10 praising God. All the people saw him walking about and praising God;
- and, when they recognised him as the man who used to sit begging at the
- Beautiful Gate of the Temple, they were utterly astonished and amazed at

- 11 what had happened to him. While the man still clung to Peter and John,
the people all quickly gathered round them in the Colonnade named after
Solomon, in the greatest astonishment.
- 12 On seeing this, Peter said to the people, 'People of Israel, why are you
surprised at this? And why do you stare at us, as though we, by any power
13 or piety of our own, had enabled this man to walk? The God of Abraham,
Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has done honour to his servant
Jesus – him whom you gave up and disowned before Pilate, when he had
14 decided to set him free. You, I say, disowned the holy and righteous one,
15 and asked for the release of a murderer! The guide to life you put to death!
But God raised him from the dead – and of that we are ourselves witnesses.
- 16 And it is by faith in the name of Jesus, that this man, whom you all see and
know, has – by his name – been made strong. Yes, it is the faith inspired by
Jesus that has made this complete cure of the man, before the eyes of you
17 all. And yet, my friends, I know that you acted as you did from ignorance,
18 and your rulers also. But it was in this way that God fulfilled all that he
had long ago foretold, as to the sufferings of his Christ, by the lips of all
19 the prophets. Therefore, repent and turn so that your sins may be wiped
20 away; so that happier times may come from the Lord himself, and so that
21 he may send you, in Jesus, your long-appointed Christ. But heaven must
be his home, until the days of the Universal Restoration, of which God has
22 spoken by the lips of his holy prophets from the very first. Moses himself
said –

"The Lord your God will raise up from among yourselves a prophet,
as he raised me. To him you will listen whenever he speaks to you."

- 23 And it will be that should anyone among the people not listen to
that prophet, he will be utterly destroyed."

- 24 Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel onwards, and all their succe-
25 sors who had a message to deliver, told of these days. You yourselves are
the heirs of the prophets, and heirs, too, of the covenant which God made
with your ancestors, when he said to Abraham –

"In your descendants will all the nations of the earth be blessed."

- 26 For you, first, God raised up his servant, and sent him to bless you, by
4 turning each one of you from his wicked ways.' While Peter and John
were still speaking to the people, the chief priest, with the officer in
2 charge at the Temple and the Sadducees, came up to them, much an-
noyed because they were teaching the people, and because, through Jesus,
3 they were preaching the resurrection from the dead. They arrested the

4 apostles and, as it was already evening, had them placed in custody until
the next day. Many, however, of those who had heard the apostles' mes-
sage became believers in Christ, the number of the men alone amounting
to about five thousand.

5 The next day, a meeting of the leaders of the people, the elders, and the
6 teachers of the Law was held in Jerusalem. There were present Annas the
high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all who were of High-Priestly
7 rank. They had Peter and John brought before them, and questioned them.

'By what power,' they asked, 'Or in whose name have men like you done
this thing?'

8 Then, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, 'Leaders of the people and
9 elders, since we are on our trial today for a kind act done to a helpless man,
10 and are asked in what way the man here before you has been cured, let
me tell you all and all the people of Israel, that it is by the name of Jesus
Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the
11 dead – it is, I say, by his name that this man stands here before you lame
12 no longer. Jesus is "the stone which, scorned by you the builders, has yet
13 become the corner stone." And salvation is in him alone; for there is no
other name in the whole world, given to people, to which we must look
for our salvation.'

14 When the Council saw how boldly Peter and John spoke, and found
that they were uneducated men of humble station, they were surprised,
15 and realised that they had been companions of Jesus. But, when they
looked at the man who had been healed, standing there with them, they
had nothing to say. So they ordered them out of court, and then began
consulting together.

16 'What are we to do to these men?' they asked one another. 'That a re-
markable sign has been given through them is obvious to everyone living
17 in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But, to prevent this thing from spread-
ing further among the people, let us warn them not to speak in this name
any more to anyone whatever.'

18 So they called the apostles in, and ordered them not to speak or teach in
the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John replied, 'Whether it is right, in the sight of God, to
20 listen to you rather than to him – judge for yourselves, for we cannot help
21 speaking of what we have seen and heard.' However, after further warnings,
the Council set them at liberty, not seeing any safe way of punishing them,
because of the people, for they were all praising God for what had occurred;

22 for the man who was the subject of this miraculous cure was more than forty years old.

23 After they had been set at liberty, the apostles went to their friends and
24 told them what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. All who heard their story, moved by a common impulse, raised their voices to God in prayer:

‘Sovereign Lord, it is you who has made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them, and who, by the lips of our ancestor, your servant David, who spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit, have said –

“Why did the nations rage,
and the peoples form vain designs?

26 The kings of the earth set their array,
and its rulers gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Christ.”

27 There have indeed gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you has consecrated the Christ, not Herod and Pontius Pilate only, but the nations and the people of Israel besides
28 – Yet only to do what you, by your power and of your own will, did long ago destine to be done. Now, therefore, Lord, mark their threats, and enable your servants, with all fearlessness, to tell your message, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and cause signs and wonders to take place through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’

31 When their prayer was ended, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to tell God’s message fearlessly.

32 The whole body of those who had become believers in Christ were of one heart and mind. Not one of them claimed any of his goods as his own, but
33 everything was held for the common use. The apostles continued with great power to bear their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,
34 and God’s blessing rested on them all abundantly. Nor was there anyone in need among them, for all who were owners of land or houses sold them,
35 and brought the proceeds of the sales And laid them at the apostles’ feet;
36 and then everyone received a share in proportion to his wants. A Levite of Cyprian birth, named Joseph, (who had received from the apostles
37 the additional name of “Barnabas” – which means “The Consoler,”) Sold

a farm that belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

5 There was, however, a man named Ananias, who, with his wife Sapphira, sold some property, and, with her connivance, kept back some of the proceeds. He brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 'Ananias,' Peter exclaimed, 'how is it that Satan has so taken possession of your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit, and kept back a part of 4 the money paid for the land? While it was unsold, was not it your own? And after it was sold, was not the money at your own disposal? How did you come to think of such a thing? You have lied, not to people, but to God!'

5 As Ananias heard these words, he fell down and expired; and everyone 6 who heard of it was appalled. The young men got up, and, winding the body in a sheet, carried it out and buried it.

7 After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing 8 what had happened. 'Is it true?' Peter asked, addressing her, 'that you sold your land for such a sum?'

9 'Yes,' she answered, 'we did.' Then Peter said, 'How did you come to agree to provoke the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The footsteps of those who have buried your husband are at the door; and they will carry you out too.'

10 Instantly Sapphira fell down at Peter's feet and expired. On coming in, the young men found her dead; so they carried her out and buried her by 11 her husband's side. The whole church and all who heard of these events were appalled.

12 Many signs and wonders continued to occur among the people, through the instrumentality of the apostles, whose custom it was to meet all together 13 in the Colonnade of Solomon; but of the rest no one ventured to join them.

14 On the other hand, the people were full of their praise, and still larger numbers, both of men and women, as they became believers in the Lord, 15 were added to their number. The consequence was that people would bring out their sick even into the streets, and lay them on mattresses and mats, in the hope that, as Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on someone 16 of them. Besides this, the inhabitants of the towns round Jerusalem flocked into the city, bringing with them their sick and those who were troubled by foul spirits; and they were cured everyone.

17 At this the high priest was roused to action, and he and all his supporters 18 (who formed the party of the Sadducees), moved by jealousy, arrested the 19 apostles, and had them placed in custody. An angel of the Lord, however,

20 opened the prison doors at night and led them out. 'Go,' he said, 'and stand in the Temple Courts, and tell the people the whole message of this new life.' When they heard this, they went at daybreak into the Temple Courts, and began to teach. The high priest and his party, on their arrival, summoned the High Council, including all the leaders of the people among the 22 Israelites, and sent to the jail to fetch the apostles. But, when the officers got there, they did not find them in the prison; so they returned and reported 23 that, while they had found the goal barred securely and the guards posted at the doors, yet, on opening them, they had not found anyone inside.

24 When the officer in charge at the Temple and the chief priests heard their story, they were perplexed about the apostles and as to what all this would 25 lead to. Presently, however, someone came and told them, that the men whom they had put in prison were actually standing in the Temple Courts, 26 teaching the people. Then, the officer went with his men and fetched the apostles – without using violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by 27 the people – And then brought them before the Council. The high priest demanded an explanation from them.

28 'We gave you strict orders,' he said, 'not to teach in this name. Yet you have actually flooded Jerusalem with your teaching, and you want to make us responsible for the death of this man.'

29 To this Peter and the apostles replied, 'We must obey God rather than 30 people. The God of our ancestors raised Jesus, whom you put to death by 31 hanging him on a cross. It is this Jesus whom God has exalted to his right hand, to be a guide and a Saviour, to give Israel repentance and forgiveness 32 of sins. And we are witness to the truth of this, and so is the Holy Spirit – the gift of God to those who obey him.'

33 The members of the Council became frantic with rage on hearing this, 34 and were for putting the apostles to death. But Gamaliel, a Pharisee, who was a Doctor of the Law and who was held in universal respect, rose in the Council, and directed that the men should be taken out of court for a little while.

35 He then said, 'People of Israel, take care as to what you intend to do with 36 these men. For not long ago Theudas appeared, professing to be somebody, and was joined by a body of some four hundred men. But he was killed; 37 and all his followers scattered and dwindled away. After him, Judas the Galilean appeared at the time of the census, and induced people to follow 38 him; Yet he, too, perished and all his followers were dispersed. And, in this present case, my advice to you is not to interfere with these men, but to leave them alone, for, if their designs and their work are merely of human 39 origin, they will come to an end; but, if they are of divine origin, you will be

powerless to put an end to them – or else you may find yourselves fighting against God!'

40 The Council followed his advice, and, calling the apostles in, had them flogged, and then, after cautioning them not to speak in the name of Jesus, 41 set them free. But the apostles left the Council, rejoicing that they had been 42 thought worthy to suffer disgrace for that name; and never for a single day, either in the Temple Courts or in private houses, did they cease to teach, or to tell the good news of Jesus, the Christ.

6 About this time, when the number of the disciples was constantly increasing, complaints were made by the Greek speaking Jews against the Aramaic speaking Jews, that their widows were being overlooked in the 2 daily distribution. The Twelve, therefore, called together the general body 3 of the disciples and said to them, 'It is not well for us to see to the distribution at the tables and neglect God's message. Therefore, friends, look for seven men of reputation among yourselves, wise and spiritually-minded 4 men, and we will appoint them to attend to this matter; while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the delivery of the message.'

5 This proposal was unanimously agreed to; and the disciples chose Stephen – a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit – and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a former 6 convert to Judaism; and they brought these men to the apostles, who, after praying, placed their hands on them.

7 So God's message spread, and the number of the disciples continued to increase rapidly in Jerusalem, and a large body of the priests accepted the faith.

8 Meanwhile Stephen, divinely helped and strengthened, was showing 9 great wonders and signs among the people. But some members of the Synagogue of the Freed Slaves (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and Visitors from Cilicia and Roman Asia, were roused to action and 10 began disputing with Stephen; yet they were quite unable to withstand 11 the wisdom and the inspiration with which he spoke. Then they induced some men to assert that they had heard Stephen saying blasphemous things 12 against Moses, and against God; and they stirred up the people, as well as the elders and the teachers of the Law, and set on Stephen, and arrested him, 13 and brought him before the High Council. There they produced witnesses who gave false evidence.

'This man,' they said, 'is incessantly saying things against this Holy 14 place and the Law; indeed, we have heard him declare that this Jesus of

15 Nazareth will destroy this place, and change the customs handed down to us by Moses.' The eyes of all the members of the Council were riveted on Stephen, and they saw his face looking like the face of an angel.

7 Then the high priest asked, 'Is this true?' Stephen replied, 'Brothers and fathers, hear what I have to say. God, who manifests himself in the glory, appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, and 2 before he settled in Haran, and said to him – "Leave your country and your 3 people, and come into the country that I will show you." And so Abraham left the country of the Chaldaeans and settled in Haran; and from there, after his father's death, God caused him to migrate into this country, in 5 which you are now living. God did not at that time give him any part of it, not even a foot of ground. But he promised to give him possession of it 6 and his descendants after him, though at that time he had no child. God's words were these – "Abraham's descendants will live in a foreign country, 7 where they will be enslaved and ill-treated for four hundred years. But I myself will judge the nation, to which they will be enslaved," God said, "and after that they will leave the country and worship me in this place."

8 Then God made with Abraham the covenant of circumcision; and under it Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him when he was eight days old; and Isaac became the father of Jacob; and Jacob of the 9 Twelve Patriarchs. The Patriarchs, out of jealousy, sold Joseph into slavery 10 in Egypt; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his troubles, and enabled him to win favour and show wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him Governor of Egypt and of his whole household.

11 Then a famine spread over the whole of Egypt and Canaan, causing great 12 distress, and our ancestors could find no food. Hearing, however, that there 13 was corn in Egypt, Jacob sent our ancestors there on their first visit. In the course of their second visit, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, and his 14 family became known to Pharaoh. Then Joseph sent an urgent invitation to 15 his father Jacob and to his relatives, seventy-five persons in all; and so Jacob 16 went down into Egypt. There he died, and our ancestors also, and their bodies were removed to Shechem, and laid in the tomb which Abraham 17 had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem. As the time drew near for the fulfilment of the promise which God had made 18 to Abraham, the people increased largely in numbers in Egypt, until a 19 new king, who knew nothing of Joseph, came to the throne. This king acted deceitfully towards our people and ill-treated our ancestors, making 20 them abandon their own infants, so that they should not be reared. It was just at this time that Moses was born. He was an exceedingly beautiful child, and for three months was brought up in his own father's house; and,

when he was abandoned, the daughter of Pharaoh found him and brought
22 him up as her own son. So Moses was educated in all the learning of the
23 Egyptians, and proved his ability both by his words and actions. When
24 he was in his fortieth year, he resolved to visit his fellow Israelites; and,
25 seeing an Israelite ill-treated, he defended him, and avenged the man, who
26 was being wronged, by striking down the Egyptian. He thought his own
people would understand that God was using him to save them; but they
failed to do so. The next day he again appeared on the scene, when some
of them were fighting, and tried to make peace between them. "Men," he
said, "you are brothers; how is it that you are ill-treating one another?"
But the man who was ill-treating his fellow workman pushed Moses aside
saying – "Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to make
away with me as you did yesterday with that Egyptian?" At these words
Moses took to flight, and became an exile in Midian; and there he had two
sons born to him. Forty years had passed when there appeared to him,
in the desert of Mount Sinai, an angel in a flame of fire in a bush. When
Moses saw it, he was astonished at the vision; but on his going nearer
to look at it more closely, the voice of the Lord was heard to say – "I am
the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Moses
trembled, and did not dare to look. Then the Lord said to him – "Take your
sandals off your feet, for the spot where you are standing is holy ground. I
have seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt, and heard their
groans, and I have come down to deliver them. Come now and I will send
you into Egypt." This same Moses, whom they had disowned with the
words – "Who made you a ruler and a judge?" was the man whom God
sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer, under the guidance of the angel that
had appeared to him in the bush. He it was who led them out, after he
had shown wonders and signs in Egypt, in the Red Sea, and in the desert
during forty years. This was the Moses who said to the people of Israel –
"God will raise up for you, from among yourselves, a prophet, as he raised
up me." He, too, it was who was present at the assembly in the desert, with
the angel who talked to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors, and
who received living truths to impart to you. Yet our ancestors refused him
obedience; more than that, they rejected him, and in their hearts turned
back to Egypt, while they said to Aaron – "Make us Gods who will lead the
way for us, since, as for this Moses who has brought us out of Egypt, we do
not know what has become of him." That was the time when they made
the calf and offered sacrifice to their idol, and held festivities in honour
of their own handiwork! So God turned from them and left them to the
worship of the Starry Host, as is written in the book of the prophets –

"Did you offer victims and sacrifices to me, house of Israel,
all those forty years in the desert?

- 43 You took with you the tent where Moloch is worshipped
and the star of the god Rephan –
the images which you had made to worship.
Therefore I will exile you beyond Babylon."

44 Our ancestors had the tent where they worshipped God in the desert,
constructed, just as he who spoke to Moses had directed him to make it,
45 after the model which he had seen. This tent, which was handed down to
them, was brought into this country by our ancestors who accompanied
Joshua (at the conquest of the nations that God drove out before their
46 advance), and remained here until the time of David. David found favour
with God, and prayed that he might provide the God of Jacob with a
47 place to reside. But it was Solomon who built a house for God. Yet it
48 is not in buildings made by hands that the Most High dwells. As the
prophet says –

49 "The heavens are a throne for me,
and the earth a stool for my feet.
What manner of house will you build me, asks the Lord,
or what place is there where I may rest?

50 Was it not my hand that made all these things?"

51 Stubborn people, heathen in heart and ears, you are for ever resisting
52 the Holy Spirit; your ancestors did it, and you are doing it still. Which
of the prophets escaped persecution at their hands? They killed those
who foretold the coming of the righteous one; of whom you, in your turn,
53 have now become the betrayers and murderers – You who received the
Law as transmitted by angels and yet failed to keep it.'

54 As they listened to this, the Council grew frantic with rage, and gnashed
55 their teeth at Stephen. He, filled as he was with the Holy Spirit, fixed his
eyes intently on the heavens, and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing
at God's right hand.

56 'Look,' he exclaimed, 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing
57 at God's right hand!' At this, with a loud shout, they stopped their ears
58 and all rushed on him, forced him outside the city, and began to stone him,
the witnesses laying their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.
59 And they stoned Stephen, while he cried to the Lord, 'Lord Jesus! Receive
60 my spirit!' Falling on his knees, he called out loudly, 'Lord! Do not charge
them with this sin;' and with these words he fell asleep.

8 Saul approved of his being put to death.

On that very day a great persecution broke out against the church which was in Jerusalem; and its members, with the exception of the apostles,
2 were all scattered over the districts of Judea and Samaria. Some religious
3 men buried Stephen, with loud lamentations for him. But Saul began to devastate the church; he entered house after house, dragged out men and women alike, and threw them into prison.

4 Now those who were scattered in different directions went from place to
5 place proclaiming the good news. Philip went down to the city of Samaria,
6 and there began to preach the Christ. The people, one and all, listened attentively to what Philip told them, when they heard of, and saw, the
7 miracles which he was working. For there were many instances of people with foul spirits, where the spirits, with loud screams, came out of them;
8 and many who were paralysed or lame were cured, so that there was great
9 rejoicing throughout that city. There was staying in the city a man named Simon, who had been practicing magic there and mystifying the Samaritan
10 people, giving himself out to be some great being. Everyone, high and low, paid attention to him. "This man," they used to say, "must be that power of
11 God which people call 'The Great Power.'" And they paid attention to him
12 because they had for a long time been mystified by his magic arts. However, when they came to believe Philip, as he told them the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both
13 men and women. Even Simon believed, and after his baptism attached himself to Philip, and was in his turn mystified at seeing signs and great miracles constantly occurring.

14 When the apostles at Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had welcomed
15 God's message, they sent Peter and John to them; and they, on their arrival,
16 prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit. (As yet the Spirit had not descended on any of them; they had only been baptized into the
17 faith of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 When Simon saw that it was through the placing of the apostles' hands on them that the Spirit was given, he brought them a sum of money and
19 said, 'Give me also this power of yours, so that, if I place my hands on anyone, he may receive the Holy Spirit.'

20 'A curse on you and on your money,' Peter exclaimed, 'for thinking that
21 God's free gift can be bought with gold! You have no share or part in our
22 message, for your heart is not right with God. Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord, that, if possible, you may be
23 forgiven for such a thought; for I see that you have fallen into the bitterness of envy and the fetters of sin.'

24 ‘Pray to the Lord for me, all of you,’ Simon answered, ‘so that none of the things you have spoken of may happen to me.’

25 Peter and John, having borne their testimony and delivered the Lord’s message, returned to Jerusalem, telling the good news, as they went, in many Samaritan villages.

26 Meanwhile an angel of the Lord had said to Philip, ‘Set out on a journey southwards, along the road that runs down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (It is now deserted). So Philip set out on a journey; and on his way he came on an official of high rank, in the service of Candace, Queen of the Abyssinians.

27 He was her treasurer, and had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was now on his way home, sitting in his carriage and reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 The Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go up to the carriage over there and keep close to it.’ So Philip ran up, and he heard the Abyssinian reading the prophet Isaiah.

31 ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ he asked. ‘How can I,’ the other answered, ‘unless someone will explain it to me?’ and he invited 32 Philip to get up and sit by his side. The passage of scripture which he was reading was this –

“Like a sheep, he was led away to slaughter,
and as a lamb is dumb in the hands of its shearer,
so he refrains from opening his lips.

33 He was humiliated and justice was denied him.
Who will tell the story of his generation?
For his life is cut off from earth.”

34 ‘Now,’ said the Treasurer, addressing Philip, ‘tell me, of whom is the prophet speaking? Of himself, or of someone else?’ Then Philip began, and, taking this passage as his text, told him the good news about Jesus.

36 Presently, as they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the Treasurer exclaimed, ‘Look! Here is water; what is to prevent my being 38 baptized?’²⁶ So he ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into 39 the water – both Philip and the Treasurer – and Philip baptized him. But, when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, and the Treasurer saw no more of him; for he continued his journey 40 with a joyful heart. But Philip was found at Ashdod, and, as he went on his way, he told the good news in all the towns through which he passed, until he came to Caesarea.

²⁶ 8:37 Some later manuscripts add: Philip said, ‘If you believe with your whole heart, you may.’ And he replied, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’

9 Meanwhile Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the disciples
2 of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked him to give him letters to
the Jewish congregations at Damascus, authorising him, if he found there
any supporters of the Way, whether men or women, to have them put in
chains and brought to Jerusalem.

3 While on his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, suddenly a light
4 from the heavens flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a
voice saying to him – ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’

5 ‘Who are you, Lord?’ he asked.

6 ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the voice answered; ‘Yet stand
up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’

7 The men traveling with Saul were meanwhile standing speechless; they
8 heard the sound of the voice, but saw no one. When Saul got up from the
ground, though his eyes were open, he could see nothing. So his men led
9 him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus; and for three days he
was unable to see, and took nothing either to eat or to drink.

10 Now there was at Damascus a disciple named Ananias, to whom, in a
vision, the Lord said, ‘Ananias.’

11 ‘Yes, Lord,’ he answered. ‘Go at once,’ said the Lord, ‘to the Straight
Street, and ask at Judas’s house for a man named Saul, from Tarsus. He is
12 at this moment praying, and he has seen, in a vision, a man named Ananias
coming in and placing his hands on him, so that he may recover his sight.’

13 ‘Lord,’ exclaimed Ananias, ‘I have heard from many people about this
man – how much harm he has done at Jerusalem to your people there.
14 And, here, too, he holds authority from the chief priests to put in chains
15 all those who invoke your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for this
man is my chosen instrument to uphold my name before the Gentiles and
16 their kings, and the people of Israel. I will myself show him all that he has
to suffer for my name.’

17 So Ananias went, entered the house, and, placing his hands on Saul, said,
‘Saul, my brother, I have been sent by the Lord – by Jesus, who appeared
to you on your way here – so that you may recover your sight and be filled
18 with the Holy Spirit.’ Instantly it seemed as if a film fell from Saul’s eyes,
19 and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and, after
he had taken food, he felt his strength return.

20 Saul stayed for some days with the disciples who were at Damascus,
and at once began in the synagogues to proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.
21 All who heard him were amazed.

'Is not this,' they asked, 'the man who worked havoc in Jerusalem among those that invoke this name, and who had also come here for the express purpose of having such persons put in chains and taken before the chief priests?' Saul's influence, however, kept steadily increasing, and he confounded the Jewish people who lived in Damascus by the proofs that he gave that Jesus was the Christ.

23 After some time some of them laid a plot to kill Saul, but it became known to him. They even watched the gates day and night, to kill him; 24 but his disciples let him down by night through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

25 26 On his arrival in Jerusalem, Saul attempted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, as they did not believe that he was really a disciple. 27 Barnabas, however, taking him by the hand, brought him to the apostles, and told them the whole story of how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord, and how the Lord had talked to him, and how in Damascus he had 28 spoken out fearlessly in the name of Jesus. After that, Saul remained in Jerusalem, in close contact with the apostles; and he spoke fearlessly in the 29 name of the Lord, talking and arguing with the Jews of foreign birth, who, 30 however, made attempts to kill him. But, when the followers found this out, they took him down to Caesarea, and sent him on his way to Tarsus.

31 And so it came about that the church, throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, enjoyed peace and became firmly established; and, ordering its life by respect for the Lord and the help of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

32 Peter, while traveling from place to place throughout the country, went 33 down to visit the people of Christ living at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years with paralysis. 34 'Aeneas,' Peter said to him, 'Jesus Christ cures you. Get up, and make your 35 bed.' Aeneas got up at once; and all the inhabitants of Lydda and of the Plain of Sharon saw him, and came over to the Lord's side.

36 At Jaffa there lived a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which is in Greek "Dorcas" – a Gazelle. Her life was spent in doing kind and charitable actions. 37 Just at that time she was taken ill, and died; and they had washed her body 38 and laid it out in an upstairs room. Jaffa was near Lydda, and the disciples, having heard that Peter was at Lydda, sent two men with the request that 39 he come to them without delay. Peter returned with them at once. On his arrival, he was taken upstairs, and all the widows came round him in tears, showing the coats and other clothing which Dorcas had made while she

40 was among them. But Peter sent everybody out of the room, and knelt down and prayed. Then, turning to the body, he said, 'Tabitha! Stand up.'

41 She opened her eyes, and, seeing Peter, sat up. Giving her his hand, Peter raised her up, and, calling in the widows and others of Christ's people,

42 presented her to them alive. This became known all through Jaffa, and

43 numbers of people came to believe in the Lord. And Peter stayed some days at Jaffa with a tanner named Simon.

10 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a captain in the regiment known as the "Italian Regiment," A religious man and one who reverenced God, with all his household. He was liberal in his charities to the people,

2 and prayed to God constantly. One afternoon, about three o'clock, he distinctly saw in a vision an angel from God come to him, and call him by

3 name. Cornelius fixed his eyes on him and, in great alarm, said, 'What is it, Lord?'

4 'Your prayers and your charities,' the angel answered, 'have been an acceptable offering to God. And now, send messengers to Jaffa and fetch a

5 man called Simon, who is also known as Peter. He is lodging with a tanner named Simon, who has a house near the sea.'

6 When the angel, who had spoken to him, had gone, Cornelius called two servants and a religious soldier, who was one of his constant attendants,

7 and, after telling them the whole story, sent them to Jaffa.

8 On the next day, while these men were on their way, just as they were nearing the town, Peter went up on the housetop about midday to pray.

9 He became hungry and wanted something to eat; but while it was being

10 prepared, he fell into a trance, and saw that the heavens were open, and that something like a great sail was descending, let down by its four corners

11 towards the earth. In it were all kinds of quadrupeds, reptiles, and birds.

12 Then he was aware of a voice which said – 'Stand up, Peter, kill something,

13 and eat.'

14 'No, Lord, I cannot,' answered Peter, 'for I have never eaten anything defiled and unclean.' Again he was aware of a voice which said – 'What

15 God has pronounced clean, do not regard as defiled.' This happened three times, and then suddenly it was all taken up into the heavens.

16 While Peter was still perplexed as to the meaning of the vision that he had seen, the men sent by Cornelius, having enquired the way to Simon's

17 house, came up to the gate, and called out and asked if the Simon, who

18 was also known as Peter, was lodging there. Peter was still pondering over

19 the vision, when the Spirit said to him, 'There are two men looking for you

20 at this moment. Go down at once and do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.'

21 Peter went down to the men and said, 'I am the person you are looking for. What is your reason for coming?'

22 The men replied, 'Our captain, Cornelius, a pious man who reverences God and is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, has been instructed by a holy angel to send for you to his house, and to listen to what you have 23 to say.' So Peter invited them in and entertained them.

The next day he lost no time in setting out with them, accompanied by 24 some of the Lord's followers from Jaffa; and the day following he entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them, and had invited his relatives and 25 intimate friends to meet them. So, when Peter entered the city, Cornelius 26 met him, and, throwing himself at Peter's feet, bowed to the ground. Peter, however, lifted him up, saying as he did so, 'Stand up, I am only human like yourself.'

27 Talking with him as he went, Peter entered the house, where he found a 28 large gathering of people, to whom he said, 'You are doubtless aware that it is forbidden for a Jew to be intimate with a foreigner, or even to enter his 29 house; and yet God has shown me that I ought not to call anyone defiled or unclean. That was why I came, when I was sent for, without raising any objection. And now I ask your reason for sending for me.'

30 'Just three days ago this very hour,' Cornelius said, 'I was in my house, saying the Afternoon Prayers, when a man in dazzling clothing suddenly 31 stood before me. "Cornelius," he said, "your prayer has been heard, and 32 your charities have been accepted, by God. Therefore send to Jaffa, and invite the Simon, who is also known as Peter, to come here. He is lodging 33 in the house of Simon the tanner, near the sea." Accordingly I sent to you at once, and you have been so good as to come. And now we are all here in the presence of God, to listen to all that you have been instructed by the 34 Lord to say.' Then Peter began.

'I see, beyond all doubt,' he said, 'that God does not show partiality, 35 but that in every nation he who reverences him and does what is right is acceptable to him. God has sent his message to the Israelites and told them, 36 through Jesus Christ, the good news of peace – and Jesus is Lord of all! You 37 yourselves know the story which spread through all Judea, how, beginning 38 from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed – The story, I mean, of Jesus of Nazareth, and how God consecrated him his Christ by enduing him with the Holy Spirit and with power; and how he went about doing good and curing all who were under the power of the devil, because God 39 was with him. We are ourselves, too, witnesses to all that he did in Judea

and in Jerusalem; yet they put him to death by hanging him on a cross!
40 This Jesus God raised on the third day, and enabled him to appear, not
41 indeed to everyone, but to witnesses chosen beforehand by God – to us,
42 who ate and drank with him after his resurrection from the dead. Further,
43 God charged us to proclaim to the people, and solemnly affirm, that it is
Jesus who has been appointed by God judge of the living and the dead. To
him it is that all the prophets bear witness, when they say that everyone
who believes in him receives through his name forgiveness of sins.'

44 Before Peter had finished saying these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all
45 who were listening to the message. Those converts from Judaism, who had
come with Peter, were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been
46 bestowed even on the Gentiles; for they heard them speaking in different
47 languages and extolling God. At this Peter asked, 'Can anyone refuse the
water for the baptism of these people, now that they have received the Holy
48 Spirit as we did ourselves?' And he directed that they should be baptized
in the faith of Jesus Christ; after which they asked him to stay there a few
days longer.

11 The apostles and the followers throughout Judea heard that even the Gen-
2 tiles had welcomed God's message. But, when Peter went up to Jerusalem,
3 those who were converts from Judaism began to attack him, on the ground
that he had visited people who were not circumcised, and had taken meals
4 with them. So Peter began to relate the facts to them as they had occurred.
5 'I was in the town of Jaffa,' he said, 'and was praying; and, while in a trance,
I saw a vision. There was something like a great sail descending, let down
6 by its four corners out of the heavens; and it came right down to me. Look-
7 ing intently at it, I began to distinguish quadrupeds, wild beasts, reptiles,
8 and birds; and I also heard a voice saying to me – "Stand up, Peter, kill
9 something and eat." "No, Lord, I cannot," I answered, "for nothing defiled
or unclean has ever passed my lips." Then a second time there came a
10 voice from the heavens. "What God has pronounced clean", it said, "you
must not call defiled." This happened three times, and then all was drawn
11 up again into the heavens. At that moment three men, who had been sent
12 from Caesarea to see me, came up to the house in which we were. The
Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation. These six companions
13 also went with me. And, when we came into the man's house, he told us
how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and how the angel had
said to him – "Send to Jaffa and fetch the Simon, who is also known as
14 Peter; for he will tell you truths, which will prove the means of salvation
15 to you and all your household." I had but just begun to speak,' continued

- 16 Peter, ‘when the Holy Spirit fell on them, exactly as on us at the first; and I recalled the saying of the Master – “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Since then, God had given them the very same gift as he gave us when we became believers in Jesus Christ the Master – who was I that I could thwart God?’
- 18 On hearing this statement, they said no more, but broke out into praise of God. ‘So even to the Gentiles,’ they exclaimed, ‘God has granted the repentance which leads to life!’
- 19 Now those who had been scattered in different directions, in consequence of the persecution that followed the death of Stephen, went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, telling the message – but only to Jews.
- 20 Some of them, however, who were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, on coming to Antioch, addressed themselves also to the Jews of foreign birth, telling
- 21 them the good news about that Lord Jesus. The power of the Lord was with them, so that a great number who had learned to believe came over
- 22 to the Lord’s side. The news about them reached the ears of the church at
- 23 Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. On coming there he saw to his great joy these tokens of the loving kindness of God, and encouraged
- 24 them all to make up their minds to be faithful to the Lord – For Barnabas was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith – and a large number of people took their stand on the Lord’s side. Afterwards Barnabas left
- 25 for Tarsus to look for Saul; and, when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And so it came about that, for a whole year, they attended the meetings of the church there, and taught a large number of people; and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called “Christians.”
- 27 During this time, some prophets came to Antioch from Jerusalem. One
- 28 of them, named Agabus, came forward and, under the influence of the
- 29 Spirit, foretold a great famine that was to spread over all the world – a
- 30 famine which occurred in the reign of Claudius. So the disciples, without exception, determined, in proportion to their means, to send something to help the followers living in Judea. And this they did, sending it to the church elders by Barnabas and Saul.
- 12 It was at that time that King Herod began to ill-treat some of the members
- 2 of the church. He had James, the brother of John, beheaded; and, when
- 3 he saw that the Jews were pleased with this, he proceeded to arrest Peter
- 4 also. (This was during the Festival of the unleavened bread.) After seizing Peter, Herod put him in prison, and entrusted him to the keeping of four Guards of four soldiers each, intending, after the Passover, to bring him up

- 5 before the people. So Peter was kept in prison, but meanwhile the prayers
6 of the church were being earnestly offered to God on his behalf. Just when
7 Herod was intending to bring him before the people, on that very night
Peter was asleep between two soldiers, chained to them both, while there
8 were sentries in front of the door, guarding the prison. Suddenly an angel
of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the cell. The angel struck
9 Peter on the side, and roused him with the words, 'Get up quickly.' The
chains dropped from his wrists, and then the angel said, 'Put on your belt
and sandals.' When Peter had done so, the angel added, 'Throw your cloak
round you and follow me.'
- 9 Peter followed him out, not knowing that what was happening under
the angel's guidance was real, but thinking that he was seeing a vision.
10 Passing the first Guard, and then the second, they came to the iron gate
leading into the city, which opened to them of itself; and, when they had
passed through that, and had walked along one street, all at once the angel
left him.
- 11 Then Peter came to himself and said, 'Now I know beyond all doubt
that the Lord has sent his angel, and has rescued me from Herod's hands
12 and from all that the Jewish people have been expecting.' As soon as he
realized what had happened, he went to the house of Mary, the mother
13 of John who was also known as Mark, where a number of people were
gathered together, praying. On his knocking at the door in the gate, a
14 maid-servant, named Rhoda, came to answer it. She recognized Peter's
voice, but in her joy left the gate unopened, and ran in, and told them that
Peter was standing outside.
- 15 'You are mad!' they exclaimed. But, when she persisted that it was so,
they said, 'It must be his spirit!'
- 16 Meanwhile Peter went on knocking, and, when they opened the gate
17 and saw him, they were amazed. Peter signed to them with his hand to
be silent, and then told them how the Lord had brought him out of the
prison, adding, 'Tell James and the others all this.' Then he left the house,
and went away to another place.
- 18 In the morning there was a great stir among the soldiers – what could
19 have become of Peter! And, when Herod had made further search for him
and failed to find him, he closely questioned the Guard, and ordered them
away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to stay at Caesarea.
- 20 It happened that Herod was deeply offended with the people of Tyre and
Sidon, but they went in a body to him, and, having succeeded in winning
over Blastus, the Chamberlain, they begged Herod for a reconciliation,
21 because their country was dependent on the king's for its food supply. On

- 22 an appointed day Herod, wearing his state robes, seated himself on his throne, and delivered an oration. The people kept shouting, 'It is the voice of God, and not of a person!'
- 23 Instantly an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God
24 the glory; and he was attacked with worms, and died. Meanwhile the Lord's message kept extending, and spreading far and wide.
- 25 When Barnabas and Saul had carried out their mission, they returned to Jerusalem, and took with them John, who was also known as Mark.

*The Church and the Gentiles**Acts of the Apostle Paul*

- 13 AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH AT ANTIOPH THERE WERE several prophets and teachers – Barnabas, Simeon who was known by the name of "Black", Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, foster-brother of Prince Herod, and Saul. While
2 they were engaged in the worship of the Lord and were fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, for the work to which I
3 have called them.' Accordingly, after fasting and prayer, they placed their hands on them and dismissed them.
- 4 Barnabas and Saul, sent on this mission, as they were, by the Holy Spirit,
5 went down to Seleucia, and from there sailed to Cyprus. On reaching Salamis, they began to tell the message of God in the Jewish synagogues;
6 and they had John with them as an assistant. After passing through the whole island, they reached Paphos, where they found an astrologer who pretended to be a prophet – a Jew by birth, whose name was Barjoshua.
7 He was at the court of the Governor, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence,
8 who sent for Barnabas and Saul and asked to be told God's message. But Elymas, the astrologer (for that is the meaning of the word), opposed them,
9 eager to divert the Governor's attention from the faith. However, Saul (who is the same as Paul), full of the Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him and
10 said, 'You incarnation of deceit and all fraud! You son of the devil! You opponent of all that is good! Will you never cease to divert the straight
11 paths of the Lord? Listen! The hand of the Lord is on you even now, and you will be blind for a time and unable to see the sun.' Immediately a mist

and darkness fell on him, and he went feeling about for someone to guide
12 him. When the Governor saw what had happened, he became a believer
in Christ, being greatly impressed by the teaching about the Lord.

13 After this, Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and went to
14 Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them and returned to Jerusalem. The
15 others went on from Perga and arrived at Antioch in Pisidia. There they
went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and took their seats. After the
reading of the Law and the prophets, the synagogue leader sent them this
message – ‘Friends, if you have any helpful words to address to the people,
16 now is the time to speak.’ So Paul rose and, motioning with his hand, said:
‘People of Israel and all here who worship God, hear what I have to say.
17 The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors, and during their stay in
Egypt increased the prosperity of the people, and then with uplifted arm
18 brought them out from that land. For about forty years he bore with them
19 in the desert; then, after destroying seven heathen nations in Canaan, he
20 allotted their land to this people – For about four hundred and fifty years.
In later times he gave them Judges, of whom the prophet Samuel was the
21 last. And, when they demanded a king, God gave them Saul the son of
22 Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. After
removing him, he raised David to the throne, and bore this testimony to
him – “In David, the son of Jesse, I have found a man after my own heart,
23 who will carry out all my purposes.” It was from this man’s descendants
that God, in accordance with his promise, gave Israel a Saviour – Jesus;
24 John having first proclaimed, before the appearance of Jesus, a baptism on
25 repentance for all the people of Israel. As John was drawing towards the
end of his career, he said “What do you suppose that I am? I am not the
Christ. But there is ‘one coming’ after me, whose sandal I am not worthy to
26 untie.” Brothers and sisters, descendants of Abraham, and all those among
you who worship God, it was to us that the message of this salvation was
27 sent. The people of Jerusalem and their leaders, failing to recognise Jesus,
and not understanding the utterances of the prophets that are read every
28 Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. They found no ground at all
29 for putting him to death, and yet demanded his execution from Pilate; and,
after carrying out everything written about him, they took Jesus down
30 from the cross, and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead;
31 and he appeared for many days to those who had gone up with him from
32 Galilee to Jerusalem, and who are now witnesses for him to the people. We
also have good news to tell you, about the promise made to our ancestors

- 33 – That our children have had this promise completely fulfilled to them by God, by his raising Jesus. That is just what is said in the second Psalm –
“You are my Son; this day I have become your Father.”
- 34 As to his raising Jesus from the dead, never again to return to corruption, this is what is said –
“I will give to you the sacred promises made to David;”
- 35 And, therefore, in another Psalm it is said –
“You will not give up the Holy One to undergo corruption.”
- 36 David, after obediently doing God’s will in his own time, fell asleep and was laid by the side of his ancestors, and did undergo corruption; 37 but Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, did not undergo corruption. I 38 would, therefore, like you to know, friends, that through Jesus forgiveness 39 of sins is being proclaimed to you, and that, in union with him, everyone 40 who believes in him is absolved from every sin from which under the Law of Moses you could not be absolved. Beware, therefore, that what is said in the prophets does not come true of you –
- 41 “Look, you despisers, and wonder, and perish;
for I am doing a deed in your days –
a deed which, though told you in full, you will never believe”.
- 42 As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people begged 43 for a repetition of this teaching on the next Sabbath. After the congregation had dispersed, many of the Jews, and of the converts who joined in their worship, followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue to rely on the loving kindness of God.
- 44 On the following Sabbath, almost all the city gathered to hear God’s message. 45 But the sight of the crowds of people filled the minds of the Jews with jealousy, and they kept contradicting Paul’s statements in violent language.
- 46 Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out fearlessly, and said:
‘It was necessary that the message of God should be told to you first; but, since you reject it and reckon yourselves not worthy of the eternal life
47 – we turn to the Gentiles! For this is the Lord’s command to us –
- “I have destined you for a light to the Gentiles,
a means of salvation to the ends of the earth”.
- 48 On hearing this, the Gentiles were glad and extolled God’s message; and all those who had been enrolled for eternal life became believers in 49 Christ; and the Lord’s message was carried throughout that district. But
50

the Jews incited the women of high social standing who worshiped with them, and the leading men of the town, and started a persecution against
51 Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. They, however,
52 shook the dust off their feet in protest, and went to Iconium, leaving the
disciples full of joy and of the Holy Spirit.

14 The same thing occurred in Iconium, where Paul and Barnabas went into
the Jewish synagogue, and spoke in such a way that a great number of
2 both Jews and Greeks believed in Christ. But the Jews who refused to
believe stirred up the Gentiles, and poisoned their minds against the Lord's
3 followers. Therefore Paul and Barnabas spent a long time there, and spoke
4 out fearlessly, relying on the Lord, who confirmed the message of his love
5 by permitting signs and wonders to take place at their hands. But the
6 townspeople were divided, some siding with the Jews, some with the
7 apostles; and, when there was an attempt on the part of both Gentiles and
Jews, with their leaders, to resort to violence and to stone them, the apostles
8 heard of it, and took refuge in Lystra and Derbe, towns in Lycaonia, and
in the district round, and there they continued to tell the good news.

8 In the streets of Lystra there used to sit a man who had no power in his
9 feet; he had been lame from his birth, and had never walked. This man
10 was listening to Paul speaking, when Paul, looking intently at him, and
seeing that he had the faith to be healed, said loudly, 'Stand upright on
your feet.'

11 The man leaped up, and began walking about, and the crowd, seeing
what Paul had done, called out in the Lycaonian language, 'The Gods have
12 come down to us in human form.' So they called Barnabas "Zeus," and
13 Paul "Hermes," because he took the lead in speaking; and the priest of
Zeus-beyond-the-Walls, accompanied by the crowd, brought bullocks and
14 garlands to the gates, with the intention of offering sacrifices. But, when the
apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed
out into the crowd.

15 'Friends, why are you doing this?' they shouted. 'We are only people like
yourselves, and we have come with the good news that you should turn
away from these follies to a living God, who made the heavens, the earth,
16 the sea, and everything that is in them. In bygone times he permitted all
17 the nations to go their own ways. Yet he has not failed to give you, in the
good he does, some revelation of himself – sending you from heaven rain
and fruitful seasons, and gladdening your hearts with plenty and good
18 cheer.' Even with this appeal they could hardly restrain the people from
offering sacrifice to them.

19 Presently, however, there came some Jews from Antioch, and Iconium who, after they had won over the people, stoned Paul, and dragged him out
20 of the town, thinking him to be dead. But, when the disciples had gathered round him, he got up and went back into the town; the next day he went
21 with Barnabas to Derbe. After telling the good news throughout that town, and making a number of converts, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and
22 Antioch, reassuring the minds of the disciples, urging them to remain true to the faith, and showing that it is only through many troubles that
23 we can enter the kingdom of God. They also appointed elders for them in every church, and, after prayer and fasting, commended them to the
24 Lord in whom they had learned to believe. Paul and Barnabas then went
25 through Pisidia, and came into Pamphylia, and, after telling the message
26 at Perga, went down to Attaleia. From there they sailed to Antioch – the place where they had been committed to the gracious care of God for the
27 work which they had now finished. After their arrival, they gathered the church together, and gave an account of all that God had helped them to do, and especially how he had opened to the Gentiles the door of faith;
28 and at Antioch they stayed with the disciples for a considerable time.

15 But certain persons came down from Judea, and began to teach the Lord's followers that, unless they were circumcised, in accordance with
2 the custom required by Moses, they could not be saved. This gave rise to a serious dispute, and much discussion, between Paul and Barnabas and these people, and it was therefore settled that Paul and Barnabas and others of their number should go up to Jerusalem, to consult the apostles and church elders about the matter under discussion.

3 The church, therefore, sent them on their journey, and they made their way through Phoenicia and Samaria, telling the story of the conversion
4 of the Gentiles, to the great joy of all the followers. On their arrival at Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, as well as by the apostles and the elders, and gave an account of all that God had helped them to do. Some of the Pharisees' party, however, who had become believers in Christ, came forward and declared that they were bound to circumcise
5 converts and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses. The apostles and
6 the church elders held a meeting to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter rose and said:

8 ‘You, my friends, know well that long ago God singled me out – that through my lips the Gentiles should hear the message of the good news,
and become believers in Christ. Now God, who reads all hearts, declared his acceptance of the Gentiles, by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he

9 did to us. He made no distinction between them and us, when he purified
10 their hearts by their faith. Why, then, do you now provoke God, by putting
on the necks of these disciples a yoke which neither our ancestors nor we
11 were able to bear? No, it is through the loving kindness of the Lord Jesus
that we, just as they do, believe that we have been saved.'

12 Every voice in the assembly was hushed, as they listened to Barnabas
and Paul, while they gave an account of all the signs and wonders which
13 God had shown among the Gentiles through them. After they had finished
speaking, James addressed the Council.

14 'Friends,' he began, 'hear what I have to say. Simon has described the
manner in which God first visited the Gentiles, in order to take from among
15 them a people to bear his name. And that is in harmony with the words of
the prophets, where they say -

16 "After this I will return;
And I will rebuild the house of David which has fallen –
Its ruins I will rebuild,
And will set it up once more;

17 That so the rest of mankind may earnestly seek the Lord –
Even all the Gentiles on whom my name has been bestowed.

18 Says the Lord, as he does these things, known from long ago."

19 In my judgment, therefore, we should not add to the difficulties of
20 those Gentiles who are turning to God, but we should write to them to
abstain from food that has been polluted by being sacrificed to idols,
from impurity, from eating the flesh of strangled animals, and from blood.
21 For in every town, for generations past, there have been those who preach
Moses, read as he is in the synagogues every Sabbath.'

22 It was then decided by the apostles and the elders, with the assent of the
whole church, to choose some of their number, and send them to Antioch
with Paul and Barnabas. Those chosen were Judas (called Barsabas) and
23 Silas, who were leaders among the community. They were bearers of the
following letter –

24 "The apostles, and the followers who are the church elders, send
their greetings to the followers of the Lord of Gentile birth in Anti-
och, Syria, and Cilicia. As we had heard that some of our number
had upset you by their assertions, and unsettled your minds – with-
out instructions from us – We met and decided to choose certain
men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul,
who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
26 We are accordingly sending Judas and Silas, and they will tell you

28 by word of mouth what we are now writing. We have, therefore,
decided, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to lay no further
29 burden on you beyond these necessary conditions – That you abstain from food offered to idols, from blood, from eating the flesh
of strangled animals, and from impurity. If you guard yourselves
against such things, it will be well with you. Farewell."

30 So the bearers of this letter were sent on their way, and went down to
31 Antioch. There they called a meeting of all the followers, and delivered
the letter, the reading of which caused great rejoicing by its encouraging
32 contents. Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, further encouraged
33 the them by many an address, and strengthened their faith. After
some stay, they were dismissed with kind farewells from the followers,
and returned to those who had sent them.²⁷

35 Paul and Barnabas, however, remained in Antioch, where they taught and,
with the help of many others, told the good news of the Lord's message.
36 Some time after this, Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us go back and visit the
Lord's followers in every town in which we have told the Lord's message,
37 and see how they are prospering.' Barnabas wished to take with them John,
38 whose other name was Mark; but Paul felt that they ought not to take with
them the man who had deserted them in Pamphylia, and had not gone
39 on with them to their work. This caused such unpleasant feeling between
them that they parted ways, Barnabas taking Mark and sailing for Cyprus,
40 while Paul chose Silas for his companion and, after he had been committed
41 by the followers to the gracious care of the Lord, started on his journey and
went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches in the faith.

16 Among other places Paul went to Derbe and Lystra. At the latter place
they found a disciple, named Timothy, whose mother was a Jewish woman
2 who was a believer, while his father was a Greek, and who was well spoken
3 of by the followers of the Lord in Lystra and Iconium. Wishing to take
this man with him on his journey, Paul caused him to be circumcised out
4 of consideration for the Jews in that region, for they all knew that his
father had been a Greek. As they traveled from town to town, they gave
the followers the decisions which had been reached by the apostles and
church elders at Jerusalem, for them to observe.

5 So the churches grew stronger in the faith, and increased in numbers
from day to day.

²⁷ 15:34 Some later manuscripts add: But Silas decided to stay.

6 They next went through the Phrygian district of Galatia, but were restrained by the Holy Spirit from delivering the message in Roman Asia.
7 When they reached the borders of Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them. Passing through Mysia,
8 they went down to Troas; and there one night Paul saw a vision. A Macedonian was standing and appealing to him – “Come over to Macedonia
9 and help us.” So, immediately after Paul had seen the vision, we looked for an opportunity to cross over to Macedonia, concluding that God had summoned us to tell the good news to the people there.

11 Accordingly we set sail from Troas, and ran before the wind to Samothrace, reaching Neapolis the next day. From there we made our way to Philippi, which is the principal city of that part of Macedonia, and also a Roman Settlement.

13 In that city we spent several days. On the Sabbath we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and talked to the women who were gathered there. Among them was a woman, named Lydia, belonging to Thyatira, a dealer in purple cloth, who was accustomed to join in the worship of God. The Lord touched this woman’s heart, so that she gave attention to the message delivered by Paul, and, when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us to become her guests.

‘Since you have shown your conviction,’ she said, ‘that I really am a believer in the Lord, come and stay in my house.’ And she insisted on our doing so.

16 One day, as we were on our way to the place of prayer, we were met by a girl possessed by a divining spirit, who made large profits for her masters by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, calling, ‘These men are servants of the most high God, and they are bringing you news of a way to salvation.’ She had been doing this for several days, when Paul, much vexed, turned and said to the spirit within her, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to leave her.’ That very moment the spirit left her.

19 When her masters saw that there was no hope of further profit from her, they seized Paul and Silas, dragged them into the public square to the authorities, and took them before the Magistrates.

21 ‘These men are causing a great disturbance in our town,’ they complained; ‘They are Jews, and they are teaching customs which it is not right for us, as Romans, to sanction or adopt.’

22 The mob rose as one person against them, and the Magistrates stripped them of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After

beating them severely, the Magistrates put them in prison, with orders
24 to the jailer to keep them in safe custody. On receiving so strict an order,
the Governor put them into the inner cell, and secured their feet in the
25 stocks. About midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing
26 hymns to God, and while the prisoners were listening to them, suddenly
there was an earthquake of such violence that the jail was shaken to its
foundations; all the doors flew open, and all the prisoners' chains were
27 loosened. Roused from his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, the
Governor drew his sword intending to kill himself, in the belief that the
28 prisoners had escaped. But Paul called out loudly, 'Do not harm yourself;
we are all here.'

29 Calling for a light, the Governor rushed in, and flung himself trembling
30 at the feet of Paul and Silas. Then he led them out, and said, 'What must I
do to be saved?'

31 'Believe in Jesus, our Lord,' they replied, 'and you will be saved, you
32 and your household too.' Then they spoke to him of God's message, and
33 to all his household as well. And that very hour of the night he took them
and washed their wounds, and he himself and everyone belonging to him
34 were baptized without delay. Afterwards he took them up to his house and
set before them something to eat, rejoicing that he, with all his household,
had come to believe in God.

35 In the morning the Magistrates sent the police with an order for the men
36 to be discharged. The jailer told Paul of his instructions. 'The Magistrates
have sent an order for your discharge,' he said, 'so you had better leave the
place at once and go quietly away.'

37 But Paul's answer to them was, 'They have flogged us in public without
trial, though we are Roman citizens, and they have put us in prison, and
now they are for sending us out secretly! No, indeed! Let them come and
38 take us out themselves.' The police reported his words to the Magistrates,
who, on hearing that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, were alarmed,
39 and went to the prison, and did their best to conciliate them. Then they
40 took them out, and begged them to leave the city. When Paul and Silas left
the prison, they went to Lydia's house, and, after they had seen the Lord's
followers, and encouraged them, they left the place.

17 After passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, Paul and Silas came
2 to Thessalonica. Here the Jews had a synagogue; and, following his usual
custom, Paul joined them, and for three Sabbaths addressed them, drawing
3 his arguments from the scriptures. He laid before them and explained that
the Christ must undergo suffering and rise from the dead; and 'It is this

man,' he declared, 'who is the Christ – this Jesus about whom I am telling you.'

4 Some of the people were convinced, and threw in their lot with Paul and Silas, as did also a large body of Greeks who were accustomed to
5 join in the Jewish services, and a great number of leading women. But the Jewish leaders, becoming jealous, engaged some worthless fellows from the streets, and, getting a mob together, kept the city in an uproar. They attacked Jason's house, with the intention of bringing Paul and Silas before
6 the Popular Assembly; and, not finding them there, they proceeded to drag Jason and some of the Lord's followers before the city magistrates, shouting out,

'These men, who have turned the world upside down, have now come
7 here, and have been harboured by Jason! They are all defying the decrees of the Emperor. They say that someone else is king – a man called Jesus!'

8 On hearing this, the people and the city magistrates were much concerned; and, before letting them go, they took bail from Jason and the
10 others. That very night the followers sent Paul and Silas off to Beroea; and
11 on reaching that place, they went to the Jewish synagogue. These Jews of Beroea were better disposed than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message with great readiness, and daily examined the scriptures to
12 see if what was said was true. As a consequence, many of them became believers in Christ, besides a considerable number of Greek women of position,
13 and of men also. But, when the Jewish leaders in Thessalonica found out that God's message had been delivered by Paul at Beroea, they came
14 there too, exciting and disturbing the minds of the people. The followers immediately arranged for Paul to go away to the coast, but both Silas and
15 Timothy stayed behind in Beroea. The friends who escorted Paul took him as far as Athens, and, after receiving a message for Silas and Timothy to join him as quickly as possible, they started on their return.

16 While Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his heart was stirred at
17 seeing the whole city full of idols. So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and with those who joined in their worship, as well as daily in
18 the public Square with those who happened to be there. Among others, some Epicurean and Stoic Philosophers joined issue with him. Some asked 'What is this prater wanting to make out?', while others said 'He seems to be a preacher of foreign Deities.' (This was because he was telling the
19 good news about Jesus and the resurrection). So they laid hold of him and took him to the Court of Areopagus.

‘May we hear,’ they asked, ‘what new teaching this is which you are giving? For you are bringing some strange things to our notice, and we should like to know what they mean.’ (All Athenians and the foreigners staying in the city found no time for anything else but telling, or listening to, the last new thing.)

So Paul took his stand in the middle of the Court, and said – ‘People of Athens, on every hand I see signs of your being very devout. For as I was going about, looking at your sacred shrines, I came upon an altar with this inscription – “To an Unknown God.” What, therefore, you worship in ignorance, that I am now proclaiming to you. The God who made the world and all things that are in it – he, Lord as he is of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by hands, neither do human hands minister to his wants, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives, to all, life, and breath, and all things. He made all races of the earth’s surface – fixing a time for their rise and fall, and the limits of their settlements – That they might search for God, if by any means they might feel their way to him and find him. And yet he is not really far from any one of us; for in him we live and move and are. To use the words of some of your own poets –

“His offspring, too, are we.”

Therefore, as the offspring of God, we must not think that the Deity has any resemblance to anything made of gold, or silver, or stone – a work of human art and imagination. True, God looked with indulgence on the days of people’s ignorance, but now he is announcing to everyone everywhere the need for repentance, because he has fixed a day on which he intends to judge the world with justice, by a man whom he has appointed – and of this he has given all people a pledge by raising this man from the dead.’

On hearing of a resurrection of the dead, some began jeering, but others said that they wanted to hear what he had to say about that another time. And so Paul left the Court. There were, however, some people who joined him, and became believers in Christ. Among them were Dionysius, a member of the Court of Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and several others.

On leaving Athens, Paul next went to Corinth. There he met a Jew of the name of Aquila, from Pontus, who, with his wife Priscilla, had lately come from Italy, in consequence of the order which had been issued by the Emperor Claudius for all Jews to leave Rome. Paul paid them a visit, and, since their trade was the same as his, he stayed and worked with them

- 4 – their trade was tent-making. Every Sabbath Paul gave addresses in the synagogue, trying to convince both Jews and Greeks.
- 5 But, when Silas and Timothy had come down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself entirely to delivering the message, earnestly maintaining
- 6 before the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. However, as they set themselves against him and became abusive, Paul shook his clothes in protest and said to them, ‘Your blood be on your own heads. My conscience is clear. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.’
- 7 So he left, and went to the house of a certain Titius Justus, who had been accustomed to join in the worship of God, and whose house was next door
- 8 to the synagogue. Crispus, the synagogue leader, came to believe in the Lord, and so did all his household; and many of the Corinthians, as they
- 9 listened to Paul, became believers in Christ and were baptized. One night the Lord said to Paul, in a vision, ‘Have no fear, but continue to speak, and
- 10 refuse to be silenced; for I am with you, and no one will do you harm, for
- 11 I have many people in this city.’ So he settled there for a year and a half, and taught God’s message among the people.
- 12 While Gallio was governor of Greece, some of the Jewish leaders made a combined attack on Paul, and brought him before the Governor’s Bench,
- 13 charging him with persuading people to worship God in a way forbidden
- 14 by the Law. Just as Paul was on the point of speaking, Gallio said to them, ‘If this were a case of misdemeanour or some serious crime, there would
- 15 be some reason for my listening patiently to you; but, since it is a dispute about words, and names, and your own Law, you must see to it yourselves. I do not choose to be a judge in such matters.’
- 16 Saying this, he drove them back from the Bench. Then they all set on
- 17 Sosthenes, the synagogue leader, and beat him in front of the Bench, but Gallio did not trouble himself about any of these things.
- 18 Paul remained there some time after this, and then took leave of the followers, and sailed to Syria with Priscilla and Aquila, but not before his head had been shaved at Cenchreae, because he was under a vow.
- 19 They put into Ephesus, and there Paul, leaving his companions, went
- 20 into the synagogue and addressed the Jews. When they asked him to
- 21 prolong his stay, he declined, saying however, as he took his leave, ‘I will
- 22 come back again to you, please God,’ and then set sail from Ephesus. On
- 23 reaching Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and exchanged greetings with the church, and then went down to Antioch. After making some stay in Antioch, he set out on a tour through the Phrygian district of Galatia, strengthening the faith of all the disciples as he went.

24 Meanwhile there had come to Ephesus an Alexandrian Jew, named Apol-
25 los, an eloquent man, who was well-versed in the scriptures. He had been
well-instructed in the Way of the Lord, and with burning zeal he spoke of,
and taught carefully, the facts about Jesus, though he knew of no baptism
26 but John's. This man began to speak out fearlessly in the synagogue; and
when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home and explained
27 the Way of God to him more carefully still. When he wanted to cross to
Greece, the followers furthered his plans, and wrote to the disciples there
to welcome him. On his arrival he proved of great assistance to those who
28 had, through the loving kindness of God, become believers in Christ, for
he vigorously confuted the Jews, publicly proving by the scriptures that
Jesus was the Christ.

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland districts
of Roman Asia, and went to Ephesus. There he found some disciples, of
2 whom he asked, 'Did you, when you became believers in Christ, receive
the Holy Spirit?'

'No,' they answered, 'we did not even hear that there was a Holy Spirit.'

3 'What then was your baptism?' Paul asked. 'John's baptism was a bap-
4 tism on repentance,' rejoined Paul, 'and John told the people (speaking of
the "one coming" after him) that they should believe in him – that is in
Jesus.'

5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the faith of the Lord Jesus, and,
6 after Paul had placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit descended on
7 them, and they began to speak in other languages and to preach. There
were about twelve of them in all.

8 Paul went to the synagogue there, and for three months spoke out fear-
lessly, giving addresses and trying to convince his hearers, about the king-
9 dom of God. Some of them, however, hardened their hearts and refused to
believe, denouncing the Way before the people. So Paul left them and with-
drew his disciples, and gave daily addresses in the lecture-hall of Tyrannus.
10 This went on for two years, so that all who lived in Roman Asia, Jews and
Greeks alike, heard the Lord's message.

11 God did miracles of no ordinary kind by Paul's hands; so that people
12 would carry home to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his
body, and their diseases would leave them and the wicked spirits go out
13 of them. An attempt was made by some itinerant Jews, who were exorcists,
to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had wicked spirits in
them.

14 'I order you,' they would say, 'by the Jesus, whom Paul preaches.' The
15 seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this; but the wicked

spirit answered them, 'Jesus I acknowledge, and Paul I know, but you – who are you?'

16 Then the man, in whom this wicked spirit was, sprang on them, mastered both of them, and so completely overpowered them, that they fled out of
17 the house, stripped of their clothes, and wounded. This incident came to the knowledge of all the Jews and Greeks living at Ephesus; they were all awe-struck, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in the highest honour.
18 Many, too, of those who had become believers in Christ came with a full
19 confession of their practices; while a number of people, who had practiced magic, collected their books and burnt them publicly; and on reckoning up the price of these, they found it amounted to fifty thousand silver coins.
20 So irresistibly did the Lord's message spread and prevail.

21 Sometime after these events Paul resolved to go through Macedonia and Greece, and then make his way to Jerusalem. 'And after I have been
22 there,' he said, 'I must visit Rome also.' So he sent to Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Roman Asia.

23 Just about that time a great disturbance arose about the Way. A silver-smith named Demetrius, who made silver models of the shrine of Artemis,
24 and so gave a great deal of work to the artisans, got these men together, as well as the workmen engaged in similar occupations, and said:

26 Men, you know that our prosperity depends on this work, and you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but in almost the whole of Roman Asia, this Paul has convinced and won over great numbers of people, by his
27 assertion that those Gods which are made by hands are not Gods at all. So that not only is this business of ours likely to fall into discredit, but there is the further danger that the Temple of the great Goddess Artemis will be thought nothing of, and that she herself will be deprived of her splendour – though all Roman Asia and the whole world worship her.'

28 When they heard this, the men were greatly enraged, and began shouting – 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!' The commotion spread through the whole city, and the people rushed together into the amphitheater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, two Macedonians who were Paul's
30 traveling companions. Paul wished to go into the amphitheater and face
31 the people, but the disciples would not let him, while some of the chief religious officials of the province, who were friendly to him, sent repeated
32 entreaties to him not to trust himself inside. Meanwhile some were shouting one thing and some another, for the Assembly was all in confusion,
33 most of those present not even knowing why they had met. But some of

the crowd prompted Alexander, whom several of the Jewish leaders had pushed to the front, and he waved his hand to show that he wanted to speak in their defence to the people. However, when they recognised him as a Jew, one cry broke from them all, and they continued shouting for two hours – ‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’

When the Recorder had succeeded in quieting the crowd, he said, ‘People of Ephesus, who is there, I ask you, who needs to be told that this city of Ephesus is the Warden of the Temple of the great Artemis, and of the statue which fell down from Zeus? As these are undeniable facts, you ought to keep calm and do nothing rash; for you have brought these men here, though they are neither robbers of Temples nor blasphemers of our Goddess. If, however, Demetrius and the artisans who are acting with him have a charge to make against anyone, there are court days and there are Magistrates; let both parties take legal proceedings. But if you want anything more, it will have to be settled in the regular Assembly. For I tell you that we are in danger of being proceeded against for today’s riot, there being nothing to account for it; and in that case we will be at a loss to give any reason for this disorderly gathering.’

With these words he dismissed the Assembly.

When the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and, with encouraging words, bade them goodbye, and started on his journey to Macedonia. After going through those districts and speaking many encouraging words to the disciples, he went into Greece, where he stayed three months. He was about to sail to Syria, when he learned that a plot had been laid against him by several of the Jewish leaders; so he decided to return by way of Macedonia. He was accompanied by Sopater the son of Pyrrhus, of Beroea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus of Roman Asia. These people went to Troas and waited for us there; while we ourselves sailed from Philippi after the Passover, and joined them five days later at Troas, where we stayed for a week.

On the first day of the week, when we had met for the breaking of bread, Paul, who was intending to leave the next day, began to address those who were present, and prolonged his address until midnight. There were a good many lamps in the upstairs room, where we had met; and a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, was gradually overcome with great drowsiness, as Paul continued his address. At last, quite overpowered by his drowsiness, he fell from the third story to the ground, and was picked

- 10 up for dead. But Paul went down, threw himself on him, and put his arms round him.
- 11 ‘Do not be alarmed,’ he said, ‘he is still alive.’ Then he went upstairs; and, after breaking and partaking of the bread, he talked with them at great length until daybreak, and then left. Meanwhile they had taken the lad away alive, and were greatly comforted.
- 13 We started first, went on board ship, and sailed for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there. This was by his own arrangement, as he intended 14 to go by land himself. So, when he met us at Assos, we took him on board 15 and went on to Mitylene. The day after we had sailed from there, we arrived off Chios, touched at Samos the following day, and the next day reached 16 Miletus; for Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so as to avoid spending much time in Roman Asia. He was making haste to reach Jerusalem, if possible, by the Festival at the close of the Harvest.
- 17 From Miletus, however, he sent to Ephesus and invited the church elders 18 to meet him; and, when they came, he said to them, ‘You know well the life that I always led among you from the very first day that I set foot in 19 Roman Asia, serving the Lord, as I did, in all humility, amid the tears and trials which fell to my lot through the plots of some of the Jewish leaders. 20 I never shrank from telling you anything that could be helpful to you, or 21 from teaching you both in public and in private. I earnestly pointed both Jews and Greeks to the repentance that leads to God, and to faith in Jesus, 22 our Lord. And now, under spiritual constraint, I am here on my way to 23 Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that in town after town the Holy Spirit plainly declares to me that imprisonment and 24 troubles await me. But I count my life of no value to myself, if only I may complete the course marked out for me, and the task that was allotted me by the Lord Jesus – which was to declare the good news of the love of God. 25 And now, I tell you, I know that none of you will ever see my face again – 26 you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom. Therefore I declare to you this day, that my conscience is clear in regard to the fate 27 of any of you, for I have not shrunk from announcing the whole purpose 28 of God regarding you. Be watchful over yourselves, and over the whole flock, of which the Holy Spirit has placed you in charge, to shepherd the 29 church of God, which he won for himself at the cost of his life. I know that, after my departure, merciless wolves will get in among you, who will not 30 spare the flock; and from among yourselves, too, people will arise, who will teach perversions of truth, so as to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore, be on your guard, remembering how for three years, night and

32 day, I never ceased, even with tears, to warn each one of you. And now I commend you to the Lord and to the message of his love – a message which has the power to build up your characters, and to give you your place
33 among all those who have become Christ's people. I have never coveted
34 anyone's gold or silver or clothing. You, yourselves, know that these hands of mine provided not only for my own wants, but for my companions also.
35 I left nothing undone to show you that, labouring as I laboured, you ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he
36 said himself – "It is more blessed to give than to receive." When Paul had
37 finished speaking, he knelt down and prayed with them all. All were in tears; and throwing their arms round Paul's neck, they kissed him again
38 and again, grieving most of all over what he had said – that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

21 When we had torn ourselves away and had set sail, we ran before the wind to Cos; the next day we came to Rhodes, and from there to Patara,
2 where we found a ship crossing to Phoenicia, and went on board and set
3 sail. After sighting Cyprus and leaving it on the left, we sailed to Syria, and
4 put into Tyre, where the ship was to discharge her cargo. There we found the disciples and stayed a week with them. Speaking under the influence
5 of the Spirit, they warned Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem. However, when we had come to the end of our visit, we went on our way, all the disciples with their wives and children escorting us out of the city. We knelt down
6 on the beach, and prayed, and then said goodbye to one another; after which we went on board, and they returned home.

7 After we had made the run from Tyre, we landed at Ptolemais, and exchanged greetings with the followers there, and spent a day with them.
8 The next day we left, and reached Caesarea, where we went to the house of Philip, the missionary, who was one of the Seven, and stayed with him.
9 He had four unmarried daughters, who had the gift of prophecy. During
10 our visit, which lasted several days, a prophet, named Agabus, came down
11 from Judea. He came to see us, and, taking Paul's belt, and binding his own feet and hands with it, said, 'This is what the Holy Spirit says – "The man to whom this belt belongs will be bound like this by the religious
12 authorities in Jerusalem, and they will give him up to the Gentiles".' When we heard that, we and the people of the place began to entreat Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 It was then that Paul made the reply, 'Why are you weeping and breaking my heart like this? For my part, I am ready not only to be bound, but even
14 to suffer death at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' So, as he would

not be persuaded, we said no more to him, only adding – ‘The Lord’s will be done.’

15 At the end of our visit, we made our preparations, and started on our
16 way up to Jerusalem. Some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us,
and brought Mnason with them, a Cypriot disciple of long standing, with
17 whom we were to stay. On our arrival at Jerusalem, the followers of the
18 Lord there gave us a hearty welcome; and the next day Paul went with us
19 to see James, and all the church elders were present. After greeting them,
Paul related in detail all that God had done among the Gentiles through
20 his efforts; and, when they had heard it, they began praising God, and said
to Paul:

‘You see, brother, that those of our people who have become believers in
Christ may be numbered by tens of thousands, and they are all naturally
21 earnest in upholding the Jewish Law. Now they have heard it said about
you, that you teach all of our people in foreign countries to forsake Moses,
for you tell them not to circumcise their children or even to observe Jewish
22 customs. Well now, as they are certain to hear of your arrival, do what we
23 are going to suggest. We have four men here, who have of their own accord
24 put themselves under a vow. Join these men, share their purification, and
bear their expenses, so that they may shave their heads; and then all will
see that there is no truth in what they have been told about you, but that,
on the contrary, you yourself rule your life in obedience to the Jewish Law.
25 As to the Gentiles who have become believers in Christ, we have sent our
decision that they should avoid food offered to idols, and blood, and the
flesh of strangled animals, and impurity.’

26 Paul joined the men, and the next day shared their purification, and
went into the Temple, and gave notice of the expiration of the period of
purification when the usual offering should have been made on behalf of
each of them.

27 But, just as the seven days were drawing to a close, some of the Jewish
people from Roman Asia caught sight of Paul in the Temple, and caused
great excitement among all the people present, by seizing Paul and shouting,
‘People of Israel! Help! This is the man who teaches everyone every-
where against our people, our Law, and this place; and, what is more, he
has actually brought Greeks into the Temple and defiled this sacred place.’
29 (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in Paul’s company
in the city, and were under the belief that Paul had taken him into the
Temple.)

30 The whole city was stirred, and the people quickly collected, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the Temple, when the doors were immediately shut. They were bent on killing him, when it was reported to the officer commanding the garrison, that all Jerusalem was in commotion. He instantly got together some officers and soldiers, and charged down on the crowd, who, when they saw the commanding officer and his soldiers, 33 stopped beating Paul. Then he went up to Paul, arrested him, ordered him to be doubly chained, and proceeded to inquire who he was, and what 34 he had been doing. Some of the crowd said one thing, and some another; and, as he could get no definite reply because of the uproar, he ordered 35 Paul to be taken into the barracks. When Paul reached the steps, he was actually being carried by the soldiers, owing to the violence of the mob; 36 for the people were following in a mass, shouting out, 'Kill him!' 37 Just as he was about to be taken into the Fort, Paul said to the commanding officer, 'May I speak to you?' 38 'Do you know Greek?' asked the commanding officer. 'Aren't you, then, the Egyptian who some time ago raised an insurrection and led the four thousand Bandits out into the wilderness?' 39 'No,' said Paul, 'I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of a city of some note. I beg you to give me permission to speak to the people.' 40 The commanding officer gave his permission, and Paul, standing on the steps, made signs with his hand to the people, and, when comparative 22 silence had been obtained, he said to them in Hebrew: 'Brothers and fathers, 2 listen to the defence which I am about to make.' When they heard that he was speaking to them in Hebrew, they were still more quiet; and Paul went on: 3 'I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, but I was brought up in this city under the teaching of Gamaliel, and educated in accordance with the strict system of our ancestral Law. I was as zealous in God's service as any of you 4 who are here today. In my persecution of this Way I did not stop even at the taking of life. I put in chains, and imprisoned, men and women alike – 5 And to that the high priest himself and all the council of elders can testify. For I had letters of introduction from them to our fellow Jews at Damascus, and I was on my way to that place, to bring those whom I might find there 6 prisoners to Jerusalem for punishment. While I was still on my way, just as I was getting close to Damascus, about midday, suddenly there flashed 7 from the heavens a great light all round me. I fell to the ground, and heard 8 a voice saying to me "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" "Who are you, Lord?" I replied. Then the voice said "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom 9 you are persecuting." The men with me saw the light, but did not hear

10 the speaker's voice. Then I said "What am I to do, Lord?" "Get up and go into Damascus," The Lord said to me, "and there you will be told all that
11 you have been appointed to do." In consequence of that dazzling light I could not see, but my companions held me by the hand, until I reached
12 Damascus. There a man named Ananias, a strict observer of our Law, well spoken of by all the Jewish inhabitants, came to see me. Standing close to me, he said "Saul, my brother, recover your sight." And then and there I
14 recovered my sight and looked up at him. Then he said "The God of our ancestors has appointed you to learn his will, and to see the righteous one,
15 and to hear words from his lips; for you will be a witness for him to all the world of what you have just seen and heard. And now why wait any longer,
17 Be baptized at once, wash away your sins, and invoke his name." After my return to Jerusalem, while I was praying one day in the Temple, I fell
18 into a trance, and saw Jesus saying to me "Make haste and leave Jerusalem
19 at once, because they will not accept your testimony about me." "Lord," I answered, "these people know that I used to imprison and scourge, in
20 synagogue after synagogue, those who believed in you; and, when the blood of your martyr, Stephen, was being shed, I was myself standing by, approving of his death, and took charge of the clothes of those who
21 were murdering him." But Jesus said to me "Go; for I will send you to the Gentiles far away".

22 Up to this point the people had been listening to Paul, but at these words they called out, 'Kill him! A fellow like this ought not to have been allowed
23 to live!' As they were shouting, tearing off their clothes, and throwing dust
24 in the air, the commanding officer ordered Paul to be taken into the Fort, and directed that he should be examined under the lash so that he might find out the reason for their outcry against him.

25 But just as they had tied him up to be scourged, Paul said to the captain standing near, 'Is it legal for you to scourge a Roman citizen, unconvicted?'
26 On hearing this, the captain went and reported it to the commanding officer. 'Do you know what you are doing?' he said. 'This man is a Roman
27 citizen.' So the commanding officer went up to Paul and said, 'Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?'

28 'Yes,' replied Paul. 'I had to pay a heavy price for my position as citizen,' said the officer. 'I am one by birth,' rejoined Paul.

29 The men who were to have examined Paul immediately drew back, and the officer, finding that Paul was a Roman citizen, was alarmed at having put him in chains.

30 On the next day the commanding officer, wishing to find out the real reason why Paul was denounced by the Jewish leaders, had his chains taken off, and directed the chief priests and the whole of the High Council
23 to assemble, and then took Paul down and brought him before them. Paul fixed his eyes on the Council, and began:

‘Brothers, for my part, I have always ordered my life before God, with
2 a clear conscience, up to this very day.’ At this, the high priest Ananias
3 ordered the men standing near to strike him on the mouth; Paul turned to him and said:

‘God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting there to try me in accordance with law, and yet, in defiance of law, order me to be
4 struck?’ The people standing near said to Paul, ‘Do you know that you are insulting God’s high priest?’

5 ‘I did not know, brothers, that it was the high priest,’ said Paul, ‘for scripture says –

“Of the ruler of your people you should speak no ill”.

6 Noticing that some of those present were Sadducees and others Pharisees, Paul called out in the Council, ‘Brothers, I am a Pharisee and a son of Pharisees. It is on the question of hope for the dead and of their resurrection that I am on my trial.’

7 As soon as he said this, a dispute arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and there was a sharp division of opinion among those present.
8 (For Sadducees say there is no such thing as a resurrection, and that there is
9 neither angel nor spirit, while Pharisees believe in both.) So a great uproar ensued, and some of the Teachers of the Law belonging to the Pharisees’ party stood up and hotly protested, ‘We find nothing whatever wrong in
10 this man. Suppose a spirit did speak to him, or an angel...’ The dispute was becoming so violent, that the commanding officer, fearing that Paul would be torn in pieces between them, ordered the Guard to go down and rescue him from them, and take him into the Fort.

11 That night the Lord came and stood by Paul, and said, ‘Courage! You have borne witness for me in Jerusalem and you must bear witness in
12 Rome also.’ In the morning some Jewish men combined together, and took
13 an oath that they would not eat or drink until they had killed Paul. There
14 were more than forty in the plot; and they went to the chief priests and the elders, and said, ‘We have taken a solemn oath not to touch food until we
15 have killed Paul. So we want you now, with the consent of the Council, to suggest to the commanding officer that he should bring Paul down before

you, as though you intended to go more fully into his case; but, before he comes here, we will be ready to make away with him.'

16 However, the son of Paul's sister, hearing of the plot, went to the Fort, 17 and on being admitted, told Paul about it. Paul called one of the Captains of the garrison and asked him to take the lad to the commanding officer, 18 as he had something to tell him. The captain went with the lad to the commanding officer, and said, 'The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this lad to you, as he has something to tell you.'

19 The commanding officer took the lad by the hand, and, stepping aside, 20 asked what it was he had to tell him. 'Some men have agreed,' answered the lad, 'to ask you to bring Paul down before the Council tomorrow, on 21 the plea of your making further inquiry into his case. But do not let them persuade you, for more than forty of them are lying in wait for him, who have taken an oath that they will not eat or drink, until they have made away with him; and they are at this very moment in readiness, counting on 22 your promise.' The commanding officer then dismissed the lad, cautioning him not to mention to anybody that he had given him that information. 23 Then he called two Captains, and ordered them to have two hundred soldiers ready to go to Caesarea, as well as seventy troopers and two 24 hundred lancers, by nine o'clock that night, and to have horses ready for 25 Paul to ride, so that they might take him safely to Felix, the Governor. He also wrote a letter along these lines:

26 "Claudius Lysias sends his compliments to His Excellency Felix the Governor. The man whom I send with this had been seized by some Jews, and was on the point of being killed by them, when I came upon them with the force under my command, and rescued 28 him, as I learned that he was a Roman citizen. Wanting to know exactly the ground of the charges they made against him, I brought 29 him before their Council, when I found that their charges were connected with questions of their own Law, and that there was 30 nothing alleged involving either death or imprisonment. Having, however, information of a plot against the man, which was about to be put into execution, I am sending him to you at once, and I have also directed his accusers to prosecute him before you."

31 The soldiers, in accordance with their orders, took charge of Paul and 32 conducted him by night to Antipatris; and on the next day, leaving the 33 troopers to go on with him, they returned to the Fort. On arriving at Caesarea, the troopers delivered the letter to the Governor, and brought 34 Paul before him. As soon as Felix had read the letter, he enquired to what

province Paul belonged, and, learning that he came from Cilicia, he said,
35 'I will hear all you have to say as soon as your accusers have arrived.' And
he ordered Paul to be kept under guard in Herod's Government house.

24 Five days afterwards the high priest Ananias came down with some of the
elders and a barrister named Tertullus. They laid an information with the
2 Governor against Paul; and, when the hearing came on, Tertullus began
3 his speech for the prosecution. 'We owe it to your Excellency,' he said,
'that we are enjoying profound peace, and we owe it to your foresight that
4 this nation is constantly securing reforms – advantages which we very
gratefully accept at all times and places. But – not to be tedious – I beg
you, with your accustomed fairness, to listen to a brief statement of our
5 case. We have found this man a public pest; he is one who stirs up disputes
among our people all the world over, and is a ringleader of the Nazarene
6 heretics. He even attempted to desecrate the Temple itself, but we caught
8 him;²⁸ and you will be able, by examining him on all these points, to satisfy
yourself as to the charges which we are bringing against him.'

9 The Jewish crowd also joined in the attack and bore out his statements.
10 On a sign from the Governor, Paul made this reply:

'Knowing, as I do, for how many years you have acted as judge to this
11 nation, it is with confidence that I undertake my own defence. For you
can easily verify that it is not more than twelve days ago that I went up
12 to worship at Jerusalem, where my prosecutors never found me holding
discussions with anyone, or causing a crowd to collect – either in the
13 Temple, or in the synagogues, or about the city; and they cannot establish
14 the charges which they are now making against me. This, however, I do
acknowledge to you, that it is as a believer in the Way which they call
heretical, that I worship the God of my ancestors. At the same time, I
believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in
15 the prophets; and I have a hope that rests in God – a hope which they also
cherish – that there will one day be a resurrection of good and bad alike.
16 This being so, I strive at all times to keep my conscience clear before both
17 God and people. After some years' absence I had come to bring charitable
18 gifts to my nation, and to make offerings; and it was while engaged in this
that they found me in the Temple, after completing a period of purification,
19 but not with any crowd or disorder. There were, however, some Jews from

²⁸ 24:7 Some later manuscripts add: We wanted to judge him according to our law. But Lysias the commanding officer came and took him out of our hands by force, ordering his accusers to come before you.

Roman Asia who ought to have been here before you, and to have made
20 any charge that they may have against me – Or else let my opponents here
21 say what they found wrong in me when I was before the Council, except
as to the one sentence that I shouted out as I stood among them – “It is
about the resurrection of the dead that I am on my trial before you today.”

22 Felix, however, adjourned the case – though he had a fairly accurate
knowledge of all that concerned the Way – with the promise, ‘When Lysias,
the commanding officer, comes down, I will give my decision in your case.’
23 So he gave orders to the captain in charge of Paul to keep him in custody,
but to relax the regulations, and not to prevent any of his personal friends
from attending to his wants.

24 Some days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and,
sending for Paul, listened to what he had to say about faith in Christ Jesus.
25 But, while Paul was speaking at length about righteousness, self-control,
and the coming judgment, Felix became terrified, and interrupted him –
‘Go for the present, but, when I find an opportunity, I will send for you
again.’ He was hoping, too, for a bribe from Paul, and so he used to send
26 for him frequently and talk with him. But, after the lapse of two years, Felix
was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and, wishing to gain popularity with the
Jewish leaders, he left Paul a prisoner.

25 Three days after Festus had arrived in his province, he left Caesarea and
2 went up to Jerusalem. There the chief priests and the leading men among
3 the Jews laid an information before him against Paul, and asked a favour of
him, to Paul’s injury – to have Paul brought to Jerusalem. All the while they
4 were plotting to make away with him on the road. But Festus answered
that Paul was in prison at Caesarea, and that he himself would be leaving
for that place shortly.

5 ‘So let the influential men among you,’ he said, ‘go down with me, and
6 if there is anything amiss in the man, charge him formally with it.’ After
staying among them some eight or ten days, Festus went down to Caesarea.
The next day he took his seat on the Bench, and ordered Paul to be brought
7 before him. On Paul’s appearance, the Jewish leaders who had come down
from Jerusalem surrounded him, and made many serious charges, which
8 they failed to establish. Paul’s answer to the charge was – “I have not com-
mitted any offence against the Jewish Law, or the Temple, or the Emperor.”
9 But, as Festus wished to gain popularity with the Jews, he interrupted Paul
with the question, ‘Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be tried on
these charges before me there?’

10 ‘No,’ replied Paul, ‘I am standing at the Emperor’s court, where I ought
11 to be tried. I have not wronged the Jews, as you yourself are well aware. If,
however, I am breaking the law and have committed any offence deserving
death, I do not ask to escape the penalty; but, if there is nothing in the
accusations of these people, no one has the power to give me up to them. I
appeal to the Emperor.’

12 Festus, after conferring with his Council, answered, ‘You have appealed
to the Emperor; to the Emperor you will go.’

13 Some days later King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Caesarea,
14 and paid a visit of congratulation to Festus; and, as they were staying
there for several days, Festus laid Paul’s case before the king. ‘There is a
15 man here,’ he said, ‘left a prisoner by Felix, about whom, when I came
to Jerusalem, the Jewish chief priest and the elders laid an information,
16 demanding judgment against him. My answer to them was, that it was not
the practice of Romans to give up anyone to their accusers until the accused
had met them face to face, and had also had an opportunity of answering
17 the charges brought against them. So they met here, and without loss of
time I took my seat on the Bench the very next day, and ordered the man to
18 be brought before me. But, when his accusers came forward, they brought
19 no charge of wrong-doing such as I had expected; but I found that there
were certain questions in dispute between them about their own religion,
and about some dead man called Jesus, whom Paul declared to be alive.
20 And, as I was at a loss how to enquire into questions of this kind, I asked
Paul if he were willing to go up to Jerusalem, and be put on trial there.
21 Paul, however, appealed to have his case reserved for the consideration
of his August Majesty, so I ordered him to be detained in custody, until I
could send him to the Emperor.’

22 ‘I should like to hear this man myself,’ Agrippa said to Festus.

‘You will hear him tomorrow,’ Festus answered.

23 So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come in full state and
had entered the Audience Chamber, with the superior officers and the
principal people of the city, by the order of Festus Paul was brought before
24 them. Then Festus said, ‘King Agrippa, and all here present, you see before
you the man about whom the whole Jewish people have applied to me,
both at Jerusalem and here, loudly asserting that he ought not to be allowed
25 to live. I found, however, that he had not done anything deserving death;
so, as he had himself appealed to his August Majesty, I decided to send
him. But I have nothing definite to write about him to my Imperial Master;
and for that reason I have brought him before you all, and especially before
you, King Agrippa, that, after examining him, I may have something to

27 write. For it seems to me absurd to send a prisoner, without at the same time stating the charges made against him.'

26 Turning to Paul, Agrippa said, 'You are at liberty to speak for yourself.'
2 Then Paul stretched out his hand and began his defence. 'I have been congratulating myself, King Agrippa,' he said, 'that it is before you that I have to make my defence today, with regard to all the charges brought
3 against me by my own people, especially as you are so well-versed in all the customs and questions of the Jewish world. I beg you therefore to
4 give me a patient hearing. My life, then, from youth upwards, was passed, from the very first, among my own nation, and in Jerusalem, and is within
5 the knowledge of all Jews; and they have always known – if they choose to give evidence – that, in accordance with the very strictest form of our
6 religion, I lived a true Pharisee. Even now, it is because of my hope in the
7 promise given by God to our ancestors that I stand here on my trial – A promise which our twelve tribes, by earnest service night and day, hope to see fulfilled. It is for this hope, your Majesty, that I am accused – and
8 by Jews themselves! Why do you all hold it incredible that God should
9 raise the dead? I myself, it is true, once thought it my duty to oppose in
10 every way the name of Jesus of Nazareth; and I actually did so at Jerusalem.
Acting on the authority of the chief priests, I myself threw many of the people of Christ into prison, and, when it was proposed to put them to
11 death, I gave my vote for it. Time after time, in every synagogue, I tried by punishments to force them to blaspheme. So frantic was I against them,
12 that I pursued them even to towns beyond our borders. It was while I was traveling to Damascus on an errand of this kind, entrusted with full
13 powers by the chief priests, that at midday, your Majesty, I saw right in my path, coming from the heavens, a light brighter than the glare of the
14 sun, which shone all round me and those traveling with me. We all fell to the ground, and then I heard a voice saying to me in Hebrew – "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? By kicking against the goad you are
15 punishing yourself." "Who are you, Lord?" I asked. And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but get up and stand upright; for I have appeared to you in order to appoint you a servant and a witness of those revelations of me which you have already had, and of those in
17 which I will yet appear to you, since I am choosing you out from your own
18 people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; so that they may receive pardon for their sins, and a place among
19 those who have become God's people, by faith in me." After that, King Agrippa, I did not fail to obey the heavenly vision; on the contrary, first to

those at Damascus and Jerusalem, and then through the whole of Judea, and to the Gentiles as well, I began to preach repentance and conversion to God, and a life befitting that repentance. This is why some men seized me in the Temple, and made attempts on my life. However I have received help from God to this very day, and so stand here, and bear my testimony to high and low alike – without adding a word to what the prophets, as well as Moses, declared should happen – That the Christ must suffer, and that, by rising from the dead, he was destined to be the first to bring news of light, not only to our nation, but also to the Gentiles.'

24 While Paul was making this defence, Festus called out loudly, 'You are mad, Paul; your great learning is driving you mad.'

25 'I am not mad, your Excellency,' he replied. 'On the contrary, the statements that I am making are true and sober. Indeed, the king knows about these matters, so I speak before him without constraint. I am sure that there is nothing whatever of what I have been telling him that has escaped 27 his attention; for all this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.'

28 But Agrippa said to Paul, 'You are soon trying to make a Christian of me!'

29 'Whether it is soon or late,' answered Paul, 'I pray to God that not only you, but all who are listening to me, might today become just what I am myself – except for these chains!' Then the king rose, with the Governor 31 and Bernice and those who had been sitting with them, and, after retiring, discussed the case among themselves. 'There is nothing,' they said, 'deserving death or imprisonment in this man's conduct'; and, speaking to Festus, Agrippa added, 'The man might have been discharged, if he had not appealed to the Emperor.'

27 As it was decided that we were to sail to Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were put in charge of a captain of the Augustan Guard, named 2 Julius. We went on board a ship from Adramyttium, which was on the point of sailing to the ports along the coast of Roman Asia, and put to sea. 3 Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, went with us. The next day we put in to Sidon, where Julius treated Paul in a friendly manner, and 4 allowed him to go to see his friends and receive their hospitality. Putting to sea again, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the wind was against 5 us; and, after crossing the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we reached Myra 6 in Lycia. There the Roman officer found an Alexandrian ship on her way 7 to Italy, and put us on board of her. For several days our progress was slow, and it was only with difficulty that we arrived off Cnidus. As the wind

8 was still unfavourable when we came off Cape Salmone, we sailed under
the lee of Crete, and with difficulty, by keeping close in shore, we reached
a place called "Fair Havens," near which was the town of Lasea.

9 This had taken a considerable time, and sailing was already dangerous,
10 for the Fast was already over; and so Paul gave this warning. 'My friends,'
he said, 'I see that this voyage will be attended with injury and much
damage, not only to the cargo and the ship, but to our own lives also.'

11 The Roman officer, however, was more influenced by the captain and
12 the owner than by what was said by Paul. And, as the harbour was not
a suitable one to winter in, the majority were in favour of continuing the
voyage, in hope of being able to reach Phoenix, and winter there. Phoenix
13 was a Cretan harbour, open to the north-east and south-east. So, when a
light wind sprang up from the south, thinking that they had found their
opportunity, they weighed anchor and kept along the coast of Crete, close
14 in shore. But shortly afterwards a hurricane came down on us off the land
15 – a north-easter, as it is called. The ship was caught by it and was unable
to keep her head to the wind, so we had to give way and let her drive
16 before it. Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we only
17 just managed to secure the ship's boat, and, after hoisting it on board, the
men frapped the ship. But, afraid of being driven on to the Syrtis Sands,
18 they lowered the yard, and then drifted. So violently were we tossed about
by the storm, that the next day they began throwing the cargo overboard,
19 and, on the following day, threw out the ship's tackle with their own hands.
20 As neither sun nor stars were visible for several days, and, as the gale still
continued severe, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

21 It was then, when they had gone a long time without food, that Paul
came forward, and said, 'My friends, you should have listened to me, and
22 not have sailed from Crete and so incurred this injury and damage. Yet,
even as things are, I beg you not to lose courage, for there will not be a
23 single life lost among you – only the ship. For last night an angel of the
24 God to whom I belong, and whom I serve, stood by me, and said – "Have
no fear, Paul; you must appear before the Emperor, and God himself has
25 given you the lives of all your fellow voyagers." Therefore, courage, my
friends! For I believe God, that everything will happen exactly as I have
26 been told. We will, however, have to be driven on some island.'

27 It was now the fourteenth night of the storm, and we were drifting about
in the Adriatic Sea, when, about midnight, the sailors began to suspect
28 that they were drawing near land. So they took soundings, and found
twenty fathoms of water. After waiting a little, they took soundings again,
29 and found fifteen fathoms. Then, as they were afraid of our being driven

on some rocky coast, they let go four anchors from the stern, and longed
30 for daylight. The sailors wanted to leave the ship, and had lowered the
31 boat, on pretence of running out anchors from the bows, when Paul said
to the Roman officer and his men, ‘Unless the sailors remain on board, you
32 cannot be saved.’ So the soldiers cut the ropes which held the boat, and let
33 her drift away. In the interval before daybreak Paul kept urging them all
to take something to eat.

‘It is a fortnight today,’ he said, ‘that, owing to your anxiety, you have
34 gone without food, taking nothing. So I beg you to take something to
eat; your safety depends on it, for not one of you will lose even a hair
35 of his head.’ With these words he took some bread, and, after saying the
thanksgiving to God before them all, broke it in pieces, and began to eat;
36 and the men all felt cheered and had something to eat themselves. There
37 were about seventy-six of us on board, all told. After satisfying their hunger,
38 they further lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea. When
39 daylight came, they could not make out what land it was, but, observing a
creek in which there was a beach, they consulted as to whether they could
40 run the ship safely into it. Then they cast off, and abandoned the anchors,
and at the same time unashed the gear of the steering oars, hoisted the
41 foresail to the wind, and made for the beach. They got, however, into a
kind of channel, and there ran the ship aground. The bows stuck fast and
could not be moved, while the stern began breaking up under the strain.
42 The advice of the soldiers was that the prisoners should be killed, so that
43 none of them could swim away and make their escape. But the Roman
officer, anxious to save Paul, prevented their carrying out their intention,
and ordered that those who could swim should be the first to jump into
44 the sea and try to reach the shore; and that the rest should follow, some on
planks, and others on different pieces of the ship. In these various ways
everyone managed to get safely ashore.

28 When we were all safe, we found that the island was called Malta. The
2 island’s people showed us marked kindness, for they lit a fire and took
3 us all under shelter, because it had come on to rain and was cold. Paul
had gathered a quantity of dry sticks and laid them on the fire, when
4 a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, fastened on his hand. When
the islanders saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one
another, ‘Evidently this man is a murderer, for though he has been saved
5 from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live.’ However, Paul shook the
6 creature off into the fire and took no harm. The islanders were expecting
inflammation to set in, or that he would suddenly fall dead; but, after

waiting for a long time, and seeing that there was nothing amiss with him, they changed their minds and said that he was a God.

7 In that region there was an estate belonging to the Governor of the island, whose name was Publius. He took us up to his house, and for three days
8 entertained us most courteously. It happened that the father of Publius was lying ill of fever and dysentery. So Paul went to see him; and, after
9 praying, he placed his hands on him and cured him. After this, all the people in the island who had any illness came to Paul, and were cured.
10 They also presented us with many gifts, and when we set sail they put supplies of necessaries on board.

11 After three months, we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island. She was an Alexandrian vessel, and had the Twin sons of Zeus for her figure-head. We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days, and from
12 there we worked to windward and so got to Rhegium. A day later a south
13 wind sprang up and took us to Puteoli in two days. There we found some
14 of the Lord's followers, and were urged to stay a week with them; after
15 which we went on to Rome. The followers there had heard about us, and
16 came out as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At sight of them Paul thanked God and was much cheered. On our reaching Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, except for the soldier
who was in charge of him.

17 Three days after our arrival, Paul invited the leading Jews to meet him; and, when they came, he said, 'Brothers, although I had done nothing hostile to the interests of our nation or to our ancestral customs, yet I was sent from Jerusalem as a prisoner, and handed over to the Romans. The Romans, when they had examined me, were ready to release me, because
18 there was nothing in my conduct deserving death. But, as the Jewish leaders opposed my release, I was compelled to appeal to the Emperor – not,
19 indeed, that I had any charge to make against my own nation. This, then, is my reason for urging you to come to see me and talk with me; because it is for the sake of the hope of Israel that I am here in chains.'

21 'We,' was their reply, 'have not had any letter about you from Judea, nor have any of our fellow Jews come and reported or said anything bad about
22 you. But we will be glad to hear from you what your views are, for, with regard to this sect, we are well aware that it is spoken against on all sides.'

23 They then fixed a day with him, and came to the place where he was staying, in even larger numbers, when Paul proceeded to lay the subject before them. He bore his testimony to the kingdom of God, and tried to

convince them about Jesus, by arguments drawn from the Law of Moses
24 and from the prophets – speaking from morning until evening. Some were
25 inclined to accept what he said; others, however, rejected it. So, as they
disagreed among themselves, they began to disperse, Paul adding only –

‘True, indeed, was the declaration made by the Holy Spirit, through the
prophet Isaiah to your ancestors –

26 Go to this nation and say:

You will hear with your ears without ever understanding,
and, though you have eyes, you will see without ever per-
ceiving.

27 For the mind of this nation has grown dense,

And their ears are dull of hearing,

Their eyes also have they closed;

Otherwise some day they might see with their eyes,

And with their ears they might hear,

And in their mind they might understand, and might turn –

And I might heal them.

28 Understand, then, that this salvation of God was sent for the Gentiles;
and they will listen.’²⁹

30 For two whole years Paul stayed in a house which he rented for himself,
31 welcoming all who came to see him, proclaiming the kingdom of God,
and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ, with perfect fearlessness, unhin-
dered.

²⁹ 28:29 Some later manuscripts add: After he said these things the Jews left, all the while engag-
ing in a heated debate among themselves.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Introduction

- 1 From Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, who has been called to become an
- 2 apostle, and has been set apart to tell God's good news. This good news
- 3 God promised long ago through his prophets in the sacred scriptures,
- 4 concerning his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; who, as to his human nature,
- 5 was descended from David, but, as to the spirit of holiness within him, was
- 6 miraculously designated Son of God by his resurrection from the dead.
- 7 Through him we received the gift of the apostolic office, to win submission
- 8 to the faith among all nations for the glory of his name. And among these
- 9 nations are you – you who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ.
- 10 To all in Rome who are dear to God and have been called to become
- 11 Christ's people, may God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you
- 12 and give you peace.
- 13 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because the report
- 14 of your faith is spreading throughout the world. God, to whom I offer the
- 15 worship of my soul as I tell the goodness of his Son, is my witness how
- 16 constantly I mention you when I pray, asking that, if he be willing, I may
- 17 some day at last find the way open to visit you. For I long to see you, in
- 18 order to impart to you some spiritual gift and so give you fresh strength –
- 19 or rather that both you and I may find encouragement in each other's faith.
- 20 I want you to know, my friends, that I have many times intended coming
- 21 to see you – but until now I have been prevented – that I might find among
- 22 you some fruit of my labours, as I have already among the other nations.

Faith the Ground of Acceptance

- 14 I have a duty to both the Greek and the barbarian, to both the cultured
- 15 and the ignorant. And so, for my part, I am ready to tell the good news to
- 16 you also who are in Rome.

- 16 For I am not ashamed of the good news; it is the power of God which brings salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, but also to the Greek. For in it there is a revelation of the divine righteousness resulting from faith and leading on to faith; as scripture says – “Through faith the righteous will find life.”
- 17 So, too, there is a revelation from heaven of the divine wrath against every form of ungodliness and wickedness on the part of those people
- 18 who, by their wicked lives, are stifling the truth. This is so, because what can be known about God is plain to them; for God himself has made it plain. For ever since the creation of the universe God’s invisible attributes – his everlasting power and divinity – are to be seen and studied in his
- 19 works, so that people have no excuse; because, although they learned to know God, yet they did not offer him as God either praise or thanksgiving.
- 20 Their speculations about him proved futile, and their undiscerning minds
- 21 were darkened. Professing to be wise, they showed themselves fools; and
- 22 they transformed the glory of the immortal God into the likeness of mortal
- 23 humans, and of birds, and beasts, and reptiles.
- 24 Therefore God abandoned them to impurity, letting them follow the
- 25 cravings of their hearts, until they dishonoured their own bodies; for they
- 26 had substituted a lie for the truth about God, and had revered and
- 27 worshiped created things more than the Creator, who is to be praised for
- 28 ever. Amen. That, I say, is why God abandoned them to degrading passions.
- 29 Even the women among them perverted the natural use of their bodies to
- 30 the unnatural; while the men, disregarding that for which women were
- 31 intended by nature, were consumed with passion for one another. Men indulged in vile practices with men, and incurred in their own persons the
- 32 inevitable penalty for their perverseness.
- 28 Then, as they would not keep God before their minds, God abandoned them to depraved thoughts, so that they did all kinds of shameful things.
- 29 They revelled in every form of wickedness, evil, greed, vice. Their lives
- 30 were full of envy, murder, quarrelling, treachery, malice. They became backbiters, slanderers, impious, insolent, boastful. They devised new sins. They
- 31 disobeyed their parents. They were undiscerning, untrustworthy, without
- 32 natural affection or pity. Well aware of God’s decree, that those who do such things deserve to die, not only are they guilty of them themselves, but they even applaud those who do them.
- 2 Therefore you have nothing to say in your own defence, whoever you are
- 2 who set yourself up as a judge. In judging others you condemn yourself,
- 3 for you who set yourself up as a judge do the very same things. And we
- 3 know that God’s judgment falls unerringly on those who do them. You

who judge those that do such things and yet are yourself guilty of them
4 – do you suppose that you of all people will escape God's judgment? Or
do you think lightly of his abundant kindness, patience, and forbearance,
not realising that his kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? Hard-
5 hearted and impenitent as you are, you are storing up for yourself wrath on
6 the day of wrath, when God's justice as a judge will be revealed; for he will
7 give to everyone what their actions deserve. To those who, by perseverance
8 in doing good, aim at glory, honour, and all that is imperishable, he will
9 give immortal life; while as to those who are factious, and disobedient to
truth but obedient to evil, wrath and anger, distress and despair, will fall
on every human being who persists in wrong-doing – on the Jew first, but
10 also on the Greek. But there will be glory, honour, and peace for everyone
11 who does right – for the Jew first, but also for the Greek, since God shows
12 no partiality. All who, when they sin, are without Law will also perish
without Law; while all who, when they sin, are under Law, will be judged
13 as being under Law. It is not those who hear the words of a Law that are
righteous before God, but it is those who obey it that will be pronounced
14 righteous. When Gentiles, who have no Law, do instinctively what the Law
15 requires, they, though they have no Law, are a Law to themselves; for they
show the demands of the Law written on their hearts; their consciences
corroborating it, while in their thoughts they argue either in self-accusation
16 or, it may be, in self-defence – on the day when God passes judgment on
people's inmost lives, as the good news that I tell declares that he will do
through Christ Jesus.

17 But, perhaps, you bear the name of "Jew," and are relying on Law, and
18 boast of belonging to God, and understand his will, and, having been
carefully instructed from the Law, have learned to appreciate the finer
19 moral distinctions. Perhaps you are confident that you are a guide to the
blind, a light to those who are in the dark, an instructor of the unintelligent,
20 and a teacher of the childish, because in the Law you possess the outline
21 of all knowledge and truth. Why, then, you teacher of others, don't you
22 teach yourself? Do you preach against stealing, and yet steal? Do you
forbid adultery, and yet commit adultery? Do you loathe idols, and yet
23 plunder temples? Boasting, as you do, of your Law, do you dishonour God
24 by breaking the Law? For, as scripture says – "The Gentiles insult God's
25 name because of you"! Circumcision has its value, if you are obeying the
Law. But, if you are a breaker of the Law, your circumcision is no better
26 than uncircumcision. If, then, an uncircumcised man pays regard to the
requirements of the Law, won't he, although not circumcised, be regarded
27 by God as if he were? Indeed, the person who, owing to his birth, remains

uncircumcised, and yet scrupulously obeys the Law, will condemn you, who, for all your written Law and your circumcision, are yet a breaker of
28 the Law. For a man who is only a Jew outwardly is not a real Jew; nor is outward bodily circumcision real circumcision. The real Jew is the person
29 who is a Jew in soul; and the real circumcision is the circumcision of the heart, a spiritual and not a literal thing. Such a person wins praise from God, though not from people.

3 What is the advantage, then, of being a Jew? Or what is the good of circumcision? Great in every way. First of all, because the Jews were entrusted
2 with God's utterances. What follows then? Some, no doubt, showed a want
3 of faith; but will their want of faith make God break faith? Heaven forbid!
4 God must prove true, though everyone prove a liar! As scripture says of God – "That you may be pronounced righteous in what you say, and gain
your cause when people would judge you."

5 But what if our wrong-doing makes God's righteousness all the clearer?
Will God be wrong in inflicting punishment? (I can but speak as a person.)
6 Heaven forbid! Otherwise how can God judge the world?

7 But, if my falsehood redounds to the glory of God, by making his truthfulness more apparent, why am I like others, still condemned as a sinner?
8 Why should we not say – as some people slanderously assert that we do say – "Let us do evil that good may come"? The condemnation of such people is indeed just!

9 What follows, then? Are we Jews in any way superior to others? Not at all. Our indictment against both Jews and Greeks was that all alike were
10 in subjection to sin. As scripture says –

"There is not even one who is righteous,
11 not one who understands,
not one who is searching for God!"

12 They have all gone astray;
they have one and all become depraved;
there is no one who is doing good – no, not one!"

13 "Their throats are like opened graves;
they deceive with their tongues."

"The venom of snakes lies behind their lips,"

14 "And their mouths are full of bitter curses."

15 "Swift are their feet to shed blood.

16 Distress and trouble dog their steps,
and the path of peace they do not know."

17 "The fear of God is not before their eyes."

- 19 Now we know that everything said in the Law is addressed to those who
20 are under its authority, in order that every mouth may be closed, and to
21 bring the whole world under God's judgment. For no human being will
22 be pronounced righteous before God as the result of obedience to Law; for
23 it is Law that shows what sin is.
- 24 But now, quite apart from Law, the divine righteousness stands revealed,
25 and to it the Law and the prophets bear witness – the divine righteousness
26 which is bestowed, through faith in Jesus Christ, on all, without distinc-
27 tion, who believe in him. For all have sinned, and all fall short of God's
28 glorious ideal, but, in his loving kindness, are being freely pronounced
29 righteous through the deliverance found in Christ Jesus. For God set him
30 before the world, to be, by the shedding of his blood, a means of recon-
31 ciliation through faith. And this God did to prove his righteousness, and
32 because, in his forbearance, he had passed over the sins that people had
33 previously committed; as a proof, I repeat, at the present time, of his own
34 righteousness, that he might be righteous in our eyes, and might pronounce
35 righteous the person who takes their stand on faith in Jesus.
- 36 What, then, becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what sort of
37 Law? A Law requiring obedience? No, a Law requiring faith.
- 38 For we conclude that a person is pronounced righteous on the ground
39 of faith, quite apart from obedience to Law. Or can it be that God is the
40 God only of the Jews? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the
41 Gentiles also, since there is only one God, and he will pronounce those
42 who are circumcised righteous as the result of faith, and also those who
43 are uncircumcised on their showing the same faith.
- 44 Do we, then, use this faith to abolish Law? Heaven forbid! No, we estab-
45 lish Law.
- 46 What then, it may be asked, are we to say about Abraham, the ancestor
47 of our nation? If he was pronounced righteous as the result of obedience,
48 then he has something to boast of. Yes, but not before God. For what are the
49 words of scripture? "Abraham had faith in God, and his faith was regarded
50 by God as righteousness." Now wages are regarded as due to the person
51 who works, not as a favour, but as a debt; while, as for the person who
52 does not rely on their obedience, but has faith in him who can pronounce
53 the godless righteous, their faith is regarded by God as righteousness.
- 54 In precisely the same way David speaks of the blessing pronounced
55 on the person who is regarded by God as righteous apart from actions –
56 "Blessed are those whose wrong-doings have been forgiven and over whose
57 sins a veil has been drawn! Blessed the man whom the Lord will never
58 regard as sinful!" Is this blessing, then, pronounced on the circumcised

only or on the uncircumcised as well? We say that – “Abraham’s faith was regarded by God as righteousness.” Under what circumstances, then, did this take place? After his circumcision or before it? Not after, but before. And it was as a sign of this that he received the rite of circumcision – to show the righteousness due to the faith of an uncircumcised man – in order that he might be the father of all who have faith in God even when uncircumcised, so that they also may be regarded by God as righteous; as well as father of the circumcised – to those who are not only circumcised, but who also follow our father Abraham in that faith which he had while still uncircumcised. For the promise that he should inherit the world did not come to Abraham or his descendants through Law, but through the righteousness due to faith. If those who take their stand on Law are to inherit the world, then faith is robbed of its meaning and the promise comes to nothing! Law entails punishment; but, where no Law exists, no breach of it is possible. That is why everything is made to depend on faith: so that everything may be God’s gift, and in order that the fulfilment of the promise may be made certain for all Abraham’s descendants – not only for those who take their stand on the Law, but also for those who take their stand on the faith of Abraham. (He is the Father of us all; as scripture says – “I have made you the Father of many nations.”) And this they do in the sight of that God in whom Abraham had faith, and who gives life to the dead, and speaks of what does not yet exist as if it did. With no ground for hope, Abraham, sustained by hope, put faith in God; in order that, in fulfilment of the words – “So many will your descendants be,” he might become “the Father of many nations.” Though he was nearly a hundred years old, yet his faith did not fail him, even when he thought of his own body, then utterly worn out, and remembered that Sarah was past bearing children. He was not led by want of faith to doubt God’s promise. On the contrary, his faith gave him strength; and he praised God, in the firm conviction that what God has promised he is also able to carry out. And therefore his faith “was regarded as righteousness.” Now these words – “it was regarded as righteousness” – were not written with reference to Abraham only; but also with reference to us. Our faith, too, will be regarded by God in the same light, if we have faith in him who raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead; for Jesus was given up to death to atone for our offences, and was raised to life that we might be pronounced righteous.

Therefore, having been pronounced righteous as the result of faith, let us enjoy peace with God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is through him that, by reason of our faith, we have obtained admission to that place in God’s favour in which we now stand. So let us exult in our hope of attaining

3 God's glorious ideal. And not only that, but let us also exult in our troubles;
4 for we know that trouble develops endurance, and endurance strength of
5 character, and strength of character hope, and that hope never disappoints.
For the love of God has filled our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was
6 given us; seeing that, while we were still powerless, Christ, in God's good
7 time, died on behalf of the godless. Even for an upright person scarcely
anyone will die. For a really good person perhaps someone might even
8 dare to die. But God puts his love for us beyond all doubt by the fact that
9 Christ died on our behalf while we were still sinners. Much more, then,
now that we have been pronounced righteous by virtue of the shedding
10 of his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For
if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the
death of his Son, much more, now that we have become reconciled, will we
11 be saved by virtue of Christ's life. And not only that, but we exult in God,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom we have now obtained this
reconciliation.

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and through
sin came death; so, also, death spread to all humanity, because every per-
13 son has sinned. Even before the time of the Law there was sin in the world;
14 but sin cannot be charged against someone where no Law exists. Yet, from
Adam to Moses, death reigned even over those whose sin was not a breach
15 of a law, as Adam's was. And Adam foreshadows the One to come. But
there is a contrast between Adam's offence and God's gracious gift. For,
if by reason of the offence of the one man the whole human race died,
far more were the loving kindness of God, and the gift given in the lov-
ing kindness of the one man, Jesus Christ, lavished on the whole human
16 race. There is a contrast, too, between the gift and the results of the one
man's sin. The judgment, which followed on the one man's sin, resulted in
condemnation, but God's gracious gift, which followed on many offences,
17 resulted in a decree of righteousness. For if, by reason of the offence of
the one man, death reigned through that one man, far more will those, on
whom God's loving kindness and his gift of righteousness are lavished,
18 find life, and reign through the one man, Jesus Christ. Briefly then, just
as a single offence resulted for all humanity in condemnation, so, too, a
single decree of righteousness resulted for all humanity in that declaration
19 of righteousness which brings life. For, as through the disobedience of the
one man the whole human race was rendered sinful, so, too, through the
obedience of the one, the whole human race will be rendered righteous.
20 Law was introduced in order that offences might be multiplied. But, where
sins were multiplied, the loving kindness of God was lavished the more,

- 21 in order than, just as sin had reigned in the realm of death, so, too, might Loving-kindness reign through righteousness, and result in eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Difficulties arising from this Teaching

- 6 What are we to say, then? Are we to continue to sin, in order that God's
2 loving kindness may be multiplied? Heaven forbid! We became dead to sin,
3 and how can we go on living in it? Or can it be that you do not know that
all of us, who were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, in our baptism
4 shared his death? Consequently, through sharing his death in our baptism,
we were buried with him; so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead
5 by a manifestation of the Father's power, so we also may live a new life. If
we have become united with him by the act symbolic of his death, surely
we will also become united with him by the act symbolic of his resurrection.
6 We recognise the truth that our old self was crucified with Christ, in order
that the body, the stronghold of sin, might be rendered powerless, so that
7 we should no longer be slaves to sin. For the man who has so died has been
8 pronounced righteous and released from sin. And our belief is, that, as we
9 have shared Christ's death, we will also share his life. We know, indeed,
that Christ, having once risen from the dead, will not die again. Death
10 has power over him no longer. For the death that he died was a death to
11 sin, once and for all. But the life that he now lives, he lives for God. So let
it be with you – regard yourselves as dead to sin, but as living for God,
12 through union with Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your
13 mortal bodies and compel you to obey its cravings. Do not offer any part
of your bodies to sin, in the cause of unrighteousness, but once for all offer
yourselves to God (as those who, though once dead, now have life), and
14 devote every part of your bodies to the cause of righteousness. For sin will
not lord it over you. You are living under the reign, not of Law, but of love.
15 What follows, then? Are we to sin because we are living under the reign
16 of love and not of Law? Heaven forbid! Surely you know that, when you
offer yourselves as servants, to obey anyone, you are the servants of the
person whom you obey, whether the service be a service sin which leads
17 to death, or a service Duty which leads to righteousness. God be thanked
that, though you were once servants of sin, yet you learned to give hearty
18 obedience to that form of doctrine under which you were placed. Set free
19 from the control of sin, you became servants to righteousness. I can but
speak as people do because of the weakness of your earthly nature. Once

you offered every part of your bodies to the service of impurity, and of wickedness, which leads to further wickedness. Now, in the same way,
20 offer them to the service of righteousness, which leads to holiness. While
21 you were still servants of sin, you were free as regards righteousness. But what were the fruits that you reaped from those things of which you are
22 now ashamed? For the end of such things is death. But now that you have been set free from the control of sin, and have become servants to God, the fruit that you reap is an ever increasing holiness, and the end eternal
23 life. The wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through union with Christ Jesus, our Lord.

7 Surely, friends, you know (for I am speaking to people who know what Law means) that Law has power over a person only as long as they lives.
2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband while he is living; but, if her husband dies, she is set free from the law that bound her
3 to him. If, then, during her husband's lifetime, she unites herself to another man, she will be called an adulteress; but, if her husband dies, the law has no further hold on her, nor, if she unites herself to another man, is she an
4 adulteress. And so with you, my friends; as far as the Law was concerned, you underwent death in the crucified body of the Christ, so that you might be united to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that
5 our lives might bear fruit for God. When we were living merely earthly lives, our sinful passions, aroused by the Law, were active in every part of
6 our bodies, with the result that our lives bore fruit for death. But now we are set free from the Law, because we are dead to that which once kept us under restraint; and so we serve under new, spiritual conditions, and not under old, written regulations.

7 What are we to say, then? That Law and sin are the same thing? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, I should not have learned what sin is, had not it been for Law. If the Law did not say "You must not covet," I should not
8 know what it is to covet. But sin took advantage of the Commandment to arouse in me every form of covetousness, for where there is no consciousness of Law sin shows no sign of life. There was a time when I myself, unconscious of Law, was alive; but when the Commandment was brought
10 home to me, sin sprang into life, while I died! The Commandment that
11 should have meant life I found to result in death! sin took advantage of the Commandment to deceive me, and used it to bring about my death.
12 And so the Law is holy, and each Commandment is also holy, and just, and good. Did, then, a thing, which in itself was good, involve death in my case? Heaven forbid! It was sin that involved death; so that, by its use of what I regarded as good to bring about my death, its true nature might

appear; and in this way the Commandment showed how intensely sinful
14 sin is. We know that the Law is spiritual, but I am earthly – sold into slavery
15 to sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I am so far from habitually
16 doing what I want to do, that I find myself doing the thing that I hate. But
17 when I do what I want not to do, I am admitting that the Law is right. This
18 being so, the action is no longer my own, but is done by the sin which is
19 within me. I know that there is nothing good in me – I mean in my earthly
20 nature. For, although it is easy for me to want to do right, to act rightly is
21 not easy. I fail to do the good thing that I want to do, but the bad thing that
22 I want not to do – that I habitually do. But, when I do the thing that I want
23 not to do, the action is no longer my own, but is done by the sin which
24 is within me. This, then, is the law that I find – when I want to do right,
25 wrong presents itself! At heart I delight in the Law of God; but throughout
my body I see a different law, one which is in conflict with the law accepted
by my reason, and which endeavours to make me a prisoner to that law of
sin which exists throughout my body. Miserable man that I am! Who will
deliver me from the body that is bringing me to this death? Thank God,
with my reason I serve the Law of God, but with my earthly nature the
Law of sin.

8 There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in union
2 with Christ Jesus; for through your union with Christ Jesus, the Law of the
3 life-giving Spirit has set you free from the Law of sin and death. What Law
could not do, in so far as our earthly nature weakened its action, God did, by
4 sending his own Son, with a nature resembling our sinful nature, to atone
for sin. He condemned sin in that earthly nature, so that the requirements
5 of the Law might be satisfied in us who live now in obedience, not to our
earthly nature, but to the Spirit. They who follow their earthly nature are
earthly-minded, while they who follow the Spirit are spiritually minded.
6 To be earthly-minded means death, to be spiritually minded means life
7 and peace; because to be earthly-minded is to be an enemy to God, for
such a mind does not submit to the Law of God, nor indeed can it do so.
8 They who are earthly cannot please God. You, however, are not earthly but
9 spiritual, since the Spirit of God lives within you. Unless a person has the
10 Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ; but, if Christ is within you,
then, though the body is dead as a consequence of sin, the spirit is life as a
11 consequence of righteousness. And, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus
from the dead lives within you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead
will give life even to your mortal bodies, through his Spirit living within
you.

12 So then, friends, we owe nothing to our earthly nature, that we should
13 live in obedience to it. If you live in obedience to your earthly nature, you
will inevitably die; but if, by the power of the Spirit, you put an end to the
14 evil habits of the body, you will live. All who are guided by the Spirit of
15 God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of a slave, to fill you
once more with fear, but the spirit of a son which leads us to cry "Abba,
16 Our Father." The Spirit himself unites with our spirits in bearing witness
17 to our being God's children, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God, and
joint heirs with Christ, since we share Christ's sufferings in order that we
may also share his glory.

18 I do not count the sufferings of our present life worthy of mention when
19 compared with the glory that is to be revealed and bestowed on us. All
Nature awaits with eager expectation the appearing of the sons of God.
20 For Nature was made subject to imperfection – not by its own choice, but
21 owing to him who made it so – yet not without the hope that some day
Nature, also, will be set free from enslavement to decay, and will attain to
22 the freedom which will mark the glory of the children of God. We know,
indeed, that all Nature alike has been groaning in the pains of labour to
23 this very hour. And not Nature only; but we ourselves also, though we
have already a first gift of the Spirit – we ourselves are inwardly groaning,
while we eagerly await our full adoption as sons – the redemption of our
24 bodies. By our hope we were saved. But the thing hoped for is no longer an
object of hope when it is before our eyes; for who hopes for what is before
25 his eyes? But when we hope for what is not before our eyes, then we wait
for it with patience.

26 So, also, the Spirit supports us in our weakness. We do not even know
how to pray as we should; but the Spirit himself pleads for us in sighs
27 that can find no utterance. Yet he who searches all our hearts knows what
the Spirit's meaning is, because the pleadings of the Spirit for Christ's
28 people are in accordance with his will. But we do know that God causes
all things to work together for the good of those who love him – those who
29 have received the call in accordance with his purpose. For those whom
God chose from the first he also destined from the first to be transformed
into likeness to his Son, so that his Son might be the eldest among many
30 brothers and sisters. And those whom God destined for this he also called;
and those whom he called he also pronounced righteous; and those whom
he pronounced righteous he also brought to glory.

31 What are we to say, then, in the light of all this?

If God is on our side, who can there be against us?

- 32 God did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up on behalf of us all; will he not, then, with him, freely give us all things?
- 33 Who will bring a charge against any of God's people? He who pronounces them righteous is God!
- 34 Who is there to condemn them? He who died for us is Christ Jesus! – or, rather, it was he who was raised from the dead, and who is now at God's right hand and is even pleading on our behalf!
- 35 Who is there to separate us from the love of the Christ? Will trouble, or difficulty, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword?
- 36 Scripture says – "For your sake we are being killed all the day long, We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." Yet amid all these things we more than conquer through him who loved us! For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor archangels, nor the present, nor the future, nor any powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus, our Lord!

Gentiles and Jews

- 9 I am speaking the truth as one in union with Christ; it is no lie; and my conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, bears me out when I say that there is a great weight of sorrow on me and that my heart is never free from pain. I could wish that I were myself accursed and severed from the Christ, for the sake of my people – my own flesh and blood. For they are Israelites, and theirs are the adoption as sons, the visible presence, the Covenants, the revealed Law, the Temple worship, and the Promises. They are descended from the Patriarchs; and, as far as his human nature was concerned, from them came the Christ – he who is supreme over all things, God for ever blessed. Amen.
- 6 Not that God's Word has failed. For it is not all who are descended from Israel who are true Israelites; nor, because they are Abraham's descendants, are they all his children; but – "It is Isaac's children who will be called your descendants." This means that it is not the children born in the course of nature who are God's children, but it is the children born in fulfilment of the Promise who are to be regarded as Abraham's descendants. For these words are the words of a promise – "About this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son." Nor is that all. There is also the case of Rebecca, when

11 she was about to bear children to our ancestor Isaac. For in order that the purpose of God, working through selection, might not fail – a selection depending, not on obedience, but on his call – Rebecca was told, before her children were born and before they had done anything either right
12 or wrong, that the elder would be a servant to the younger. The words of scripture are – “I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau.”

14 What are we to say, then? Is God guilty of injustice? Heaven forbid! For his words to Moses are – “I will take pity on whom I take pity, and be merciful to whom I am merciful.” So, then, all depends, not on human wishes or human efforts, but on God’s mercy. In scripture, again, it is said to Pharaoh – “It was for this purpose that I raised you to the throne, to show my power by my dealings with you, and to make my name known throughout the world.” So, then, where God wills, he takes pity, and where he wills, he hardens the heart. Perhaps you will say to me – “How can anyone still be blamed? For who withstands his purpose?” I might rather ask “Who are you who are arguing with God?” Does a thing which a person has moulded say to the person who has moulded it “Why did you make me like this?” Has not the potter absolute power over their clay, so that out of the same lump they make one thing for better, and another for common, use? And what if God, intending to reveal his displeasure and make his power known, bore most patiently with the objects of his displeasure, though they were fit only to be destroyed, so as to make known his surpassing glory in dealing with the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared beforehand for glory, and whom he called – even us – Not only from among the Jews but from among the Gentiles also! This, indeed, is what he says in the book of Hosea – “Those who were not my people, I will call my people, and those who were unloved I will love. And in the place where it was said to them – ‘You are not my people’, they will be called sons of the living God.” And Isaiah cries aloud over Israel – “Though the sons of Israel are like the sand of the sea in number, only a remnant of them will escape! For the Lord will execute his sentence on the world, fully and without delay.” It is as Isaiah foretold – “Had not the Lord of Hosts spared some few of our people to us, we should have become like Sodom and been made to resemble Gomorrah.”

30 What are we to say, then? Why, that Gentiles, who were not in search of righteousness, secured it – a righteousness which was the result of faith; while Israel, which was in search of a Law which would ensure righteousness, failed to discover one. And why? Because they looked to obedience, and not to faith, to secure it. They stumbled over the stumbling-block. As scripture says – “See, I place a stumbling-block in Zion – a rock

which will prove a hindrance; and he who believes in him will have no cause for shame."

10 My friends, my heart's desire and prayer to God for my people is for
2 their salvation. I can testify that they are zealous for the honour of God;
3 but they are not guided by true insight, for, in their ignorance of the di-
4 vine righteousness, and in their eagerness to set up a righteousness of
5 their own, they refused to accept with submission the divine righteous-
6 ness. For Christ has brought Law to an end, so that righteousness may
7 be obtained by everyone who believes in him. For Moses writes that, as
8 for the righteousness which results from Law, those who practice it will
9 find life through it. But the righteousness which results from faith finds
10 expression in these words: "Do not say to yourself 'Who will go up into
11 heaven?'" (which means to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will go down
12 into the depths below?'" (which means to bring Christ up from the dead).
13 No, but what does it say? "The message is near you, on your lips and in
14 your heart" (which means "The Message of faith" which we proclaim). For,
15 if with your lips you acknowledge the truth of the message that JESUS
IS LORD, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,
16 you will be saved. For with their hearts people believe and so attain to
righteousness, while with their lips they make their Profession of faith and
so find salvation. As the passage of scripture says – "No one who believes
in him will have any cause for shame." For no distinction is made between
the Jew and the Greek, for all have the same Lord, and he is bountiful to all
who invoke him. For everyone who invokes the name of the Lord will be
saved. But how, it may be asked, are they to invoke one in whom they have
not learned to believe? And how are they to believe in one whose words
they have not heard? And how are they to hear his words unless someone
proclaims him? And how is anyone to proclaim him unless they are sent
as his messengers? As scripture says – "How beautiful are the feet of those
who bring good news!"

16 Still, it may be said, everyone did not give heed to the good news. No,
17 for Isaiah asks – "Lord, who has believed our teaching?" And so we gather,
faith is a result of teaching, and the teaching comes in the message of Christ.
18 But I ask "Is it possible that people have never heard?" No, indeed, for –
"Their voices spread through all the earth, and their message to the ends
19 of the world." But again I ask "Did not the people of Israel understand?"
First there is Moses, who says – "I, the Lord, will stir you to rivalry with
a nation which is no nation; Against an undiscerning nation I will arouse
20 your anger." And Isaiah says boldly – "I was found by those who were not
seeking me; I made myself known to those who were not inquiring of me."

- 21 But of the people of Israel he says – “All day long I have stretched out my hands to a people who disobey and contradict.”
- 11 I ask, then, “Has God rejected his people?” Heaven forbid! For I myself
2 am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has
3 not rejected his people, whom he chose from the first. Have you forgotten
4 the words of scripture in the story of Elijah – how he appeals to God against
5 Israel? “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have pulled down your
6 altars, and I only am left; and now they are eager to take my life.” But what
7 was the divine response? “I have kept for myself seven thousand who have
8 never bowed the knee to Baal.” And so in our own time, too, there is to
9 be found a remnant of our nation selected by God in love. But if in love,
10 then it is not as a result of obedience. Otherwise love would cease to be
11 love. What follows from this? Why, that Israel as a nation failed to secure
12 what it was seeking, while those whom God selected did secure it. The
rest grew callous; as scripture says – “God has given them a deadness of
mind – eyes that are not to see and ears that are not to hear – and it is so to
this very day.” David, too, says – “May their feasts prove a snare and a trap
to them – a hindrance and a retribution; may their eyes be darkened, so
that they cannot see; and do you always make their backs to bend.” I ask
then – “Was their stumbling to result in their fall?” Heaven forbid! On the
contrary, through their falling away salvation has reached the Gentiles, to
stir the rivalry of Israel. And, if their falling away has enriched the world,
and their failure has enriched the Gentiles, how much more will result
from their full restoration!
- 13 But I am speaking to you who were Gentiles. Being myself an apostle to
14 the Gentiles, I exalt my office, in the hope that I may stir my countrymen to
15 rivalry, and so save some of them. For, if their being cast aside has meant
the reconciliation of the world, what will their reception mean, but life
16 from the dead? If the first handful of dough in holy, so is the whole mass;
17 and if the root is holy, so are the branches. Some, however, of the branches
were broken off, and you, who were only a wild olive, were grafted in
among them, and came to share with them the root which is the source of
18 the richness of the cultivated olive. Yet do not exult over the other branches.
But, if you do exult over them, remember that you do not support the root,
19 but that the root supports you. But branches, you will say, were broken
20 off, so that I might be grafted in. True; it was because of their want of
faith that they were broken off, and it is because of your faith that you are
21 standing. Do not think too highly of yourself, but beware. For, if God did
22 not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. See, then, both
the goodness and the severity of God – his severity towards those who fell,

23 and his goodness towards you, provided that you continue to confide in
23 that goodness; otherwise you, also, will be cut off. And they, too, if they
24 do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God has it in his
24 power to graft them in again. If you were cut off from your natural stock
– a wild olive – and were grafted, contrary to the course of nature, on a
good olive, much more will they – the natural branches – be grafted back
into their parent tree.

25 My friends, so that you don't think too highly of yourselves, I want you to
recognise the truth, hitherto hidden, that the callousness which has come
over Israel is only partial, and will continue only until the whole Gentile
26 world has been gathered in. And then all Israel will be saved. As scripture
27 says – "From Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness
from Jacob. And they will see the fulfilment of my covenant, when I have
28 taken away their sins." From the standpoint of the good news, the Jews are
God's enemies for your sake; but from the standpoint of God's selection,
29 they are dear to him for the sake of the Patriarchs. For God never regrets his
30 gifts or his call. Just as you at one time were disobedient to him, but have
31 now found mercy in the day of their disobedience; so, too, they have now
become disobedient in your day of mercy, in order that they also in their
32 turn may now find mercy. For God has given all alike over to disobedience,
33 that to all alike he may show mercy. Oh! The unfathomable wisdom and
knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments, how untraceable
34 his ways! Yes – Who has ever comprehended the mind of the Lord? Who
35 has ever become his counsellor? Or who has first given to him, so that he
36 may claim a reward? For all things are from him, through him, and for
him. And to him be all glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Advice on Daily Life

12 I entreat you, then, friends, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies
as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, for this is your rational
2 worship. Do not conform to the fashion of this world; but be transformed
by the complete change that has come over your minds, so that you may
discern what God's will is – all that is good, acceptable, and perfect.

3 In fulfilment of the charge with which I have been entrusted, I tell every
one of you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but
to think until he learns to think soberly – in accordance with the measure
4 of faith that God has allotted to each. For, just as in the human body there
5 is a union of many parts, and each part has its own function, so we, by

our union in Christ, many though we are, form but one body, and individually we are related one to another as its parts. Since our gifts differ in accordance with the particular charge entrusted to us, if our gift is to preach, let our preaching correspond to our faith; if it is to minister to others, let us devote ourselves to our ministry; the teacher to their teaching, the counselor to their counsel. Let the person who gives in charity do so with a generous heart; let the person who is in authority exercise due diligence; let the person who shows kindness do so in a cheerful spirit. Let your love be sincere. Hate the wrong; cling to the right. In the love of the community of the Lord's followers, be affectionate to one another; in showing respect, set an example of deference to one another; never flagging in zeal; fervent in spirit; serving the Master; rejoicing in your hope; steadfast under persecution; persevering in prayer; relieving the wants of Christ's people; devoted to hospitality. Bless your persecutors – bless and never curse. Rejoice with those who are rejoicing, and weep with those who are weeping. Let the same spirit of sympathy animate you all, not a spirit of pride; enjoy the company of ordinary people. Do not think too highly of yourselves. Never return injury for injury. Aim at doing what everyone will recognise as honourable. If it is possible, as far as rests with you, live peaceably with everyone. Never avenge yourselves, dear friends, but make way for the wrath of God; for scripture declares – "It is for me to avenge, I will requite," says the Lord." Rather – "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him to drink. By doing this you will heap coals of fire on his head." Never be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

13 Let everyone obey the supreme Authorities. For no Authority exists except by the will of God, and the existing Authorities have been appointed by God. Therefore he who sets himself against the authorities is resisting God's appointment, and those who resist will bring a judgment on themselves. A good action has nothing to fear from Rulers; a bad action has. Do you want to have no reason to fear the Authorities? Then do what is good, and you will win their praise. For they are God's servants appointed for your good. But, if you do what is wrong, you may well be afraid; for the sword they carry is not without meaning! They are God's servants to inflict his punishments on those who do wrong. You are bound, therefore, to obey, not only through fear of God's punishments, but also as a matter of conscience. This, too, is the reason for your paying taxes; for the officials are God's officers, devoting themselves to this special work. In all cases pay what is due from you – tribute where tribute is due, taxes where taxes are due, respect where respect is due, and honour where honour is due.

8 Owe nothing to anyone except love; for they who love their neighbour
9 have satisfied the Law. The commandments, "You must not commit adultery, You must not kill, You must not steal, You must not covet," and what-
ever other commandment there is, are all summed up in the words – "You
10 must love your neighbour as you love yourself." Love never wrongs a
11 neighbour. Therefore love fully satisfies the Law. This I say, because you
know the crisis that we have reached, for the time has already come for
you to rouse yourselves from sleep; our salvation is nearer now than when
we accepted the faith.

12 The night is almost gone; the day is near. Therefore let us have done with
13 the deeds of darkness, and arm ourselves with the weapons of light. Being
in the light of day, let us live becomingly, not in revelry and drunkenness,
14 not in lust and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. No! Arm
yourselves with the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and spend no thought
on your earthly nature, to satisfy its cravings.

14 As for those whose faith is weak, always receive them as friends, but
2 not for the purpose of passing judgment on their scruples. One person's
3 faith permits of their eating food of all kinds, while another whose faith
is weak eats only vegetable food. The person who eats meat must not
despise the person who abstains from it; nor must the person who abstains
4 from eating meat pass judgment on the one who eats it, for God himself
has received them. Who are you, that you should pass judgment on the
servant of another? Their standing or falling concerns their own master.
5 And stand they will, for their Master can enable them to stand. Again, one
person considers some days to be more sacred than others, while another
6 considers all days to be alike. Everyone ought to be fully convinced in their
own mind. The person who observes a day, observes it to the Master's
honour. They, again, who eat meat eat it to the Master's honour, for they
give thanks to God; while the person who abstains from it abstains from
7 it to the Master's honour, and also gives thanks to God. There is not one
of us whose life concerns ourselves alone, and not one of us whose death
8 concerns ourself alone; for, if we live, our life is for the Master, and, if we
die, our death is for the Master. Whether, then, we live or die we belong to
9 the Master. The purpose for which Christ died and came back to life was
10 this – that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living. I would
ask the one "Why do you judge other followers of the Lord?" And I would
ask the other "Why do you despise them?" For we will all stand before
11 the court of God. For scripture says – "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord,
12 'every knee will bend before me and every tongue will praise God.'" So,
then, each one of us will have to render account of himself to God.

13 Let us, then, cease to judge one another. Rather let this be your resolve – never to place a stumbling-block or an obstacle in the way of a fellow
14 follower of the Lord. Through my union with the Lord Jesus, I know and
15 am persuaded that nothing is defiling in itself. A thing is “defiling” only
16 to the person who holds it to be so. If, for the sake of what you eat, you
17 wound your fellow follower’s feelings, your life has ceased to be ruled by
18 love. Do not, by what you eat, ruin someone for whom Christ died! Do not
19 let what is right for you become a matter of reproach. For the kingdom
20 of God does not consist of eating and drinking, but of righteousness and
21 peace and gladness through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The person
22 who serves the Christ in this way pleases God, and wins the approval
23 of their fellows. Therefore our efforts should be directed towards all that
makes for peace and the mutual building up of character. Do not undo
God’s work for the sake of what you eat. Though everything is “clean,”
yet, if a person eats so as to put a stumbling-block in the way of others,
they do wrong. The right course is to abstain from meat or wine or, indeed,
anything that is a stumbling-block to your fellow follower of the Lord. As
for yourself – keep this conviction of yours to yourself, as in the presence of
God. Happy the person who never has to condemn themselves in regard
to something they think right! The person, however, who has misgivings
stands condemned if they still eat, because their doing so is not the result
of faith. And anything not done as the result of faith is a sin.

15 We, the strong, ought to take on our own shoulders the weaknesses of
2 those who are not strong, and not merely to please ourselves. Let each of us
please our neighbour for our neighbour’s good, to help in the building up
3 of their character. Even the Christ did not please himself! On the contrary,
as scripture says of him – “The reproaches of those who were reproaching
4 you fell upon me.” Whatever was written in the scriptures in days gone
by was written for our instruction, so that, through patient endurance,
and through the encouragement drawn from the scriptures, we might
5 hold fast to our hope. And may God, the giver of this patience and this
6 encouragement, grant you to be united in sympathy in Christ, so that
with one heart and one voice you may praise the God and Father of Jesus
7 Christ, our Lord. Therefore always receive one another as friends, just as
8 the Christ himself received us, to the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ,
in vindication of God’s truthfulness, has become a minister of the covenant
9 of circumcision, so that he may fulfil the promises made to our ancestors,
and that the Gentiles also may praise God for his mercy. As scripture says
– “Therefore will I make acknowledgment to you among the Gentiles and
10 sing in honour of your name.” And again it says – “Rejoice, you Gentiles,

11 with God's people." And yet again – "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
12 and let all Peoples sing his praises." Again, Isaiah says – "There will be
a Scion of the house of Jesse, One who is to arise to rule the Gentiles; on
13 him will the Gentiles rest their hopes." May God, who inspires our hope,
grant you perfect happiness and peace in your faith, until you are filled
with this hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

14 I am persuaded, my friends – yes, I Paul, with regard to you – that you
are yourselves full of kindness, furnished with all Christian learning, and
15 well able to give advice to one another. But in parts of this letter I have
expressed myself somewhat boldly – by way of refreshing your memories
16 – because of the charge with which God has entrusted me, that I should
be an assistant of Christ Jesus to go to the Gentiles – that I should act as a
priest of God's good news, so that the offering up of the Gentiles may be an
17 acceptable sacrifice, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. It is, then, through my
union with Christ Jesus that I have a proud confidence in my work for God.
18 For I will not dare to speak of anything but what Christ has done through
19 me to win the obedience of the Gentiles – by my words and actions, through
the power displayed in signs and marvels, and through the power of the
Holy Spirit. And so, starting from Jerusalem and going as far as Illyria, I
20 have told in full the good news of the Christ; yet always with the ambition
to tell the good news where Christ's name had not previously been heard,
21 so as to avoid building on another's foundations. But as scripture says –
"They to whom he had never been proclaimed will see; and they who have
never heard will understand!"

Conclusion

22 That is why I have so often been prevented from coming to you. But now
23 there are no further openings for me in these parts, and I have for several
24 years been longing to come to you whenever I may be going to Spain. For
my hope is to visit you on my journey, and then to be sent on my way by you,
25 after I have first partly satisfied myself by seeing something of you. Just
now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem, to take help to Christ's people
26 there. For Macedonia and Greece have been glad to make a collection for
27 the poor among Christ's people at Jerusalem. Yes, they were glad to do so;
and indeed it is a duty which they owe to them. For the Gentile converts
28 who have shared their spiritual blessings are in duty bound to minister to
them in the things of this world. When I have settled this matter, and have
secured to the poor at Jerusalem the enjoyment of these benefits, I will go,

29 by way of you, to Spain. And I know that, when I come to you, it will be with a full measure of blessing from Christ.

30 I beg you, then, friends, by Jesus Christ, our Lord, and by the love inspired by the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf. Pray that I may be rescued from those in Judea who reject the faith, and that the help which I am taking to Jerusalem may prove acceptable to Christ's people; so that, God willing, I may be able to come to you with a joyful heart, and enjoy some rest among you. May God, the giver of peace, be with you all. Amen.

16 I commend to your care our sister, Phoebe, who is an assistant of the church at Cenchreae; and I ask you to give her a Christian welcome – one worthy of Christ's people – and to aid her in any matter in which she may need your assistance. She has proved herself a staunch friend and protector and to many others.

3 Give my greeting to Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in the cause of Christ Jesus, who risked their own lives to save mine. It is not I alone who thank them, but all the churches among the Gentiles thank them also.

4 Give my greeting, also, to the church that meets at their house, as well as to my dear friend Epaenetus, one of the first in Roman Asia to believe in Christ; to Mary, who worked hard for you; to Andronicus and Junia, fellow Jews and once my fellow prisoners, who are people of note among the apostles, and who became Christians before I did; to my dear Christian friend Ampliatus; to Urban, our fellow worker in the cause of Christ, and to my dear friend Stachys; to that proved Christian Apelles; to the household of Aristobulus; to my countryman Herodion; to the Christians in the household of Narcissus; to Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who have worked hard for the Master; to my dear friend Persis, for she has done much hard work for the Master; to that eminent Christian, Rufus, and to his mother, who has been a mother to me also; to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and our friends with them; also to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and to all Christ's people who are with them.

16 Greet one another with a sacred kiss. All the churches of the Christ send you greetings.

17 I beg you, friends, to be on your guard against people who, by disregarding the teaching which you received, cause divisions and create difficulties; dissociate yourselves from them. For such persons are not serving Christ, our Master, but are slaves to their own appetites; and, by their smooth words and flattery, they deceive simple-minded people. Everyone has heard of your ready obedience. It is true that I am very happy about you, but I want you to be well versed in all that is good, and innocent of all that

- 20 is bad. And God, the giver of peace, will before long crush Satan under your feet.
May the blessing of Jesus, our Lord, be with you.
- 21 Timothy, my fellow worker, sends you his greetings, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, send theirs.
- 22 I Tertius, who am writing this letter, send you my Christian greeting.
- 23 My host Gaius, who extends his hospitality to the whole church, sends you his greeting; and Erastus, the city treasurer, and Quartus, our dear friend, add theirs.³⁰
- 25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you, as promised in the good news entrusted to me and in the proclamation of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the revelation of that hidden purpose, which in past ages was kept
- 26 secret but now has been revealed and, in obedience to the command of the immortal God, made known through the writings of the prophets to all
- 27 nations, to secure submission to the faith – to him, I say, the wise and only God, be ascribed, through Jesus Christ, all glory for ever and ever. Amen.

³⁰ 16:24 Some later manuscripts add: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

Introduction

- 1 To the church of God in Corinth, to those who have been consecrated by union with Christ Jesus and called to become his people, and also to all, wherever they may be, who invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ –
- 2 their Master and ours, from Paul, who has been called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and from Sosthenes, our fellow follower of the Lord.
- 3 May God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.
- 4 I always thank God about you for the blessing bestowed on you in Christ
- 5 Jesus. For through union with him you were enriched in every way – in
- 6 your power to preach, and in your knowledge of the truth; and so became
- 7 yourselves a confirmation of my testimony to the Christ. There is no gift in which you are deficient, while waiting for the appearing of our Lord
- 8 Jesus Christ. And God himself will strengthen you to the end, so that at
- 9 the day of our Lord Jesus Christ you may be found blameless. God will not fail you, and it is he who called you into communion with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The State of the Church at Corinth

- 10 But I appeal to you, my friends, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree in what you profess, and not to allow divisions to exist among you,
- 11 but to be united – of one mind and of one opinion. For I have been informed, my friends, by the members of Chloe's household, that party feeling exists
- 12 among you. I mean this: that every one of you says either "I follow Paul,"
- 13 or "I Apollos," or "I Cephas," or "I Christ." You have torn the Christ in pieces! Was it Paul who was crucified for you? Or were you baptized into
- 14 the faith of Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except

15 Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized into
16 my faith. I baptized also the household of Stephanas. I do not know that I
17 baptized anyone else. My mission from Christ was not to baptize, but to
tell the good news; not, however, in the language of philosophy, in case
the cross of the Christ should be robbed of its meaning.

18 The message of the cross is indeed mere folly to those who are in the path to ruin, but to us who are in the path of salvation it is the power of
19 God. For scripture says –

“I will bring the philosophy of the philosophers to naught, and the shrewdness of the shrewd I will bring to nothing.”

20 Where is the philosopher? Where the teacher of the Law? Where the
disputant of today? Has not God shown the world's philosophy to be
21 folly? For since the world, in God's wisdom, did not by its philosophy learn to know God, God saw fit, by the “folly” of our proclamation, to
22 save those who believe in Christ! While Jews ask for miraculous signs,
23 and Greeks study philosophy, we are proclaiming Christ crucified! – to
24 the Jews an obstacle, to the Gentiles mere folly, but to those who have
received the call, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ, the power of God and
25 the wisdom of God! For God's “folly” is wiser than people, and God's
“weakness” is stronger than people.

26 Look at the facts of your call, friends. There are not many among you who
are wise, as people reckon wisdom, not many who are influential, not
27 many who are high-born; but God chose what the world counts foolish to put its wise to shame, and God chose what the world counts weak to
28 put its strong to shame, and God chose what the world counts poor and insignificant – things that to it are unreal – to bring its “realities” to nothing,
29 so that in his presence no one should boast. But you, by your union with
30 Christ Jesus, belong to God; and Christ, by God's will, became not only
31 our wisdom, but also our righteousness, holiness, and deliverance, so that – in the words of scripture –

“Whoever boasts should boast of the Lord!”

2 For my own part, friends, when I came to you, it was with no display of eloquence or philosophy that I came to tell the hidden purpose of God;
2 for I had determined that, while with you, I would forget everything Jesus
3 Christ – and him crucified! Indeed, when I came among you, I was weak,
4 and full of fears, and in great anxiety. My message and my proclamation were not delivered in the persuasive language of philosophy, but were

- 5 accompanied by the manifestation of spiritual power, so that your faith
should be based, not on the human wisdom, but on the power of God.
- 6 Yet there is a philosophy that we teach to those whose faith is matured,
but it is not the philosophy of today, or of the leaders of today – whose
7 downfall is at hand. No, it is a divine philosophy that we teach, one con-
cerned with the hidden purpose of God – that long hidden philosophy
8 which God, before time began, destined for our glory. This philosophy
is not known to any of the leaders of today; for, had they known it, they
9 would not have crucified our glorified Lord. It is what scripture speaks of
as –

“What eye never saw, nor ear ever heard,
what never entered people’s minds –
even all that God has prepared for those who love him.”

- 10 Yet to us God revealed it through his Spirit; for the Spirit fathoms all
11 things, even the inmost depths of God’s being. For what person is there
who knows what a person is, except the person’s own spirit within them?
- 12 So, also, no one comprehends what God is, except the Spirit of God. And
as for us, it is not the spirit of the world that we have received, but the
Spirit that comes from God, so that we may realize the blessings given to
13 us by him. And we speak of these gifts, not in language taught by human
philosophy, but in language taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual
14 things in spiritual words. The merely intellectual person rejects the teach-
ing of the Spirit of God; for to them it is mere folly; they cannot grasp it,
15 because it is to be understood only by spiritual insight. But the person
with spiritual insight is able to understand everything, although they
16 themselves are understood by no one. For who has so comprehended
the mind of the Lord as to be able to instruct him? We, however, have the
mind of Christ.

- 3 But I, my friends, could not speak to you as people with spiritual insight,
2 but only as worldly-minded – mere infants in the faith of Christ. I fed you
with milk, not with solid food, for you were not then able to take it.

- 3 No, and even now you are not able; you are still worldly. While there exist
among you jealousy and party feeling, is it not true that you are worldly,
4 and are acting merely as other people do? When one says “I follow Paul,”
5 and another “I follow Apollos,” aren’t you like other people? What, I ask,
is Apollos? Or what is Paul? Servants through whom you were led to
6 accept the faith; and that only as the Lord helped each of you. I planted,
7 and Apollos watered, but it was God who caused the growth. Therefore
neither the one who plants, nor the one who waters, counts for anything,

8 but only God who causes the growth. In this the person who plants and the person who waters are one; yet each will receive their own reward in proportion to their own labour. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's harvest field, God's building.

10 In fulfilment of the charge which God had entrusted to me, I laid the foundation like a skilful master; but someone else is now building on it. Let 11 everyone take care how they build; for no one can lay any other foundation 12 than the one already laid – Jesus Christ. Whatever is used by those who build on this foundation, whether gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or 13 straw, the quality of each man's work will become known, for the day will make it plain; because that day is to be ushered in with fire, and the fire 14 itself will test the quality of every man's work. If anyone's work, which they have built on that foundation, still remains, they will gain a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burnt up, they will suffer loss; though they themselves will escape, but only as one who has passed through fire.

16 Don't you know that you are God's Temple, and that God's Spirit has 17 his home in you? If any one destroys the Temple of God, God will destroy them; for the Temple of God is sacred, and so also are you.

18 Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you imagines that, as regards this world, they are wise, they should become a "fool," that they 19 may become wise. For in God's sight this world's wisdom is folly. Scripture tells of –

"One who catches the wise in their own craftiness,"

20 And it says again –

"The Lord sees how fruitless are the deliberations of the wise."

21 Therefore let no one boast about people; for all things are yours – 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or 23 the present, or the future – all things are yours! But you are Christ's and Christ is God's.

4 Let people look on us as Christ's servants, and as stewards of the hidden 2 truths of God. Now what we look for in stewards is that they should be 3 trustworthy. But it weighs very little with me that I am judged by you or 4 by any human tribunal. No, I do not even judge myself; for, though I am conscious of nothing against myself, that does not prove me innocent. It 5 is the Lord who is my judge. Therefore do not pass judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes. He will throw light on what is now dark and obscure, and will reveal the motives in people's minds; and then everyone will receive due praise from God.

6 All this, friends, I have, for your sakes, applied to Apollos and myself, so
that, from our example, you may learn to observe the precept – “Keep to
what is written,” that none of you may speak boastfully of one teacher to
7 the disparagement of another. For who makes any one of you superior to
others? And what have you that was not given you? But if you received it
8 as a gift, why do you boast as if you had not? Are you all so soon satisfied?
Are you so soon rich? Have you begun to reign without us? Would indeed
9 that you had, so that we also might reign with you! For, as it seems to me,
God has exhibited us, the apostles, last of all, as people doomed to death.
10 We are made a spectacle to the universe, both to angels and to people! We,
for Christ’s sake, are fools, but you, by your union with Christ, are people
of discernment. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honoured, but
11 we are despised. To this very hour we go hungry, thirsty, and naked; we
12 are beaten; we are homeless; we work hard, toiling with our own hands.
13 We meet abuse with blessings, we meet persecution with endurance, we
meet slander with gentle appeals. We have been treated as the scum of the
earth, the vilest of the vile, to this very hour.

14 It is with no wish to shame you that I am writing like this; but to warn you
15 as my own dear children. Though you may have thousands of instructors
in the faith of Christ, yet you have not many fathers. It was I who, through
union with Christ Jesus, became your father by means of the good news.
16 Therefore I entreat you – Follow my example. This is my reason for sending
17 Timothy to you. He is my own dear faithful child in the Master’s service,
and he will remind you of my methods of teaching the faith of Christ Jesus
– methods which I follow everywhere in every church.

18 Some, I hear, are puffed up with pride, thinking that I am not coming to
you. But come to you I will, and that soon, if it please the Lord; and then I
will find out, not what words these people use who are so puffed up, but
20 what power they possess; for the kingdom of God is based, not on words,
21 but on power. What do you wish? Am I to come to you with a rod, or in a
loving and gentle spirit?

5 There is a wide-spread report respecting a case of immorality among
you, and that, too, of a kind that does not occur even among the Gentiles
2 – a man, I hear, is living with his father’s wife! Instead of grieving over
it and taking steps for the expulsion of the man who has done this thing,
3 is it possible that you are still puffed up? For I myself, though absent in
body, have been present with you in spirit, and in the name of our Lord
Jesus I have already passed judgment, just as if I had been present, on the
4 man who has acted in this way. I have decided – having been present in
5 spirit at your meetings, when the power of the Lord Jesus was with us – to

6 deliver such a man as this over to Satan, that what is sensual in him may
7 be destroyed, so that his spirit may be saved at the day of the Lord. Your
boasting is unseemly. Don't you know that even a little leaven leavens all
the dough? Get rid entirely of the old leaven, so that you may be like new
8 already sacrificed – Christ himself; therefore let us keep our festival, not
with the leaven of former days, nor with the leaven of vice and wickedness,
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I told you, in my letter, not to associate with immoral people – not, of
10 course, meaning people of the world who are in immoral, or who are
covetous and grasping, or who worship idols; for then you would have
11 to leave the world altogether. But, as things are, I say that you are not
to associate with anyone who, although a follower of Christ in name, is
immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or abusive, or a drunkard, or grasping
12 – no, not even to sit down to eat with such people. What have I to do with
judging those outside the church? Is it not for you to judge those who are
13 within the church, while God judges those who are outside? Put away the
wicked from among you.

6 Can it be that, when one of you has a dispute with another, they dare to
have their case tried before the heathen, instead of before Christ's people?
2 Don't you know that Christ's people will try the world? And if the world
3 is to be tried by you, are you unfit to try the most trivial cases? Don't you
know that we are to try angels – to say nothing of the affairs of this life?
4 Why, then, if you have cases relating to the affairs of this life, do you set to
try them those who carry no weight with the church? To your shame I ask
5 it. Can it be that there is not one among you wise enough to decide between
6 two of their fellow followers? Must a follower sue a fellow follower? In
7 front of unbelievers? To begin with, it is undoubtedly a loss to you to have
lawsuits with one another. Why not rather let yourselves be wronged?
8 Why not rather let yourselves be cheated? Instead of this, you wrong and
9 cheat others yourselves – yes, even other followers! Don't you know that
wrong-doers will have no share in God's kingdom? Do not be deceived.
No one who is immoral, or an idolater, or an adulterer, or licentious, or
10 a sexual pervert, or a thief, or covetous, or a drunkard, or abusive, or
11 grasping, will have any share in God's kingdom. Such some of you used
to be; but you washed yourselves clean. You became Christ's people! You
were pronounced righteous through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and through the Spirit of our God!

12 Everything is allowable for me! Yes, but everything is not profitable. Everything is allowable for me! Yes, but for my part, I will not let myself
13 be enslaved by anything. Food exists for the stomach, and the stomach for food; but God will put an end to both the one and the other. The body, however, exists, not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for
14 the body; and, as God has raised the Lord, so he will raise up us also by
15 the exercise of his power. Don't you know that your bodies are Christ's members? Am I, then, to take the members that belong to the Christ and
16 make them the members of a prostitute? Heaven forbid! Or don't you know
17 that a man who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body
18 (for "the two," it is said, "will become one"); while a man who is united
19 with the Lord is one with him in spirit? Shun all immorality. Every other
20 sin that people commit is something outside the body; but an immoral person sins against their own body. Again, don't you know that your body is a shrine of the Holy Spirit that is within you – the Spirit which you have from God? Moreover, you are not your own masters; you were bought, and the price was paid. Therefore, honour God in your bodies.

Answers to Questions Asked by the Church at Corinth

7 With reference to the subjects about which you wrote to me: It is good
2 for a man to remain single. But, owing to the prevalence of immorality, I advise every man to have his own wife, and every woman her husband.
3 A husband should give his wife her due, and a wife her husband. It is not
4 the wife, but the husband, who exercises power over her body; and so, too,
5 it is not the husband, but the wife, who exercises power over his body. Do not deprive each other of what is due – unless it is only for a time and
6 by mutual consent, so that your minds may be free for prayer until you again live as man and wife – otherwise Satan might take advantage of your
7 want of self-control and tempt you. I say this, however, as a concession, not
as a command. I should wish everyone to be just what I am myself. But everyone has his own gift from God – one in one way, and one in another.

8 My advice, then, to those who are not married, and to widows, is this:
9 It would be good for them to remain as I am myself. But, if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to be
10 consumed with passion. To those who are married my direction is – yet it
11 is not mine, but the Master's – that a woman is not to leave her husband (If she has done so, she should remain as she is, or else be reconciled to her

- 12 husband) and also that a man is not to divorce his wife. To all others I say – I, not the Master – If a follower of the Lord is married to a woman, who is an unbeliever but willing to live with him, he should not divorce her;
- 13 and a woman who is married to a man, who is an unbeliever but willing
- 14 to live with her, should not divorce her husband. For, through his wife, the husband who is an unbeliever has become associated with Christ's people; and the wife who is an unbeliever has become associated with Christ's people through the Lord's follower whom she has married. Otherwise your children would be "defiled," but, as it is, they belong to Christ's people.
- 15 However, if the unbeliever wishes to be separated, let them be so. Under such circumstances neither is bound; God has called you to live in peace.
- 16 How can you tell, wife, whether you may not save your husband? And how can you tell, husband, whether you may not save your wife?
- 17 In any case, a person should continue to live in the condition which the Lord has allotted to them, and in which they were when God called them. This is the rule that I lay down in every church. Was a man already circumcised when he was called? Then he should not efface his circumcision. Has a man been called when uncircumcised? Then he should not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing; the want of it is nothing; but to keep the commands of God is everything. Let everyone remain in that condition of life in which they were when the call came to them. Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let that trouble you. No, even if you are able to gain your freedom, still do your best. For the person who was a slave when they were called to the master's service is the Master's freedman; so, too, the person who was free when called is Christ's slave. You were bought, and the price was paid. Do not let yourselves become slaves to people. Friends, let everyone remain in the condition in which they were when they were called, in close communion with God.
- 25 With regard to unmarried women, I have no command from the Master to give you, but I tell you my opinion, and the Master in his mercy has made me worthy to be trusted. I think, then, that, in view of the time of suffering that has now come upon us, what I have already said is best –
- 27 that a man should remain as he is. Are you married to a wife? Then do not seek to be separated. Are you separated from a wife? Then do not seek for
- 28 a wife. Still, if you should marry, that is not wrong; nor, if a young woman marries, is that wrong. But those who marry will have much trouble to
- 29 bear, and my wish is to spare you. What I mean, friends, is this – the time is short. Meanwhile, let those who have wives live as if they had none,
- 30 those who are weeping as if not weeping, those who are rejoicing as if

- 31 not rejoicing, those who buy as if not possessing, and those who use the good things of the world as using them sparingly; for this world as we see it is passing away. I want you to be free from anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious about the Master's cause, desiring to please him; while the married man is anxious about worldly matters, desiring to please his wife; and so his interests are divided. Again, the unmarried woman, whether she is old or young, is anxious about the Master's cause, striving to be pure both in body and in spirit, while the married woman is anxious about worldly matters, desiring to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not with any intention of putting a halter round your necks, but in order to secure for the Master seemly and constant devotion, free from all distraction.
- 36 If, however, a father thinks that he is not acting fairly by his unmarried daughter, when she is past her youth, and if under these circumstances her marriage ought to take place, he should act as he thinks right. He is doing nothing wrong – let the marriage take place. On the other hand, a father, who has definitely made up his mind, and is under no compulsion, but is free to carry out his own wishes, and who has come to the decision, in his own mind, to keep his unmarried daughter at home will be doing right. In short, the one who consents to his daughter's marriage is doing right, and yet the other will be doing better.
- 39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives; but, if the husband should pass to his rest, the widow is free to marry anyone she wishes, provided he is a believer. Yet she will be happier if she remains as she is – in my opinion, for I think that I also have the Spirit of God.
- 8 With reference to food that has been offered in sacrifice to idols – We are aware that all of us have knowledge! Knowledge breeds conceit, while love builds up character. If someone thinks that they know anything, they have not yet reached that knowledge which they ought to have reached. 3 On the other hand, if a person loves God, they are known by God. With 4 reference, then, to eating food that has been offered to idols – we are aware 5 that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no God but one. Even supposing that there are so-called "gods" either in heaven or on earth – 6 and there are many such "gods" and "lords" – Yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from whom all things come (and for him we live), and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come (and through him we live). Still, it is not everyone that has this knowledge. Some people, because of their association with idols, continued down to the present time, eat the food as food offered to an idol; and their consciences, while still weak, are

8 dulled. What we eat, however, will not bring us nearer to God. We lose
9 nothing by not eating this food, and we gain nothing by eating it. But take
10 care that this right of yours does not become in any way a stumbling-block
11 to the weak. For if someone should see you who possess this knowledge,
feasting in an idol's temple, will not their conscience, if they are weak,
12 become so hardened that they, too, will eat food offered to idols? And so,
through this knowledge of yours, the weak person is ruined – someone
13 for whose sake Christ died! In this way, by sinning against your fellow
followers of the Lord and injuring their consciences, while still weak, you
sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat makes a follower of the Lord fall,
rather than make them fall, I will never eat meat again.

9 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen our Lord Jesus?
2 Aren't you yourselves my work achieved in union with the Lord? If I am
not an apostle to others, yet at least I am to you; for you are the seal that
3 stamps me as an apostle in union with the Lord. The defence that I make
4 to my critics is this: Haven't we a right to food and drink? Haven't we a
5 right to take a wife with us, if she is a Christian, as the other apostles and
6 the Master's brothers and Cephas all do? Or is it only Barnabas and I who
7 have no right to give up working for our bread? Does anyone ever serve as
a soldier at his own expense? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat its
8 produce? Or does anyone look after a herd and not drink the milk? Am I,
in all this, speaking only from the human standpoint? Does not the Law
9 also say the same? For in the Law of Moses it is said –

"You should not muzzle a bullock while it is treading out the grain."

10 Is it the bullocks that God is thinking of? Or is not is said entirely for
our sakes? Surely it was written for our sakes, for the ploughman ought
not to plough, nor the thrasher to thrash, without expecting a share of
11 the grain. Since we, then, sowed spiritual seed for you, is it too much
12 that we should reap from you an earthly harvest? If others share in this
right over you, don't we even more? Still we did not avail ourselves of
this right. No, we endure anything rather than impede the progress of
13 the good news of the Christ. Don't you know that those who do the work
of the Temple live on what comes from the Temple, and that those who
14 serve at the altar share the offerings with the altar? So, too, the Master
has appointed that those who tell the good news should get their living
15 from the good news. I, however, have not availed myself of any of these
rights. I am not saying this to secure such an arrangement for myself;
16 indeed, I would far rather die – Nobody will make my boast a vain one! If

I tell the good news, I have nothing to boast of, for I am compelled to do
17 so. Woe is me if I do not tell it! If I do this work willingly, I have a reward;
18 but, if unwillingly, I have been charged to perform a duty. What is my
reward, then? To present the good news free of all cost, and so make but
a sparing use of the rights which it gives me.
19 Although I was entirely free, yet, to win as many converts as possible, I
20 made myself everyone's slave. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win
Jews. To those who are subject to Law I became like a man subject to Law
– though I was not myself subject to Law – to win those who are subject
21 to Law. To those who have no Law I became like a man who has no Law
– not that I am free from God's Law; no, for I am under Christ's Law – to
22 win those who have no law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak.
23 I have become all things to all people, so as at all costs to save some. And
I do everything for the sake of the good news, so that with them I may
share in its blessings.
24 Don't you know that on a racecourse, though all run, yet only one wins
25 the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Every athlete exercises
self-restraint in everything; they, indeed, for a crown that fades, we for one
26 that is unfading. I, therefore, run with no uncertain aim. I box – not like a
27 man hitting the air. No, I bruise my body and make it my slave, so that I,
who have called others to the contest, will not myself be rejected.

10 I want you to bear in mind, friends, that all our ancestors were beneath
2 the cloud, and all passed through the sea; that in the cloud and in the sea
3 they all underwent baptism as followers of Moses; and that they all ate the
4 same supernatural food, and all drank the same supernatural water, for
they used to drink from a supernatural rock which followed them, and that
5 rock was the Christ. Yet with most of them God was displeased; for they
6 were struck down in the desert. Now these things happened as warnings
7 to us, to teach us not to long for evil things as our ancestors longed. Do not
become idolaters, as some of them became. Scripture says –

“The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to dance.”

8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them acted, with the result that
9 twenty-three thousand of them fell dead in a single day. Nor let us try
the patience of the Lord too far, as some of them tried it, with the result
10 that they were, one after another, destroyed by the snakes. And do not
murmur, as some of them murmured, and so were destroyed by the angel
11 of death. These things happened to them by way of warning, and were

recorded to serve as a caution to us, in whose days the close of the ages has come.

12 Therefore let the person who thinks that they stand take care that they
13 do not fall. No temptation has come upon you that is not common to all humanity. God will not fail you, and he will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength; but, when he sends the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape, so that you may have strength to endure.

14 Therefore, my dear friends, shun the worship of idols. I speak to you as
15 man of discernment; form your own judgment about what I am saying. In
16 the cup of blessing which we bless, is not there a sharing in the blood of
17 the Christ? And in the bread which we break, is not there a sharing in the
18 body of the Christ? The bread is one, and we, though many, are one body;
19 for we all partake of that one bread. Look at the people of Israel. Do not
20 those who eat the sacrifices share with the altar? What do I mean? That an
offering made to an idol, or the idol itself, is anything? No; what I say is
that the sacrifices offered by the Gentiles are offered to demons and to a
being who is no God, and I do not want you to share with demons. You
cannot drink both the Cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot
partake at the Table of the Lord and at the table of demons. Or are we to
rouse the jealousy of the Lord? Are we stronger than he?

23 Everything is allowable! Yes, but everything is not profitable. Everything
24 is allowable! Yes, but everything does not build up character. A person
must not study their own interests, but the interests of others.

25 Eat anything that is sold in the market, without making inquiries to
26 satisfy your scruples; for the earth, with all that is in it, belongs to the
27 Lord. If an unbeliever invites you to his house and you consent to go, eat
anything that is put before you, without making inquiries to satisfy your
scruples. But, if anyone should say to you "This has been offered in sacrifice
to an idol," then, for the sake of the speaker and his scruples, do not eat
it. I do not say your scruples, but his. For why should the freedom that I
claim be condemned by the scruples of another? If, for my part, I take the
food thankfully, why should I be abused for eating that for which I give
thanks?

31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything to
32 the honour of God. Do not cause offence either to Jews or Greeks or to
33 the church of God; for I, also, try to please everybody in everything, not
seeking my own advantage, but do what is best for others, so that they
11 may be saved. Imitate me, as I myself imitate Christ.

2 I praise you, indeed, because you never forget me, and are keeping
3 my injunctions in mind, exactly as I laid them on you. But I am anxious
4 that you should understand that the Christ is the head of every man, that
5 man is the head of woman, and that God is the head of the Christ. Any
6 man who keeps his head covered, when praying or preaching in public,
7 dishonours him who is his head; while any woman, who prays or preaches
8 in public bare-headed, dishonours him who is her head; for that is to make
9 herself like one of the shameless women who shave their heads. Indeed,
10 if a woman does not keep her head covered, she may as well cut her hair
11 short. But, since to cut her hair short, or shave it off, marks her as one of the
12 shameless women, she should keep her head covered. A man ought not to
13 have his head covered, for he has been from the beginning the likeness of
14 God and the reflection of his glory, but woman is the reflection of man's
15 glory. For it was not man who was taken from woman, but woman who
16 was taken from man. Besides, man was not created for the sake of woman,
but woman for the sake of man. And, therefore, a woman ought to wear on
her head a symbol of her subjection, because of the presence of the angels.
Still, when in union with the Lord, woman is not independent of man, or
man of woman; for just as woman came from man, so man comes by means
of woman; and all things come from God. Judge for yourselves. Is it fitting
that a woman should pray to God in public with her head uncovered?
Does not nature herself teach us that, while for a man to wear his hair long
is degrading to him, a woman's long hair is her glory? Her hair has been
given her to serve as a covering. If, however, anyone still thinks it right to
contest the point – well, we have no such custom, nor have the churches of
God.

17 In giving directions on the next subject, I cannot praise you; because
18 your meetings do more harm than good. To begin with, I hear you and, to
19 some extent, I believe it. Indeed, there must be actual parties among you,
20 for so only will the people of real worth become known. When you meet
21 together, as I understand, it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper; for, as
you eat, each of you tries to secure his own supper first, with the result
22 that one has too little to eat, and another has too much to drink! Have you
no houses in which you can eat and drink? Or are you trying to show your
contempt for the church of God, and to humiliate the poor? What can I say
to you? Should I praise you? In this matter I cannot praise you. For I myself
received from the Lord the account which I have in turn given to you –
how the Lord Jesus, on the very night of his betrayal, took some bread, and,
after saying the thanksgiving, broke it and said 'This is my own body given

25 on your behalf. Do this in memory of me.' And in the same way with the cup, after supper, saying 'This cup is the new covenant made by my blood.
26 Do this, whenever you drink it, in memory of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death – until he
27 comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread, or drinks the Lord's cup, in an irreverent spirit, will have to answer for an offence against the Lord's body
28 and blood. Let everyone look into their own heart, and only then eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For the person who eats and drinks brings a judgment on themselves by their eating and drinking, when they do not
30 discern the body. That is why so many among you are weak and ill, and
31 why some are sleeping. But, if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not
32 be judged. Yet, in being judged by the Lord, we are undergoing discipline,
so that we may not have judgment passed on us with the rest of the world.
33 Therefore, my friends, when you meet together to eat the Supper, wait for
34 one another. If anyone is hungry, they should eat at home, so that your meetings may not bring a judgment on you. The other details I will settle when I come.

12 In the next place, friends, I do not want you to be ignorant about spiritual gifts. You know that there was a time when you were Gentiles, going astray
2 after idols that could not speak, just as you happened to be led. Therefore I tell you plainly that no one who speaks under the influence of the Spirit of God says "JESUS IS ACCURSED," and that no one can say "JESUS IS
4 LORD," except under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Gifts differ, but the
5 Spirit is the same; ways of serving differ, yet the Master is the same; results
6 differ, yet the God who brings about every result is in every case the same.
7 To each of us there is given spiritual illumination for the general good.
8 To one is given the power to speak with wisdom through the Spirit; to
9 another the power to speak with knowledge, due to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another power to cure diseases by the
10 one Spirit; to another supernatural powers; to another the gift of preaching;
to another the gift of distinguishing between true and false inspiration; to another varieties of the gift of "tongues"; to another the power to interpret
11 "tongues." All these result from one and the same Spirit, who distributes his gifts to each individually as he wills.
12 For just as the human body is one whole, and yet has many parts, and all its parts, many though they are, form but one body, so it is with the Christ;
13 for it was by one Spirit that we were all baptized to form one body, whether
14 Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and were all imbued with one Spirit. The
15 human body, I repeat, consists not of one part, but of many. If the foot says

“Since I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it does not because of
16 that cease to belong to the body. Or if the ear says “Since I am not an eye,
I do not belong to the body,” it does not because of that cease to belong
17 to the body. If all the body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If
18 it were all hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God
19 has placed each individual part just where he thought fit in the body. If,
20 however, they all made up only one part, where would the body be? But
21 in fact, although it has many parts, there is only one body. The eye cannot
say to the hand “I do not need you,” nor, again, the head to the feet “I do
22 not need you.” No! Those parts of the body that seem naturally the weaker
23 are indispensable; and those parts which we deem less honourable we
surround with special honour; and our ungraceful parts receive a special
24 grace which our graceful parts do not require. Yes, God has so constructed
25 the body – by giving a special honour to the part that lacks it – As to secure
that there should be no disunion in the body, but that the parts should show
26 the same care for one another. If one part suffers, all the others suffer with
27 it, and if one part has honour done it, all the others share its joy. Together
28 you are the body of Christ, and individually its parts. In the church God
has appointed, first, apostles, secondly preachers, thirdly teachers; then
he has given supernatural powers, then power to cure diseases, aptness
for helping others, capacity to govern, varieties of the gift of “tongues.”
29 Can everyone be an apostle? Can everyone be a preacher? Can everyone
30 be a teacher? Can everyone have supernatural powers? Can everyone have
power to cure diseases? Can everyone speak in “tongues”? Can everyone
31 interpret them? Strive for the greater gifts.

13 Yet I can still show you a way beyond all comparison the best. Though
I speak in the “tongues” of people, or even of angels, yet have not love,
2 I have become mere echoing brass, or a clanging cymbal! Even though I
have the gift of preaching, and fathom all hidden truths and all the depths
of knowledge; even though I have such faith as might move mountains, yet
3 have not love, I am nothing! Even though I dole my substance to the poor,
even though I sacrifice my body in order to boast, yet have not love, it avails
4 me nothing! Love is long-suffering, and kind; love is never envious, never
5 boastful, never conceited, never behaves unbecomingly; love is never self-
6 seeking, never provoked, never reckons up her wrongs; love never rejoices
7 at evil, but rejoices in the triumph of truth; love bears with all things, ever
8 trustful, ever hopeful, ever patient. Love never fails. But, whether it be the
9 gift of preaching, it will be done with; whether it be the gift of “tongues,”
it will cease; whether it be knowledge, it, too, will be done with. For our

10 knowledge is incomplete, and our preaching is incomplete, but, when the
11 perfect has come, that which is incomplete will be done with. When I was
a child, I talked as a child, I felt as a child, I reasoned as a child; now that
12 I am a man, I have done with childish ways. As yet we see, in a mirror,
dimly, but then – face to face! As yet my knowledge is incomplete, but then
13 I will know in full, as I have been fully known. Meanwhile faith, hope, and
14 love endure – these three, but the greatest of these is love. Seek this love
earnestly, and strive for spiritual gifts, above all for the gift of preaching.
2 The person who, when speaking, uses the gift of “tongues” is speaking,
not to people, but to God, for no one understands them; yet in spirit they
3 are speaking of hidden truths. But those who preach are speaking to their
fellow men and women words that will build up faith, and give them
4 comfort and encouragement. Those who, when speaking, use the gift of
“tongues” builds up their own faith, while those who preach build up the
5 faith of the church. Now I want you all to speak in “tongues,” but much
more I wish that you should preach. A preacher is worth more than one
6 who speaks in “tongues,” unless they interprets their words, so that the
faith of the church may be built up. This being so, friends, what good
7 will I do you, if I come to you and speak in “tongues,” unless my words
convey some revelation, or knowledge, or take the form of preaching or
teaching? Even with inanimate things, such as a flute or a harp, though
8 they produce sounds, yet unless the notes are quite distinct, how can the
9 tune played on the flute or the harp be recognised? If the bugle sounds
a doubtful call, who will prepare for battle? And so with you; unless, in
10 using the gift of “tongues,” you utter intelligible words, how can what
you say be understood? You will be speaking to the winds! There is, for
11 instance, a certain number of different languages in the world, and not
one of them fails to convey meaning. If, however, I do not happen to know
the language, I will be a foreigner to those who speak it, and they will be
12 foreigners to me. And so with you; since your are striving for spiritual gifts,
13 be eager to excel in such as will build up the faith of the church. Therefore
anyone who, when speaking, uses the gift of “tongues” should pray for
14 ability to interpret them. If, when praying, I use the gift of “tongues,” my
15 spirit indeed prays, but my mind is a blank. What, then, is my conclusion?
Simply this – I will pray with my spirit, but with my mind as well; I will
16 sing with my spirit, but with my mind as well. If you bless God with your
spirit only, how can people in the congregation who are without your gift
say “Amen” to your thanksgiving? They do not know what you are saying!
17 Your thanksgiving may be excellent, but the other is not helped by it. Thank
18 God, I use the gift of “tongues” more than any of you. But at a meeting of
19

the church I would rather speak five words with my mind, and so teach others, than ten thousand words when using the gift of "tongues."

20 My friends, do not show yourselves children in understanding. In
21 wickedness be infants, but in understanding show yourselves adults. It is said in the Law –

"In strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."

22 Therefore the gift of the "tongues" is intended as a sign, not for those who believe in Christ, but for those who do not, while the gift of preaching is intended as a sign, not for those who do not believe in Christ, but
23 for those who do. So, when the whole church meets, if all present use the gift of "tongues," and some people who are without the gift, or who
24 are unbelievers, come in, will not they say that you are mad? While, if all those present use the gift of preaching, and an unbeliever, or someone without the gift, comes in, they are convinced of their sinfulness by them
25 all, they are called to account by them all; the secrets of their heart are revealed, and then, throwing themselves on their face, they will worship God, and declare "God is indeed among you!"

26 What do I suggest, then, friends? Whenever you meet for worship, each of you comes, either with a hymn, or a lesson, or a revelation, or the gift of "tongues," or the interpretation of them; let everything be directed to
27 the building up of faith. If any of you use the gift of "tongues," not more than two, or at the most three, should do so – each speaking in his turn
28 – and someone should interpret them. If there is no one able to interpret what is said, they should remain silent at the meeting of the church, and
29 speak to themselves and to God. Of preachers two or three should speak,
30 and the rest should weigh well what is said. But, if some revelation is made to another person as he sits there, the first speaker should stop.
31 For you can all preach in turn, so that all may learn some lesson and all
32 receive encouragement. (The spirit that moves the preachers is within the
33 preachers' control; for God is not a God of disorder, but of peace.) This custom prevails in all the churches of Christ's people.

34 At the meetings of the church married women should remain silent, for they are not allowed to speak in public; they should take a subordinate place, as the Law itself directs. If they want information on any point, they should ask their husbands about it at home; for it is unbecoming for a
36 married woman to speak at a meeting of the church. What! Did God's

message to the world originate with you? Or did it find its way to none but you?

- 37 If anyone thinks that he has the gift of preaching or any other spiritual gift, he should recognise that what I am now saying to you is a command
38 from the Lord. Anyone who ignores it may be ignored. Therefore, my
39 friends, strive for the gift of preaching, and yet do not forbid speaking in
40 "tongues." Let everything be done in a proper and orderly manner.

The Apostle's Teaching as to the Resurrection of the Dead

- 15 Next, friends, I would like to remind you of the good news which I told you, and which you received – the good news on which you have taken your
2 stand, and by means of which you are being saved. I would like to remind you of the words that I used in telling it to you, since you are still holding fast to it, and since it was not in vain that you became believers in Christ.
3 For at the very beginning of my teaching I gave you the account which I had myself received – that Christ died for our sins (as the scriptures had
4 foretold), that he was buried, that on the third day he was raised (as the
5 scriptures had foretold), and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the
6 Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of his followers
7 at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have gone to their
8 rest. After that, he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles. Last
9 of all, he appeared even to me, who am, as it were, the abortion. For I am
10 the meanest of the apostles, I who am unworthy of the name of "apostle,"
11 because I persecuted the church of God. But it is through the love of God
that I am what I am, and the love that he showed me has not been wasted.
No, I have toiled harder than any of them, and yet it was not I, but the love
of God working with me. Whether, then, it was I or whether it was they,
this we proclaim, and this you believed.
- 12 Now, if it is proclaimed of Christ that he has been raised from the dead, how is it that some of you say that there is no such thing as a resurrection
13 of the dead? But, if there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead,
14 then even Christ has not been raised; and, if Christ has not been raised,
15 then our proclamation is without meaning, and our faith without meaning
also! Yes, and we are being proved to have borne false testimony about
God; for we testified of God that he raised the Christ, whom he did not
raise, if, indeed, the dead do not rise! For, if the dead do not rise, then even
17 Christ himself has not been raised, and, if Christ has not been raised, your

18 faith is folly – your sins are on you still! Yes, and they, who have passed to
19 their rest in union with Christ, perished! If all that we have done has been
to place our hope in Christ for this life, then we of all people are the most
to be pitied.

20 But, in truth, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of
21 those who are at rest. For, since through a man there is death, so, too,
22 through a man there is a resurrection of the dead. For, as through union
23 with Adam all die, so through union with the Christ will all be made to
24 live. But each in their proper order – Christ the first-fruits; afterwards, at
25 his coming, those who belong to the Christ. Then will come the end – when
he surrenders the kingdom to his God and Father, having overthrown all
26 other rule and all other authority and power. For he must reign until God
27 “has put all his enemies under his feet.” The last enemy to be overthrown
28 is death; for God has placed all things under Christ’s feet. (But, when it is
29 said that all things have been placed under Christ, it is plain that God is
30 excepted who placed everything under him.) And, when everything has
31 been placed under him, the Son will place himself under God who placed
32 everything under him, so that God may be all in all! Again, what good will
they be doing who are baptized on behalf of the dead? If it is true that the
33 dead do not rise, why are people baptized on their behalf? Why, too, do
we risk our lives every hour? Daily I face death – I swear it, friends, by the
pride in you that I feel through my union with Christ Jesus, our Lord. If
with only human hopes I had fought in the arena at Ephesus, what should
I have gained by it? If the dead do not rise, then let us eat and drink, for
33 tomorrow we will die! Do not be deceived.

“Good character is marred by evil company.”

34 Wake up to a righteous life, and cease to sin. There are some who have
no true knowledge of God. I speak in this way to shame you.

35 Someone, however, may ask “How do the dead rise? And in what body
36 will they come?” You foolish person! The seed you yourself sow does not
37 come to life, unless it dies! And when you sow, you sow not the body that
38 will be, but a mere grain – perhaps of wheat, or something else. God gives
39 it the body that he pleases – to each seed its special body. All forms of life
are not the same; there is one for people, another for beasts, another for
40 birds, and another for fish. There are heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies;
41 but the beauty of the heavenly bodies is not the beauty of the earthly. There
is a beauty of the sun, and a beauty of the moon, and a beauty of the stars;
42 for even star differs from star in beauty. It is the same with the resurrection

of the dead. Sown a mortal body, it rises immortal; sown disfigured, it rises
43 beautiful; sown weak, it rises strong; sown a human body, it rises a spiritual
44 body. As surely as there is a human body, there is also a spiritual body. That
45 is what is meant by the words – “Adam, the first man, became a human
46 being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. That which comes first is
47 not the spiritual, but the human; afterwards comes the spiritual; the first
48 man was from the dust of the earth; the second man from heaven. Those
49 who are of the dust are like him who came from the dust; and those who
50 are of heaven are like him who came from heaven. And as we have borne
51 the likeness of him who came from the dust, so let us bear the likeness
52 of him who came from heaven. This I say, friends – Flesh and blood can
have no share in the kingdom of God, nor can the perishable share the
53 imperishable. Listen, I will tell you God’s hidden purpose! We will not all
54 have passed to our rest, but we will all be transformed – in a moment, in
the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet-call; for the trumpet will sound,
and the dead will rise immortal, and we, also, will be transformed. For
this perishable body of ours must put on an imperishable form, and this
dying body a deathless form. And, when this dying body has put on its
deathless form, then indeed will the words of scripture come true –

55 “death has been swallowed up in victory! Where, Death, is your
victory? Where, death, is your sting?”

56 It is sin that gives death its sting, and it is the Law that gives sin its
57 power. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through Jesus
58 Christ, our Lord. Therefore, my dear friends, stand firm, unshaken, al-
ways diligent in the Lord’s work, for you know that, in union with him,
your toil is not in vain.

Conclusion

- 16 With reference to the collection for Christ’s people, I want you to follow the
2 instructions that I gave to the churches in Galatia. On the first day of every
week each of you should put by what he can afford, so that no collections
3 need be made after I have come. On my arrival, I will send any persons,
4 whom you may authorise by letter, to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and, if
it appears to be worth while for me to go also, they will go with me.
5 I will come to you as soon as I have been through Macedonia – for I am
6 going through Macedonia – And I will probably make some stay with you
or, perhaps, remain for the winter, so that you may yourselves send me on

- 7 my way, wherever I may be going. I do not propose to pay you a visit in passing now, for I hope to stay with you for some time, if the Lord permits.
- 8 I intend, however, staying at Ephesus until the Festival at the close of the
9 Harvest; for a great opening for active work has presented itself, and there are many opponents.
- 10 If Timothy comes, take care that he has no cause for feeling anxious
11 while he is with you. He is doing the Master's work no less than I am. No one, therefore, should slight him. See him safely on his way to me, for I am expecting him with some of our friends.
- 12 As for our friend Apollos, I have often urged him to go to you with the others. He has, however, been very unwilling to do so as yet; but he will go as soon as he finds a good opportunity.
- 13 Be watchful; stand firm in your faith; be brave; be strong. Let everything
14 you do be done in a loving spirit.
- 15 I have another request to make of you, friends. You remember Stephanas and his household, and that they were the first-fruits gathered in from
16 Greece, and set themselves to serve Christ's people. I want you, on your part, to show deference to such people as these, as well as to every fellow
17 labourer and earnest worker. I am glad Stephanas and Fortunatus and
18 Achaicus have come, for they have made up for your absence; they have cheered my heart, and your hearts also. Recognise the worth of such people as these.
- 19 The churches in Roman Asia send you their greetings. Aquila and Prisca and the church that meets at their house send you many Christian greetings.
- 20 All of the Lord's followers send you greetings. Greet one another with a sacred kiss.
- 21 I, Paul, add this greeting in my own handwriting. Accursed be anyone
22 who has no love for the Lord. THE LORD IS COMING. May the blessing
23 of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you who are in union with
24 Christ Jesus.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

Introduction

- 1 To the church of God in Corinth, and to all Christ's people throughout Greece, from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, and from
- 2 Timothy, who is also a follower. May God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

- 3 Blessed is the God and Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, the all-merciful
- 4 Father, the God ever ready to console, who consoles us in all our troubles, so that we may be able to console those who are in any trouble with the
- 5 consolation that we ourselves receive from him. It is true that we have our full share of the sufferings of the Christ, but through the Christ we have
- 6 also our full share of consolation. If we meet with trouble, it is for the sake of your consolation and salvation; and, if we find consolation, it is for the sake of the consolation that you will experience when you are called to
- 7 endure the sufferings that we ourselves are enduring; and our hope for you remains unshaken. We know that, as you are sharing our sufferings,
- 8 you will also share our consolation. We want you, friends, to know that, in the troubles which befell us in Roman Asia, we were burdened altogether
- 9 beyond our strength, so much so that we even despaired of life. Indeed, we had the presentiment that we must die, so that we might rely, not on
- 10 ourselves, but on God who raises the dead. And from so imminent a death God delivered us, and will deliver us again; for in him we have placed our
- 11 hopes of future deliverance, while you, also, help us by your prayers. And then many lips will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us in answer to many prayers.

The Apostle's Relations with his Converts

- 12 Indeed, our main ground for satisfaction is this – Our conscience tells us that our conduct in the world, and still more in our relations with you, was

marked by a purity of motive and a sincerity that were inspired by God,
13 and was based, not on worldly policy, but on the help of God. We never
write anything to you other than what you will acknowledge to the very
14 end – And, indeed, you have already partly acknowledged it about us –
that you have a right to be proud of us, as we will be proud of you, on the
day of our Lord Jesus.

15 With this conviction in my mind, I planned to come to see you first, so
16 that your pleasure might be doubled – To visit you both on my way to
Macedonia, and to come to you again on my return from Macedonia, and
17 then to get you to send me on my way into Judea. As this was my plan,
where, pray, did I show any fickleness of purpose? Or do you think that
my plans are formed on mere impulse, so that in the same breath I say
18 "Yes" and "No"? As God is true, the message that we brought you does not
19 waver between "Yes" and "No"! The Son of God, Christ Jesus, whom we
– Silas, Timothy, and I – proclaimed among you, never wavered between
20 "Yes" and "No." With him it has always been "Yes." For, many as were the
promises of God, in Christ is the "Yes" that fulfils them. Therefore, through
21 Christ again, let the "Amen" rise, through us, to the glory of God. God who
brings us, with you, into close union with Christ, and who consecrated us,
22 also set his seal on us, and gave us his Spirit in our hearts as a pledge of
future blessings.

23 But, as my life will answer for it, I call God to witness that it was to spare
24 you that I deferred my visit to Corinth. I do not mean that we are to dictate
to you with regard to your faith; on the contrary, we work with you for
your true happiness; indeed, it is through your faith that you are standing
2 firm. For my own sake, as well, I decided not to pay you another painful
2 visit. If it is I who cause you pain, why, who is there to cheer me, except
3 the person whom I am paining? So I wrote as I did because I was afraid
that if I had come, I should have been pained by those who ought to have
made me glad; for I felt sure that it was true of you all that my joy was in
4 every case yours also. I wrote to you in sore trouble and distress of heart
and with many tears, not to give you pain, but to let you see how intense a
love I have for you.

5 Now whoever has caused the pain has not so much pained me, as he has,
6 to some extent – not to be too severe – pained every one of you. The man
to whom I refer has been sufficiently punished by the penalty inflicted
7 by the majority of you; so that now you must take the opposite course,
and forgive and encourage him, or else he may be overwhelmed by the
8 intensity of his pain. So I entreat you to assure him of your love. I had this
9

10 further object, also, in what I wrote – to find out whether you might be relied on to be obedient in everything. Anyone you forgive, I forgive them, too. Indeed, for my part, whatever I have forgiven (if I have had to forgive anything), I have forgiven for your sakes, in the presence of Christ, so as to prevent Satan from taking advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 When I went to the district round Troas to tell the good news of the Christ, even though there was an opening for serving the Master, I could get no peace of mind because I failed to find Titus, my friend; so I took leave of the people there, and went on to Macedonia. All thanks to God, who, through our union with the Christ, leads us in one continual triumph, and uses us to spread the sweet perfume of the knowledge of him in every place. For we are the fragrance of Christ ascending to God – both among those who are in the path of salvation and among those who are in the path to ruin. To the latter we are a stench which arises from death and tells of death; to the former a fragrance which arises from life and tells of life. But who is equal to such a task? Unlike many people, we are not in the habit of making profit out of God's message; but in all sincerity, and bearing God's commission, we speak before him in union with Christ.

3 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or are we like some 2 who need letters of commendation to you, or from you? You yourselves are our letter – a letter written on our hearts, and one which everybody can 3 read and understand. All can see that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, a letter written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.

The Ministry of the Apostles

4 This, then, is the confidence in regard to God that we have gained through 5 the Christ. I do not mean that we are fit to form any judgment by ourselves, 6 as if on our own authority; our fitness comes from God, who himself made us fit to be assistants of a new covenant, of which the substance is, not a written Law, but a Spirit. For the written Law means death, but the Spirit gives life.

7 If the system of religion which involved death, embodied in a written Law and engraved on stones, began amid such glory, that the Israelites were unable to gaze at the face of Moses because of its glory, though it was but a 8 passing glory, will not the religion that confers the Spirit have still greater

9 glory? For, if there was a glory in the religion that involved condemnation,
10 far greater is the glory of the religion that confers righteousness! Indeed,
that which then had glory has lost its glory, because of the glory which
11 surpasses it. And, if that which was to pass away was attended with glory,
far more will that which is to endure be surrounded with glory!

12 With such a hope as this, we speak with all plainness; unlike Moses,
13 who covered his face with a veil, to prevent the Israelites from gazing at
14 the disappearance of what was passing away. But their minds were slow
to learn. Indeed, to this very day, at the public reading of the old covenant,
the same veil remains; only for those who are in union with Christ does
15 it pass away. But, even to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on
16 their hearts. Yet, whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.
17 And the Lord is the Spirit, and, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is
18 freedom. And all of us, with faces from which the veil is lifted, seeing, as
if reflected in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into
his likeness, from glory to glory, as it is given by the Lord, the Spirit.

4 Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry,
2 we do not lose heart. No, we have renounced the secrecy prompted by
shame, refusing to adopt crafty ways, or to tamper with God's message,
and commanding ourselves to everyone's conscience, in the sight of God,
3 by our exhibition of the truth. And, even if the good news that we bring is
veiled, it is veiled only in the case of those who are on the path to ruin –
4 people whose minds have been blinded by the God of this age, unbelievers
as they are, so that the light from the good news of the glory of the Christ,
5 who is the incarnation of God, should not shine for them. (For it is not
ourselves that we proclaim, but Christ Jesus, as Lord, and ourselves as your
6 servants for Jesus' sake.) Indeed, the same God who said "Out of darkness
light will shine," has shone in on our hearts, so that we should bring out
into the light the knowledge of the glory of God, seen in the face of Christ.

7 This treasure we have in these earthen vessels, so that its all-prevailing
8 power may be seen to come from God, and not to be our own. Though
hard pressed on every side, we are never hemmed in; though perplexed,
9 never driven to despair; though pursued, never abandoned; though struck
10 down, never killed! We always bear on our bodies the marks of the death
that Jesus died, so that the life also of Jesus may be exhibited in our bodies.
11 Indeed, we who still live are continually being given over to death for Jesus'
sake, so that the life also of Jesus may be exhibited in our mortal nature.
12 And so, while death is at work within us, life is at work within you. But,
13 in the same spirit of faith as that expressed in the words – "I believed, and

14 therefore I spoke," we, also believe, and therefore speak. For we know that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with him, and will bring us, 15 with you, into his presence. For all this is for your sakes, so that the loving kindness of God, spreading from heart to heart, may cause yet more hearts to overflow with thanksgiving, to his glory.

16 Therefore, as I said, we do not lose heart. No, even though outwardly 17 we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. The light burden of our momentary trouble is preparing for us, in measure 18 transcending thought, a weight of imperishable glory; we, all the while, gazing not on what is seen, but on what is unseen; for what is seen is 5 transient, but what is unseen is imperishable. For we know that if our tent – that earthly body which is now our home – is taken down, we have a house of God's building, a home not made by hands, imperishable, in 2 heaven. Even while in our present body we sigh, longing to put over it our 3 heavenly house, sure that, when we have put it on, we will never be found 4 discarnate. For we who are in this tent sigh under our burden, unwilling to take it off, yet wishing to put our heavenly body over it, so that all that 5 is mortal may be absorbed in life. And he who has prepared us for this change is God, who has also given us his Spirit as a pledge.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, while our home is 7 in the body, we are absent from our home with the Lord. For we guide 8 our lives by faith, and not by what we see. And in this confidence we would gladly leave our home in the body, and make our home with the 9 Lord. Therefore, whether in our home or absent from our home, our one 10 ambition is to please him. For at the court of the Christ we must all appear in our true characters, so that each may reap the results of the life which he has lived in the body, in accordance with his actions – whether good or worthless.

11 Therefore, because we know the fear inspired by the Lord, it is true that we are trying to win people over, but our motives are plain to God; and 12 I hope that in your inmost hearts they are plain to you also. We are not 'commending ourselves' again to you, but rather are giving you cause for pride in us, so that you may have an answer ready for those who pride 13 themselves on appearances and not on character. For, if we were 'beside ourselves,' it was in God's service! If we are not in our senses, it is in yours! 14 It is the love of the Christ which compels us, when we reflect that, as one 15 died for all, therefore all died; and that he died for all, so that the living should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose for them.

- 16 For ourselves, then, from this time forward, we refuse to regard anyone from the world's standpoint. Even if we once thought of Christ from the 17 standpoint of the world, yet now we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in union with Christ, he is a new being! His old life has passed away; 18 a new life has begun! But all this is the work of God, who reconciled us 19 to himself through Christ, and gave us the Ministry of Reconciliation – To proclaim that God, in Christ, was reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning people's offences against them, and that he had entrusted us with the message of this reconciliation.
- 20 It is, then, on Christ's behalf that we are acting as ambassadors, God, as it were, appealing to you through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf – 21 Be reconciled to God. For our sake God made Christ, who was innocent of sin, one with our sinfulness, so that in him we might be made one with the 6 righteousness of God. Therefore, as God's fellow workers, we also appeal 2 to you not to receive his loving kindness in vain. For he says –

"At the time for acceptance I listened to you,
And on the day of deliverance I helped you."

- 3 Now is the time for acceptance! Now is the day of deliverance! Never do we put an obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found 4 with our ministry. No, we are trying to commend ourselves under all circumstances, as God's assistants should – in many an hour of endurance, 5 in troubles, in hardships, in difficulties, in floggings, in imprisonments, 6 in riots, in toils, in sleepless nights, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, 7 by patience, by kindliness, by holiness of spirit, by unfeigned love; by the message of truth, and by the power of God; by the weapons of right- 8 eousness in the right hand and in the left; amid honour and disrepute, 9 amid slander and praise; regarded as deceivers, yet proved to be true; as unknown, yet well-known; as at death's door, yet, see, we are living; as 10 chastised, yet not killed; as saddened, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet enriching many; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things!

The Apostle and his Converts

- 11 We have been speaking freely to you, dear friends in Corinth; we have 12 opened our heart; there is room there for you, yet there is not room, in 13 your love, for us. Can you not in return – I appeal to you as I should to children – open your hearts to us?

- 14 Do not enter into inconsistent relations with those who reject the faith. For what partnership can there be between righteousness and lawlessness?
- 15 Or what has light to do with darkness? What harmony can there be between Christ and Belial? Or what can those who accept the faith have in common
- 16 with those who reject it? What agreement can you be between a temple of God and idols? And we are a temple of the living God. That is what God meant when he said –

"I will live among them, and walk among them;
And I will be their God, and they will be my people.

- 17 Therefore 'Come out from among the nations, and separate yourselves from them,' says the Lord,
'And touch nothing impure;
And I will welcome you;
18 and I will be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,'
says the Lord, the Ruler of all."

- 7 With these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that pollutes either body or spirit, and, in deepest respect for God, aim at perfect holiness.
- 2 Make room for us in your hearts. In no instance have we ever wronged, or
3 harmed, or taken advantage of, anyone. I am not saying this to condemn
you. Indeed, I have already said that you are in our heart, to live and die
4 together. I have the utmost confidence in you; I am always boasting about
you. I am full of encouragement and, in spite of all our troubles, my heart
is overflowing with happiness.

- 5 Ever since we reached Macedonia, we have had no rest in body or mind;
on every side there have been troubles – conflicts without, anxieties within.
6 But God, who encourages the downcast, has encouraged us by the arrival
7 of Titus. And it is not only by his arrival that we are encouraged, but also
by the encouragement which he received from you; for he tells us of your
8 strong affection, your penitence, and your zeal on my behalf – so that I am
happier still. For, though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret
it. Even if I were inclined to regret it – for I see that my letter did cause you
9 sorrow though only for a time – I am glad now; not because of the sorrow it
caused you, but because your sorrow brought you to repentance. For it was
God's will that you should feel sorrow, in order that you should not suffer
10 loss in any way at our hands. For, when sorrow is in accordance with God's
will, it results in a repentance leading to salvation, and which will never be
11 regretted. The sure result of the sorrow that the world knows is death. For
see what results that other sorrow – sorrow in accordance with God's will

- has had in your case. What earnestness it produced! What explanations! What strong feeling! What alarm! What longing! What eagerness! What readiness to punish! You have proved yourselves altogether free from guilt
- 12 in that matter. So, then, even though I did write to you, it was not for the sake of the wrong-doer, or of the man who was wronged, but to make you conscious, in the sight of God, of your own earnest care for us. And it is this that has encouraged us.
- 13 In addition to the encouragement that this gave us, we were made far happier still by the happiness of Titus for his heart has been cheered by
- 14 you all. Although I have been boasting a little to him about you, you did not put me to shame; but, just as every thing we had said to you was true,
- 15 so our boasting to Titus about you has also proved to be the truth. And his affection for you is all the greater, as he remembers the deference that you
- 16 all showed him, and recalls how you received him with anxious care. I am glad that I can feel perfect confidence in you.

The Palestine Famine Fund

- 8 We want to remind you, friends, of the love that God has shown to the
- 2 churches in Macedonia – How, tired though they were by many a trouble, their overflowing happiness, and even their deep poverty, resulted in a
- 3 flood of generosity. I can bear witness that to the full extent of their power,
- 4 and even beyond their power, spontaneously, and with many an appeal to us for permission, they showed their love, and contributed their share
- 5 towards the fund for their fellow Christians. And that, not only in the way we had expected; but first they gave themselves to the Lord, and to us
- 6 also, in accordance with God's will. And this led us beg Titus, since he had started the work for you, he should also see to the completion of this
- 7 expression of your love. And, remembering how you excel in everything – in faith, in teaching, in knowledge, in unfailing earnestness, and in the affection that we have awakened in you – I ask you to excel also in this expression of your love.
- 8 I am not laying a command on you, but I am making use of the earnest-
- 9 ness shown by others to test the genuineness of your affection. For you do not forget the loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ – how that for your sakes, although he was rich, he became poor, so that you also might
- 10 become rich through his poverty. I am only making suggestions on this matter; for this is the best course for you, since you were a year before others, not only in taking action, but also in showing your readiness to

11 do so. And now I want you to complete the work, so that its completion
may correspond with your willing readiness – in proportion, of course,
12 to your means. For, where there is willingness, a person's gift is valued
by its comparison with what they have, and not with what they do not
13 have. For our object is not to give relief to others and bring distress on you.
14 It is a matter of a fair balance. On this occasion what you can spare will
supply what they need, at another time what they can spare may supply
15 your need, and so things will be equal. As scripture says –

“Those who had much had nothing over, and those who had little
did not lack!”

16 I thank God for inspiring Titus with the same keen interest in your wel-
17 fare that I have; for Titus has responded to my appeals and, in his great
18 earnestness, is starting to go to you of his own accord. We are sending
with him one of the Lord's followers whose fame in the service of the
19 good news has spread through all the churches; and not only that, but
he has been elected by the churches to accompany us on our journey, in
connexion with this expression of your love, which we are personally
administering to the honour of the Lord, and to show our deep interest.
20 What we are specially guarding against is that any fault should be found
21 with us in regard to our administration of this charitable fund; for we are
trying to make arrangements which will be right, not only in the eyes of
22 the Lord, but also in the eyes of people. We are also sending with them
another of our friends, whose earnestness we have many a time proved in
many ways, and whom we now find made even more earnest by his great
23 confidence in you. If I must say anything about Titus, he is my intimate
companion, and he shares my work for you; if it is our friends, they are
24 delegates of the churches, an honour to Christ. Show them, therefore – so
that the churches may see it – the proof of your affection, and the ground
for our boasting to them about you.

9 With reference, indeed, to the Fund for your fellow Christians, it is quite
2 superfluous for me to say anything to you. I know, of course, your willing-
ness to help, and I am always boasting of it to the Macedonians. I tell them
that you in Greece have been ready for a year past; and it was really your
3 zeal that stimulated most of them. So my reason for sending our friends is
to prevent what we said about you from proving, in this particular matter,
an empty boast, and to enable you to be as well prepared as I have been
4 saying that you are. Otherwise, if any Macedonians were to come with
me, and find you unprepared, we – to say nothing of you – should feel
5 ashamed of our present confidence. Therefore I think it necessary to beg

the friends to go to you in advance, and to complete the arrangements for the gift, which you have already promised, so that it may be ready, as a gift, before I come, and not look as if it were being given under pressure.

- 6 Remember the saying – “Scanty sowing, scanty harvest; plentiful sowing,
7 plentiful harvest.” Let everyone give as he has determined before hand,
8 not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. God
has power to shower all kinds of blessings on you, so that, having, under
all circumstances and on all occasions, all that you can need, you may be
9 able to shower all kinds of benefits on others. (As scripture says –

“He scattered broadcast, he gave to the poor; His righteousness
continues for ever.”

- 10 And he who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for eating, will supply
11 you with seed, and cause it to increase, and will multiply the fruits
of your righteousness). Rich in all things yourselves, you will be able to
12 show liberality to all, which, with our help, will cause thanksgiving to
13 be offered to God. For the rendering of a public service such as this, not
only relieves the needs of your fellow Christians, but also results in the
14 offering to God of many a thanksgiving. Through the evidence afforded
by the service rendered, you cause people to praise God for your fidelity
to your profession of faith in the good news of the Christ, as well as for
15 the liberality of your contributions for them and for all others. And they
also, in their prayers for you, express their longing to see you, because of
the surpassing love of God displayed toward you. All thanks to God for
his inestimable gift!

The Apostle's Claims and Authority

- 10 Now, I, Paul, make a personal appeal to you by the meekness and gentleness of the Christ – I who, ‘in your presence, am humble in my bearing
2 towards you, but, when absent, am bold in my language to you’ – I implore you not to drive me to ‘show my boldness,’ when I do come, by the confident tone which I expect to have to adopt towards some of you, who are expecting to find us influenced in our conduct by earthly motives.
3 For, though we live an earthly life, we do not wage an earthly war. The
4 weapons for our warfare are not earthly, but, under God, are powerful
5 enough to pull down strongholds. We are engaged in confuting arguments and pulling down every barrier raised against the knowledge of God. We are taking captive every hostile thought, to bring it into submission to

6 the Christ, and are fully prepared to punish every act of rebellion, when
7 once your submission is complete. You look at the outward appearance of
things! Let anyone, who is confident that he belongs to Christ, reflect, for
himself, again on the fact – that we belong to Christ no less than he does.
8 Even if I boast extravagantly about our authority – which the Lord gave
us for building up your faith and not for overthrowing it – still I have no
9 reason to be ashamed. I say this so that it doesn't seem as if I am trying to
10 overawe you by my letters. For people say 'His letters are impressive and
vigorous, but his personal appearance is insignificant and his speaking
11 contemptible.' Let such a person be assured of this – that our words in our
letters show us to be, when absent, just what our deeds will show us to be,
12 when present. We have not indeed the audacity to class or compare our-
selves with some of those who indulge in self-commendation! But, when
such persons measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves
13 with themselves, they show a want of wisdom. We, however, will not give
way to unlimited boasting, but will confine ourselves to the limits of the
sphere to which God limited us, when he permitted us to come as far as
14 Corinth. For it is not the case, as it would be if we were not in the habit of
coming to you, that we are exceeding our bounds! Why, we were the very
15 first to reach you with the good news of the Christ! Our boasting, therefore,
is not unlimited, nor does it extend to the labours of others; but our hope
is that, as your faith grows, our influence among you may be very greatly
16 increased – though still confined to our sphere – So that we will be able to
tell the good news in the districts beyond you, without trespassing on the
sphere assigned to others, or boasting of what has been already done. Let
17 anyone who boasts make their boast of the Lord. For it is not those who
18 commend themselves that stand the test, but those who are commended
by the Lord.

11 I could wish that you would tolerate a little folly in me! But indeed
2 you do tolerate me. I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God. For I
engaged you to one husband so that I might present you to the Christ a pure
3 bride. Yet I fear that it may turn out that, just as the snake by his craftiness
deceived Eve, so your minds may have lost the loyalty and purity due
4 from you to the Christ. For, if some newcomer is proclaiming a Jesus other
than him whom we proclaimed, or if you are receiving a Spirit different
from the Spirit which you received, or a good news different from that
5 which you welcomed, then you are marvellously tolerant! I do not regard
6 myself as in any way inferior to the most eminent apostles! Though I am

no trained orator, yet I am not without knowledge; indeed we made this perfectly clear to you in every way.

- 7 Perhaps you say that I did wrong in humbling myself that you might be exalted – I mean because I told you God's good news without payment.
8 I robbed other churches by taking pay from them, so that I might serve
9 you! And, when I was with you in need, I did not become a burden to any
of you; for our friends, on coming from Macedonia, supplied my needs. I
kept myself, and will keep myself from being an expense to you in any way.
10 As surely as I know anything of the truth of Christ, this boast, as far as I
11 am concerned, will not be stopped in any part of Greece. Why? Because I
do not love you? God knows that I do!
12 What I am doing now I will continue to do in order to cut away the
ground from under those who are wishing for some ground for attacking
me, so that as regards the thing of which they boast they may appear in
13 their true characters, just as we do. Such people are false apostles, treacher-
ous workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ! And no wonder;
14 for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. It is not surprising,
therefore, if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteous-
ness. But their end will be in accordance with their actions.

- 16 I say again – Let no one think me a fool! Yet, if you do, at least welcome
17 me as you would a fool, so that I, too may indulge in a little boasting. When
I speak like this, I am not speaking as the Master would, but as a fool might,
18 in boasting so confidently. As so many are boasting of earthly things, I,
19 too, will boast. For all your cleverness, you tolerate fools willingly enough!
20 You tolerate a person even when they enslave you, when they plunder you,
when they get you into their power, when they put on airs of superiority,
21 when they strike you in the face! I admit, to my shame, that we have been
weak. But whatever the subject on which others are not afraid to boast –
22 though it is foolish to say so – I am not afraid either! Are they Hebrews? So
am I! Are they Israelites? So am I! Are they descendants of Abraham? So
23 am I! Are they "Servants of Christ"? Though it is madness to talk like this,
I am more so than they! I have had more of toil, more of imprisonment!
I have been flogged times without number. I have been often at death's
24 door. Five times I received at the hands of my own people forty lashes, all
but one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three
25 times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a whole day and night in the deep.
26 My journeys have been many. I have been through dangers from rivers,
dangers from robbers, dangers from my own people, dangers from the
Gentiles, dangers in towns, dangers in the country, dangers on the sea,

27 dangers among people pretending to be followers of the Lord. I have been through toil and hardship. I have passed many a sleepless night; I have endured hunger and thirst; I have often been without food; I have known
28 cold and nakedness. And, not to speak of other things, there is my daily
29 burden of anxiety about all the churches. Who is weak without my being
30 weak? Who is led astray without my burning with indignation? If I must
31 boast, I will boast of things which show my weakness! The God and Father
32 of the Lord Jesus – he who is for ever blessed – knows that I am speaking
33 the truth. When I was in Damascus, the Governor under King Aretas had
the gates of that city guarded, so as to arrest me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

12 I must boast! It is unprofitable; but I will pass to visions and revelations
2 given by the Lord. I know a man in union with Christ, who, fourteen
years ago – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God
knows – was caught up (this man of whom I am speaking) to the third
3 heaven. And I know that this man – whether in the body or separated
4 from the body I do not know; God knows – Was caught up into Paradise,
5 and heard unspeakable things of which no human being may tell. About
such a man I will boast, but about myself I will not boast except as regards
6 my weaknesses. Yet if I choose to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will be
speaking no more than the truth. But I refrain, in case anyone should
7 credit me with more than he can see in me or hear from me, and because
of the marvellous character of the revelations. It was for this reason, and to
prevent my thinking too highly of myself, that a thorn was sent to pierce my
flesh – an instrument of Satan to discipline me – so that I should not think
8 too highly of myself. About this I three times entreated the Lord, praying
9 that it might leave me. But his reply has been – “My help is enough for
you; for my strength attains its perfection in the midst of weakness.”

Most gladly, then, will I boast all the more of my weaknesses, so that
10 the strength of the Christ may overshadow me. That is why I delight in
weakness, ill treatment, hardship, persecution, and difficulties, when borne
for Christ. For, when I am weak, then it is that I am strong!

Conclusion

11 I have been ‘playing the fool!’ It is you who drove me to it. For it is you
who ought to have been commending me! Although I am nobody, in no
12 respect did I prove inferior to the most eminent apostles. The marks of
the true apostle were exhibited among you in constant endurance, as well

- 13 as by signs, by marvels, and by miracles. In what respect, I ask, were you treated worse than the other churches, unless it was that, for my part, I refused to become a burden to you? Forgive me the wrong I did to you!
- 14 Remember, this is the third time that I have made every preparation to come to see you, and I will refuse to be a burden to you; I want, not your money, but you. It is not the duty of children to put by for their parents, 15 but of parents to put by for their children. For my part, I will most gladly spend, and be spent, for your welfare. Can it be that the more intensely I 16 love you the less I am to be loved? You will admit that I was not a burden 17 to you but you say that I was 'crafty' and caught you 'by a trick'! Do you assert that I took advantage of you through any of those whom I have sent 18 to you? I urged Titus to go, and I sent another follower with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you? Didn't we live in the same Spirit, and tread in the same footsteps?
- 19 Have you all this time been fancying that it is to you that we are making our defence? No, it is in the sight of God, and in union with Christ, that we 20 are speaking. And all this, dear friends, is to build up your characters; for I am afraid that perhaps, when I come, I may find that you are not what I want you to be, and, on the other hand, that you may find that I am what you do not want me to be. I am afraid that I may find quarrelling, jealousy, 21 ill feeling, rivalry, slandering, backbiting, self-assertion, and disorder. I am afraid that, on my next visit, my God may humble me in regard to you, and that I may have to mourn over many who have long been sinning, and have not repented of the impurity, immorality, and sensuality, in which they have indulged.
- 13 For the third time I am coming to see you. By the word of two or three 2 witnesses each statement will be established. I have said it, and I say it again before I come, just as if I were with you on my second visit, though for the moment absent, I say to those who have been long sinning, as well 3 as to all others – that if I come again, I will spare no one. And that will be the proof, which you are looking for, that the Christ speaks through me. There is no weakness in his dealings with you. No, he shows his power 4 among you. For though his crucifixion was due to weakness, his life is due to the power of God. And we, also, are weak in his weakness, but with him 5 we will live for you through the power of God. Put yourselves to the proof, to see whether you are holding to the faith. Test yourselves. Surely you recognise this fact about yourselves – that Jesus Christ is in you! Unless 6 indeed you cannot stand the test! But I hope that you will recognise that 7 we can stand the test. We pray God that you may do nothing wrong, not that we may be seen to stand the test, but that you may do what is right,

- 8 even though we may seem not to stand the test. We have no power at all
9 against the truth, but we have power in the service of the truth. We are
10 glad when we are weak, if you are strong. And what we pray for is that
you may become perfect. This is my reason for writing as I am now doing,
while I am away from you, so that, when I am with you, I may not act
harshly in the exercise of the authority which the Lord gave me – and gave
me for building up and not for pulling down.
- 11 And now, friends, goodbye. Aim at perfection; take courage; agree to-
gether; live in peace. And then God, the source of all love and peace, will
12 be with you. Greet one another with a sacred kiss. All Christ's people here
13 send you their greetings.
- 14 May the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the
communion with the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Introduction

- 1 To the churches in Galatia, from Paul, an apostle whose commission is not from any human authority and is given, not by human beings, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead; and from all the followers of the Lord here. May God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, bless you and give you peace. For Christ, to rescue us from this present wicked age, gave himself for our sins, in accordance with the will of God and Father, to whom be ascribed all glory for ever and ever. Amen.
- 6 I am astonished at your so soon deserting him, who called you through the love of Christ, for a different “good news,” which is really no good news at all. But then, I know that there are people who are harassing you, and who want to pervert the good news of the Christ. Yet even if we – or if an angel from heaven were to tell you any other “good news” than that which we told you, may he be accursed! We have said it before, and I repeat it now – If anyone tells you a “good news” other than that which you received, may he be accursed!
- 10 Is this, I ask, trying to conciliate people, or God? Am I seeking to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I should not be a servant of Christ.

The Independence of the Apostle's Gospel

- 11 I remind you, friends, that the good news which I told is no mere human invention. I, at least, did not receive it from any human being, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through a revelation made by Jesus Christ.
- 13 You heard, no doubt, of my conduct when I was devoted to Judaism – how I persecuted the church of God to an extent beyond belief, and made havoc of it, and how, in my devotion to Judaism, I surpassed many of

my contemporaries among my own people in my intense earnestness in
15 upholding the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had set me
16 apart even before my birth, and who called me by his love, saw fit to reveal
his Son in me, so that I might tell the good news of him among the Gentiles,
17 then at once, instead of consulting any human being, or even going up
to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went to Arabia,
18 and came back again to Damascus. Three years afterwards I went up to
Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter, and I stayed a fortnight with
19 him. I did not, however, see any other apostle, except James, the Master's
20 brother. (As to what I am now writing to you, I call God to witness that
21 I am speaking the truth). Afterwards I went to the districts of Syria and
22 Cilicia. But I was still unknown even by sight to the Christian churches in
23 Judea; all that they had heard was – "The man who once persecuted us
is now telling the good news of the faith of which he once made havoc."
24 And they praised God for my sake.

2 Fourteen years afterwards I went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas,
2 and I took Titus also with me. It was in obedience to a revelation that I
went; and I laid before the apostles the good news that I am proclaiming
among the Gentiles. I did this privately before those who are thought
highly of because I was afraid that I might possibly be taking, or might
3 have already taken, a course which would prove useless. Yet even my
companion, Titus, though a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised.
4 But, because of those who pretended to be followers who had stolen in, the
intruders who had crept in to spy on the liberty which we have through
5 union with Christ Jesus, in order to bring us back to slavery – Why, we
did not for a moment yield submission to them, so that the truth of the
6 good news might be yours always! Of those who are thought somewhat
highly of – what they once were makes no difference to me; God does
not recognise human distinctions – those, I say, who are thought highly
7 of added nothing to my message. On the contrary, they saw that I had
been entrusted with the good news for the Gentiles, just as Peter had
8 been for the Jews. For he who gave Peter power for his mission to the
9 Jews gave me, also, power to go to the Gentiles. Recognising the charge
entrusted to me, James, Peter, and John, who were regarded as pillars of
the church, openly acknowledged Barnabas and me as fellow workers,
10 agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. Only we
11 were to remember the poor – the thing I was myself anxious to do. But,
when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face; for he stood self-
12 condemned. Before certain persons came from James, he had been in the
habit of eating with the Gentile converts; but, when they came, he began

13 to withdraw and hold aloof, because he was afraid of offending those who
13 still held to circumcision. The rest of the Jewish converts were guilty of
14 the same hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led away by it. But, when
I saw that they were not dealing straightforwardly with the truth of the
good news, I said to Peter, before them all, 'If you, who were born a Jew,
adopt Gentile customs, instead of Jewish, why are you trying to compel
the Gentile converts to adopt Jewish customs?'

The Law and the Gospel

15 We, though we are Jews by birth and not outcasts of Gentile origin, know
that no one is pronounced righteous as the result of obedience to Law,
16 but only through faith in Christ Jesus. So we placed our faith in Christ
Jesus, in order that we might be pronounced righteous, as the result of
faith in Christ, and not of obedience to Law; for such obedience will not
17 result in even one soul's being pronounced righteous. If, while seeking to
be pronounced righteous through union with Christ, we were ourselves
seen to be outcasts, would that make Christ an agent of sin? Heaven forbid!
18 For, if I rebuild the things that I pulled down, I prove myself to have done
19 wrong. I, indeed, through Law became dead to Law, in order to live for
20 God. I have been crucified with Christ. So it is no longer I that live, but it
is Christ who lives in me; and, as for my present earthly life, I am living
21 it by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do
not reject the love of God. If righteousness comes through Law, then there
was no need for Christ to die!

3 Foolish Galatians! Who has been fascinating you – you before whose
2 eyes Jesus Christ was depicted on the cross? Here is the one thing that
I want to find out from you – Did you receive the Spirit as the result of
3 obedience to Law, or of your having listened with faith? Can you be so
foolish? After beginning with what is spiritual, do you now end with what
4 is external? Did you go through so much to no purpose? – if indeed it really
5 was to no purpose! He who supplies you abundantly with his Spirit and
endows you with such powers – does he do this as the result of obedience
6 to Law? Or as the result of your having listened with faith? It is just as it
was with Abraham –

he had faith in God, and his faith was regarded by God as right-
eousness.

- 7 You see, then, that those whose lives are based on faith are the sons of
8 Abraham. And scripture, foreseeing that God would pronounce the Gentiles righteous as the result of faith, foretold the good news to Abraham in the words –

“Through you all the Gentiles will be blessed.”

- 9 And, therefore, those whose lives are based on faith share the blessings
10 bestowed on the faith of Abraham. All who rely on obedience to Law are under a curse, for scripture says –

“Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all that is written in the book of the Law, and do it.”

- 11 Again, it is evident that no one is pronounced righteous before God through Law, for we read –

“Through faith the righteous will find life.”

- 12 But the Law is not based on faith; no, its words are –

“Those who practice these precepts will find life through them.”

- 13 Christ ransomed us from the curse pronounced in the Law, by taking the curse on himself for us, for scripture says –

“Cursed is anyone who is hanged on a tree.”

- 14 And this he did that the blessing given to Abraham might be extended to the Gentiles through their union with Jesus Christ; that so, through our faith, we also might receive the promised gift of the Spirit.

- 15 To take an illustration, friends, from daily life – No one sets aside even an agreement between two people, when once it has been confirmed, nor do they add conditions to it. Now it was to Abraham that the promises were made, “and to his offspring.” It was not said “to his offsprings,” as if many persons were meant, but the words were “to your offspring,” showing that one person was meant – and that was Christ. My point is this – An agreement already confirmed by God cannot be canceled by the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, so as to cause the promise to be set aside. If our heritage is the result of Law, then it has ceased to be the result of a promise. Yet God conferred it on Abraham by a promise.

- 19 What, then, you ask, was the use of the Law? It was a later addition, to make people conscious of their wrong-doings, and intended to last only until the coming of that offspring to whom the promise had been made; and it was delivered through angels by a mediator. Now mediation implies more than one person, but God is one only. Does that set the Law

in opposition to God's promises? Heaven forbid! For, if a Law had been given capable of bestowing life, then righteousness would have actually
22 owed its existence to Law. But the words of scripture represent the whole world as being in bondage to sin, so that the promised blessing, dependent, as it is, on faith in Jesus Christ, may be given to those who have faith in him.

23 Before the coming of faith, we were kept under the guard of the Law,
24 in bondage, awaiting the faith that was destined to be revealed. Thus the Law has proved a guide to lead us to Christ, in order that we may be
25 pronounced righteous as the result of faith. But now that faith has come we no longer need a guide.

26 For you are all sons of God, through your faith in Christ Jesus. For all
27 of you who were baptized into union with Christ clothed yourselves with
28 Christ. All distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and
29 female, have vanished; for in union with Christ Jesus you are all one. And, since you belong to Christ, it follows that you are Abraham's offspring and, under the promise, sharers in the inheritance.

4 My point is this – As long as the heir is under age, there is no difference
2 between him and a slave, though he is master of the whole estate. He is subject to the control of guardians and stewards, during the period for
3 which his father has power to appoint them. And so is it with us; when we were under age, as it were, we were slaves to the puerile teaching of this
4 world; but, when the full time came, God sent his Son – born a woman's
5 child, born subject to Law – To ransom those who were subject to Law, so that we might take our position as sons.

6 And it is because you are sons that God sent into our hearts the Spirit of
7 his Son, with the cry – "Abba, our Father." You, therefore, are no longer a slave, but a son; and, if a son, then an heir also, by God's appointment.

8 Yet formerly, in your ignorance of God, you became slaves to "gods"
9 which were no gods. But now that you have found God – or, rather, have been found by him – how is it that you are turning back to that poor and feeble puerile teaching, to which yet once again you are wanting to become
10 slaves? You are scrupulous in keeping days and months and seasons and
11 years! You make me fear that the labour which I have spent on you may have been wasted.

12 I entreat you, friends, to become like me, as I became like you. You have
13 never done me any wrong. You remember that it was owing to bodily
14 infirmity that on the first occasion I told you the good news. And as for

what must have tried you in my condition, it did not inspire you with scorn or disgust, but you welcomed me as if I had been an angel of God – or
15 Christ Jesus himself! What has become then, of your blessings? For I can bear witness that, had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes
16 and given them to me! Am I to think, then, that I have become your enemy
17 by telling you the truth? Certain people are seeking your favour, but with no honourable object. No, indeed, they want to isolate you, so that you
18 will have to seek their favour. It is always honourable to have your favour sought in an honourable cause, and not only when I am with you, my dear
19 children – you for whom I am again enduring a mother's pains, until a
20 likeness to Christ will have been formed in you. But I could wish to be with you now and speak in a different tone, for I am perplexed about you.

21 Tell me, you who want to be still subject to Law – Why don't you listen
22 to the Law? Scripture says that Abraham had two sons, one the child of
23 the slave-woman and the other the child of the free woman. But the child of
24 the slave-woman was born in the course of nature, while the child of
25 the free woman was born in fulfilment of a promise. This story may be taken as an allegory. The women stand for two Covenants. One covenant,
26 given from Mount Sinai, produces a race of slaves and is represented by Hagar (The word Hagar meaning in Arabia Mount Sinai) and it ranks with
27 the Jerusalem of today, for she and her children are in slavery. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she it is who is our mother. For scripture says

–
“Rejoice, you barren one, who does never bear,
Break into shouts, you who are never in labour,
For many are the children of her who is desolate –
aye, more than of her who has a husband.”

28 As for ourselves, friends, we, like Isaac, are children born in fulfilment
29 of a promise. Yet at that time the child born in the course of nature persecuted the child born by the power of the Spirit; and it is the same now.
30 But what does the passage of scripture say?

“Send away the slave-woman and her son; for the slave's son will not be coheir with the son of the free woman.”

31 And so, friends, we are not children of a slave, but of her who is free.

The Gospel in the Daily Life

- 5 It is for freedom that Christ set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not again be held under the yoke of slavery.
- 2 Understand that I, Paul, myself tell you that if you allow yourselves to
3 be circumcised, Christ will avail you nothing. I again declare to everyone who receives circumcision, that he binds himself to obey the whole Law.
4 You have severed yourselves from Christ – you who are seeking to be
5 pronounced righteous through Law; you have fallen away from love. For we, by the help of the Spirit, are eagerly waiting for the fulfilment of our
6 hope – that we may be pronounced righteous as the result of faith. If we are in union with Christ Jesus, neither is circumcision nor the omission of
7 it anything, but faith, working through love, is everything. You were once making good progress! Who has hindered you from obeying the truth?
8 The persuasion brought to bear on you does not come from him who calls
9 you. A little leaven leavens all the dough. I, through my union with the
10 Lord, am persuaded that you will learn to think with me. But the man who is disturbing your minds will have to bear his punishment, whoever
11 he may be. If I, friends, am still proclaiming circumcision, why am I still
12 persecuted? It seems that the cross has ceased to be an obstacle! I could even wish that the people who are unsettling you would go further still and mutilate themselves.
- 13 Remember, friends, to you the call came to give you freedom. Only do not make your freedom an opportunity for self-indulgence, but serve one
14 another in a loving spirit. Indeed, the whole Law has been summed up in this one precept –

“You must love your neighbour as you love yourself.”

- 15 But, if you are continually wounding and preying on one another, take care that you are not destroyed by one another.
16 This is what I have to say – Let your steps be guided by the Spirit, and then
17 you will never gratify the cravings of your earthly nature. For these cravings of our earthly nature conflict with the Spirit, and the Spirit with our earthly nature – they are two contrary principles – so that you cannot do what you
18 wish. But, if you follow the guidance of the Spirit, you are not subject to Law.
19 The sins of our earthly nature are unmistakable. They are sins like these –
20 sexual immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, quarrels, strife,
21 jealousy, outbursts of passion, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, feelings of envy, drunkenness, revelry, and the like. And I warn you, as I warned you

before, that those who indulge in such things will have no place in the
22 kingdom of God. But the fruit produced by the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
forbearance, kindness, generosity, trustfulness, gentleness, self-control.
23 Against such things there is no law! And those who belong to Jesus, the
24 Christ, have already crucified their earthly nature, with its passions and
its cravings.

25 Since our life is due to the Spirit, let us rule our conduct also by the Spirit.
26 Do not let us grow vain, and provoke or envy one another. My friends, even
6 if someone should be caught committing a sin, you who are spiritually
minded should, in a gentle spirit, help them to recover themselves, taking
2 care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and
3 so carry out the Law of the Christ. If a person imagines themselves to
4 be somebody, when they are really nobody, they deceive themselves. Let
everyone test their own work, and then their cause for satisfaction will be
5 in themselves and not in a comparison with their neighbour; for everyone
6 must bear their own load. The person, however, who is being instructed
in the message ought always to share their blessings with their teacher.

7 Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. What a person sows that
8 they will reap. For the person who sows the field of their earthly nature
will from that earthly nature reap corruption; while the one who sows the
9 field of the spirit will from that spirit reap eternal life. Let us never tire
of doing right, for at the proper season we will reap our harvest, if we do
10 not grow weary. Therefore, I say, as the opportunity occurs, let us treat
everyone with kindness, and especially members of the Household of the
faith.

Conclusion in the Apostle's own handwriting

11 See in what large letters I am writing with my own hand. Those who wish
12 to appear to advantage in regard to outward observances are the people
who are trying to compel you to be circumcised; and they do it only to
13 avoid being persecuted for the cross of Jesus, the Christ. Even these men
who are circumcised do not themselves keep the Law; yet they want you to
14 be circumcised, so that they may boast of your observance of the rite. But,
for my part, may I never boast of anything except the cross of Jesus Christ,
our Master, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the
15 world. For neither is circumcision nor the omission of it anything; but a
16 new nature is everything. May all who rule their conduct by this principle
find peace and mercy – they who are the Israel of God.

- 17 For the future let no one trouble me; for I bear the marks of Jesus branded on my body.
- 18 May the blessing of Jesus Christ, our Lord, rest on your souls, friends.
Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

Introduction

- 1 To Christ's people at Ephesus who are faithful to him, from Paul, an apostle
- 2 of Christ Jesus, by the will of God. May God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus
Christ bless you and give you peace.

- 3 Blessed is the God and Father of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who has blessed
- 4 us on high with every spiritual blessing, in Christ. For he chose us in our
union with Christ before the creation of the universe, so that we might be
- 5 holy and blameless in his sight, living in the spirit of love. From the first
he destined us, in his goodwill towards us, to be adopted as sons through
- 6 Jesus Christ, and so to enhance that glorious manifestation of his loving
- 7 kindness which he gave us in the one he loves; for in him, and through
the shedding of his blood, we have found redemption in the pardon of our
- 8 offences. All this accords with the loving kindness which God lavished
- 9 on us, accompanied by countless gifts of wisdom and discernment, when
he made known to us his hidden purpose. And it also accords with the
- 10 goodwill which God purposed to exhibit in Christ, in view of that divine
order which was to mark the completion of the ages, when he should make
- 11 everything, both in heaven and on earth, centre in him. In him, I say, for
by our union with him we became God's heritage, having from the first
been destined for this in the intention of him who, in all that happens, is
- 12 carrying out his own fixed purpose; that we should enhance his glory –
- 13 we who have been the first to rest our hopes on the Christ. And you, too,
by your union with him, after you had heard the message of the truth, the
good news of your salvation – you believed in him and were sealed as his
- 14 by receiving the holy Spirit, which he had promised. And the Spirit is a
pledge of our future heritage, foreshadowing the full redemption of God's
own people – to enhance his glory.

The power of God displayed in Christ, the Head of the Church

15 And therefore I, ever since I heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which
16 prevails among you, and of your confidence in all Christ's people, have
never omitted to thank God on your behalf, whenever I make mention of
17 you in my prayers. My prayer is that the God of Jesus Christ our Lord, the
all-glorious Father, may inspire you with wisdom and true insight through
18 a fuller knowledge of himself; that your minds may be so enlightened that
you may realise the hope given by God's call, the wealth of the glory of
19 his heritage among Christ's people, and the transcendent greatness of the
power which he is able to exercise in dealing with us who believe in him.
20 The same mighty power was exerted on the Christ, when he raised the
Christ from the dead and "caused him to sit at his right hand" on high,
21 exalting him above all angels and archangels of every rank, and above
every name that can be named, whether in the present age, or in the age to
22 come. And God placed all things under Christ's feet, and gave him to the
23 church as its supreme head; for the church is Christ's body, and is filled
2 by him who fills all things everywhere with his presence. You yourselves
2 were once dead because of your offences and sins. For at one time you lived
in sin, following the ways of the world, in subjection to the Ruler of the
powers of the air – the Spirit who is still at work among the disobedient.
3 And it was among them that we all once lived our lives, indulging the
cravings of our earthly nature, and carrying out the desires prompted
by that earthly nature and by our own thoughts. Our nature exposed us
4 to the divine wrath, like the rest of humanity. Yet God, in his abundant
5 compassion, and because of the great love with which he loved us, even
though we were dead because of our offences, gave life to us in giving
6 life to the Christ. (By God's loving kindness you have been saved.) And,
through our union with Christ Jesus, God raised us with him, and caused
7 us to sit with him on high, in order that, by his goodness to us in Christ
Jesus, he might display in the ages to come the boundless wealth of his
8 loving kindness. For it is by God's loving kindness that you have been
9 saved, through your faith. It is not due to yourselves; the gift is God's. It is
10 not due to obedience to Law, so that no one can boast. For we are God's
handiwork, created, by our union with Christ Jesus, for the good actions
in doing which God had pre-arranged that we should spend our lives.
11 Remember, therefore, that you were once Gentiles yourselves, as your
bodies showed; you were called "the Uncircumcised" by those who were
12 called "the Circumcised" – circumcised only by human hands! Remember
that you were at that time far from Christ; you were shut out from the

citizenship of Israel; you were strangers to the Covenants founded on
13 God's Promise; you were in the world without hope and without God. But
now, through your union with Christ Jesus, you who once were far off
14 have, by the shedding of the blood of the Christ, been brought near. He it
is who is our peace. He made the two divisions of humanity one, broke
15 down the barrier that separated them, and in his human nature put an end
to the cause of enmity between them – the Law with its injunctions and
ordinances – in order to create, through union with himself, from Jew and
16 Gentile, one new humanity and so make peace. And when, on the cross,
he had destroyed their mutual enmity, he sought by means of his cross to
17 reconcile them both to God, united in one body. He came with the good
news of peace for you who were far off, and of peace for those who were
18 near; for it is through him that we, the Jews and the Gentiles, united in
19 the one Spirit, are now able to approach the Father. It follows, then, that
you are no longer strangers and aliens, but are fellow citizens with Christ's
20 people and members of God's Household. You have been built up on the
foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being
21 the corner-stone. United in him, every part of the building, closely joined
together, will grow into a Temple, consecrated by its union with the Lord.
22 And, through union in him, you also are being built up together, to be a
place where God lives through the Spirit.

The Apostle's Divine Commission to the Gentiles

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus, the Christ, for the sake of you
2 Gentiles – For you have heard, I suppose, of the responsible charge with
3 which God entrusted me for your benefit, and also that it was by direct
revelation that the hidden purpose of God was made known to me, as I
4 have already briefly told you. And, by reading what I have written, you
will be able to judge how far I understand this hidden purpose of God
5 in Christ. In former generations it was not made known to humanity, as
fully as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and prophets
6 among Christ's people – That, by union with Christ Jesus and through the
good news, the Gentiles are coheirs with us and members of one body,
7 and that they share with us in God's Promise. Of this good news I become
an assistant, in virtue of the charge with which God entrusted me in the
8 exercise of his power – Yes, to me, who am less than the least of all Christ's
people, was this charge entrusted! – to tell the Gentiles the good news of
9 the boundless wealth to be found in the Christ, and to make clear what is

God's way of working out that hidden purpose which from the first has
10 been concealed in the mind of the Creator of all things; so that now to the
archangels and to all the powers on high should be made known, through
11 the church, the all-embracing wisdom of God, in accordance with that pur-
pose which runs through all the ages and which he has now accomplished
12 in Jesus, the Christ, our Master. And in union with him, and through our
13 trust in him, we find courage to approach God with confidence. Therefore
I beg you not to be disheartened at the sufferings that I am undergoing for
14 your sakes; for they redound to your honour. For this reason, then, I kneel
15 before the Father – from whom all "fatherhood" in heaven and on earth
16 derives its name – And pray that, in proportion to the wealth of his glory,
he will strengthen you with his power by breathing his Spirit into your
17 inmost soul, so that the Christ, through your faith, may make his home
within your hearts in love; And I pray that you, now firmly rooted and es-
18 tablished, may, with all Christ's people, have the power to comprehend in
19 all its width and length and height and depth, and to understand – though
it surpasses all understanding – the love of the Christ; and so be filled to
the full with God himself.

20 To him who, through his power which is at work within us, is able to do
21 far more than anything that we can ask or conceive – To him be all glory
through the church and through Christ Jesus, for all generations, age after
age. Amen.

The Gospel and Daily Life

4 I beg you, then – I who am a prisoner in the Master's cause – to live lives
2 worthy of the call that you have received; always humble and gentle, pa-
3 tient, bearing lovingly with one another, and striving to maintain in the
4 bond of peace the unity given by the Spirit. There is but one body and one
Spirit, just as there was but one hope set before you when you received
5 your call. There is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is but one
6 God and Father of all – the God who is over all, pervades all, and is in all.
7 Everyone of us, however, has been entrusted with some charge, each in
8 accordance with the extent of the gift of the Christ. That is why it is said –

"When he went up on high, he led his captives into captivity. And
gave gifts to humanity."

9 Now surely this “going up” must imply that he had already gone
10 down into the world beneath. He who went down is the same as he who
went up – up beyond the highest heaven, so that he might fill all things
11 with his presence. And he it is who gave to the church apostles, prophets,
12 missionaries, pastors, and teachers, to fit his people for the work of the
13 ministry, for the building up of the body of the Christ. And this will
continue, until we all attain to that unity which is given by faith and by
a fuller knowledge of the Son of God; until we reach maturity – the full
14 standard of the perfection of the Christ. Then we will no longer be like
infants, tossed backward and forward, blown about by every breath of
15 human teaching and by people’s trickery and craftiness; but holding the
truth in a spirit of love, we will grow into complete union with him who
16 is our head – Christ himself. For from him the whole body, closely joined
and knit together by the contact of every part with the source of its life,
derives its power to grow, in proportion to the vigour of each individual
part; and so is being built up in a spirit of love.

17 This, then, as one in union with the Lord, I implore: Do not continue
18 to live such purposeless lives as the Gentiles live, with their powers of
discernment darkened, cut off from the life of God, owing to the ignorance
19 that prevails among them and to the hardness of their hearts. Lost to all
sense of shame, they have abandoned themselves to licentiousness, in order
20 to practice every kind of impurity without restraint. But far different is the
lesson you learned from the Christ – if, that is, you really listened to him,
21 and through union with him were taught the truth, as it is to be found
22 in Jesus. For you learned with regard to your former way of living that
you must cast off your old nature, which, yielding to deluding passions,
23 grows corrupt; that the spirit of your minds must be constantly renewed;
24 and that you must clothe yourselves in that new nature which was created
to resemble God, with the righteousness and holiness springing from the
truth.

25 Since, therefore, you have cast off what is false, you must every one of
you speak the truth to your neighbours. For we are united to one another
26 like the parts of a body. Be angry, yet do not sin. Do not let the sun go
down on your anger; and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the person
28 who steals steal no longer, but rather they should toil with their hands at
honest work, so that they may have something to share with anyone in
29 need. Never let any foul word pass your lips, but only such good words as
the occasion demands, so that they may be a help to those who hear them.
30 And do not grieve God’s Holy Spirit; for it was through that Spirit that

- 31 God sealed you as his, against the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, passion, anger, brawling, and abusive language be banished from among
32 you, as well as all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, ready to
5 forgive one another, just as God, in Christ, forgave you. Therefore imitate
2 God, as his dear children, and live a life of love, following the example of
the Christ, who loved you and gave himself for you as an offering and a
sacrifice to God, that should be fragrant and acceptable.
- 3 As for sexual immorality and every kind of impurity, or greed, do not
4 let them even be mentioned among you, as befits Christ's people, nor
shameful conduct, nor foolish talk or jesting, for they are wholly out of
5 place among you; but rather thanksgiving. For of this you may be sure –
that no one who is unchaste or impure or greedy of gain (for to be greedy
of gain is idolatry) has any place awaiting him in the kingdom of the Christ
and God.
- 6 Do not let anyone deceive you with specious arguments. Those are the
7 sins that bring down the wrath of God on the disobedient. Therefore have
8 nothing to do with such people. For, although you were once in darkness,
now, by your union with the Lord, you are in the light. Live as children
9 of light – for the outcome of life in the light may be seen in every form of
10 goodness, righteousness, and sincerity – always trying to find out what
11 is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in deeds of darkness, from which
12 no good can come; on the contrary, expose them. It is degrading even to
13 speak of the things continually done by them in secret. All such actions,
14 when exposed, have their true character made manifest by the light. For
everything that has its true character made manifest is clear as light. And
that is why it is said –

“Sleeper, awake!
Arise from the dead,
And the Christ will give you light!”

- 15 Take great care, then, how you live – not unwisely but wisely, making
16 the most of every opportunity; for these are evil days. Therefore do not
17 grow thoughtless, but try to understand what the Lord's will is. Do not
18 drink wine to excess, for that leads to profligacy; but seek to be filled with
the Spirit of God, and speak to one another in psalms and hymns and
19 sacred songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord. Always
20 give thanks for everything to our God and Father, in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ.
- 21 Submit to one another because you honour and respect Christ.

22 Wives should submit to their husbands as submitting to the Lord. For
23 a man is the head of his wife, as the Christ is the head of the church –
24 being indeed himself the Saviour of his body. But as the church submits to
the Christ, so also should wives submit to their husbands in everything.
25 Husbands, love your wives, just as the Christ loved the church, and gave
26 himself for her, to make her holy, after purifying her by the washing with
27 the water, according to his promise; so that he might himself bring the
church, in all her beauty, into his own presence, with no spot or wrinkle or
28 blemish of any kind, but that she might be holy and faultless. That is how
husbands ought to love their wives – as if they were their own bodies. A
29 man who loves his wife is really loving himself; for no one ever yet hated
his own body. But everyone feeds his body and cares for it, just as the
30 Christ for the church; for we are members of his body.

31 For this cause a man will leave his father and mother, and be united
to his wife; and the man and his wife will become one.

32 In this there is a profound truth – I am speaking of Christ and his
33 church. However, for you individually, let each love his wife as if she
were himself; and the wife be careful to respect her husband.

6 Children, obey your parents, as children of the Lord; for that is but right.
2 “Honour your father and mother” – this is the first Commandment with a
3 promise – “so that you may prosper and have a long life on earth.” And
4 fathers, do not irritate your children, but bring them up with Christian
discipline and instruction.

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters, with anxious care, giving them un-
6 grudging service, as if obeying the Christ; not only when their eyes are
7 on you, as if you had merely to please people, but as slaves of Christ, who
8 are trying to carry out the will of God. Give your service heartily and
cheerfully, as working for the Master and not for people; for you know
9 that everyone will be rewarded by the Master for any honest work that he
has done, whether he is a slave or free. And masters, treat your slaves in
the same spirit. Give up threatening them; for you know that he who is
both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that before him there is no
distinction of rank.

10 For the future, find strength in your union with the Lord, and in the
11 power which comes from his might. Put on the full armour of God, so that
you may be able to stand your ground against the stratagems of the devil.
12 For ours is no struggle against enemies of flesh and blood, but against
all the various powers of evil that hold sway in the darkness around us,
13 against the spirits of wickedness on high. Therefore take up the full armour

of God, so that when the evil day comes, you may be able to withstand
14 the attack, and, having fought to the end, still to stand your ground. Stand
your ground, then, with truth for your belt, and with righteousness for
15 your breast-plate, and with the readiness to serve the good news of peace
16 as shoes for your feet. At every onslaught take up faith for your shield;
for with it you will be able to extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil
17 one. And receive the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit –
18 which is the message of God – always with prayer and supplication. Pray
in spirit at all times. Be intent on this, with unwearying perseverance and
19 supplication for all Christ's people – and on my behalf also, so that when
I begin to speak, words may be given me, so that I may fearlessly make
20 known the inmost truth of the good news, on behalf of which I am an
ambassador – in chains! Pray that, in telling it, I may speak fearlessly as I
ought.

Conclusion

21 To enable you, as well as others, to know all that concerns me and what
I am doing, Tychicus, our dear friend and faithful helper in the Master's
22 cause, will tell you everything. I am sending him to you on purpose that
you may learn all about us, and that he may cheer your hearts.

23 May God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ give every follower peace,
24 and love linked with faith. May God's blessing be with all who love our
Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

1 To all Christ's people at Philippi, with the supervisors and assistants,
2 from Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus. May God, our Father, and
3 the Lord Jesus Christ bless you, and give you peace. Every recollection that
4 I have of you is a cause of thankfulness to God, always, in every prayer
5 that I offer for you all – my prayers are full of joy – Because of the share
that you have had in spreading the good news, from the first day that
6 you received it until now. For of this I am confident, that he who began a
good work in you will complete it in readiness for the day of Jesus Christ.
7 And, indeed, I am justified in feeling like this about you all; because you
have a warm place in my heart – you who all, both in my imprisonment
and in the work of defending and establishing the good news, shared my
8 privilege with me. God will bear me witness how I yearn over you all with
9 the tenderness of Christ Jesus. And what I pray for is this – that your love
may grow yet stronger and stronger, with increasing knowledge and all
10 discernment, until you are able to appreciate all moral distinctions. And
I pray, too, that you may be kept pure and blameless against the day of
11 Christ, bearing a rich harvest of that righteousness which comes through
Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

12 Friends, I want you to realise that what has happened to me has actually
13 served to forward the good news. It has even become evident, not only
to all the imperial guard, but to everyone else, that it is for Christ's sake
14 that I am in chains. And besides this, most of our fellow followers have
gained confidence in the Lord through my chains, and now venture with
15 far greater freedom to speak of God's message fearlessly. It is true that
some do proclaim the Christ out of Jealousy and opposition; but there are
16 others who proclaim him from goodwill. The latter do it from love for
me, knowing that I have been appointed to plead the cause of the good
17 news. The former spread the news of the Christ in a factious spirit, and not
18 sincerely, thinking to add to the pain of my chains. But what of that? Only
that in some way or other, either with assumed or with real earnestness,
19 Christ is being made known; and at that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, for
I know that, through your prayers and through a rich supply of the Spirit
20 of Jesus Christ, all this will make for my salvation. And this will fulfil my
earnest expectation and hope that I will have no cause for shame, but that,
with unfailing courage, now as hitherto, Christ will be honoured in my

21 body, whether by my life or by my death, for to me life is Christ, and death
22 is gain. But what if the life here in the body – if this brings me fruit from my
labours? Then which to choose I cannot tell! I am sorely perplexed either
23 way! My own desire is to depart and be with Christ, for this would be far
24 better. But, for your sakes, it may be more needful that I should still remain
25 here in the body. Yes, I am confident that this is so, and therefore I am sure
that I will stay, and stay near you all, to promote your progress and joy in
26 the faith; so that, when you once more have me among you, you, in your
27 union with Christ Jesus, may find in me fresh cause for exultation. Under
all circumstances let your lives be worthy of the good news of the Christ:
so that, whether I come and see you, or whether I hear of your affairs at a
distance, I may know that you are standing firm, animated by one spirit,
and joining with one heart in a common struggle for the faith taught by
28 the good news, without ever shrinking from your opponents. To them this
will be a sign of their destruction and of your salvation – a sign from God.
29 For, on behalf of Christ, you have had the privilege granted you, not only
30 of trusting in him, but also of suffering on his behalf. You will be engaged
in the same hard struggle as that which you once saw me waging, and
which you hear that I am waging still.

2 If, then, any encouragement comes through union with Christ, if there
is any persuasive power in love, if there is any communion with the Spirit,
2 if there is any tenderness or pity, I entreat you to make my happiness
complete – Live together animated by the same spirit and in mutual love,
3 one in heart, animated by one Spirit. Nothing should be done out of selfish
ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility lift others up above yourselves,
4 considering not only your own interests but also the interests of others. Let
5 the spirit of Christ Jesus be yours also. Though the divine nature was his
6 from the beginning, yet he did not look on equality with God as above all
7 things to be clung to, but impoverished himself by taking the nature of a
8 servant and becoming like one of us; he appeared among us as a man, and
still further humbled himself by submitting even to death – to death on a
9 cross! And that is why God raised him to the very highest place, and gave
10 him the name which stands above all other names, so that in adoration of
the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven, on earth, and under
11 the earth, and that every tongue should acknowledge JESUS CHRIST as
12 LORD – to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my dear friends, as you
have always been obedient in the past, so now work out your own salvation
with anxious care, not only when I am with you, but all the more now that I
13 am absent. Remember it is God who, in his kindness, is at work within you,
14 enabling you both to will and to work. In all that you do, avoid murmuring

15 and dissension, so as to prove yourselves blameless and innocent – faultless children of God, in the midst of an evil-disposed and perverse generation,
16 in which you are seen shining like stars in a dark world, offering to them the message of life; and then I will be able at the day of Christ to boast
17 that I did not run my course for nothing, or toil for nothing. And yet, even if, when your faith is offered as a sacrifice to God, my lifeblood must be
18 poured out in addition, still I will rejoice and share the joy of you all; and
19 you must also rejoice and share my joy. I hope, however, as one who trusts
20 in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you before long, so that I may myself
21 be cheered by receiving news of you. For I have no one but him to send – no one of kindred spirit who would take the same genuine interest in
22 your welfare. They are all pursuing their own aims and not those of Christ
23 Jesus. But you know what Timothy has proved himself to be, and how, like
24 a child working for his father, he worked hard with me in spreading the
25 good news. It is Timothy, then, whom I hope to send, as soon as ever I can
foresee how it will go with me. And I am confident, as one who trusts in
the Lord Jesus, that before long I myself will follow. Still I think it necessary
to send Epaphroditus to you now, for he is my dear friend, fellow worker,
and fellow soldier, and he was also your messenger to help me in my need.
26 For he has been longing to see you all, and has been distressed because
27 you heard of his illness. And I can assure you that his illness very nearly
proved fatal. But God had pity on him, and not on him only but also on
28 me, so that I might not have sorrow on sorrow. I am all the more ready,
therefore, to send him, so that the sight of him may revive your spirits and
29 my own sorrow be lightened. Give him, then, the heartiest of Christian
30 welcomes, and hold such people in great honour. For it was owing to his
devotion to the Master's work that he was at the point of death, having
risked his own life in the effort to supply what was wanting in the help
that you sent me.

3 In conclusion, my friends, all joy be yours in your union with the Lord.
To repeat what I have already written does not weary me, and is the safe
2 course for you. Beware of those dogs! Beware of those mischievous work-
3 ers! Beware of the men who mutilate themselves! For it is we who are the
circumcised – we whose worship is prompted by the Spirit of God, who
4 exult in Christ Jesus, and who do not rely on external privileges; though
I, if anyone, have cause to rely even on them. If anyone thinks he can rely
5 on external privileges, far more can I! I was circumcised when eight days
old; I am an Israelite by birth, and of the tribe of Benjamin; I am a Hebrew,
6 and the child of Hebrews. As to the Law, I was a Pharisee; as to zeal, I was
a persecutor of the church; as to such righteousness as is due to Law, I

7 proved myself blameless. But all the things which I once held to be gains
 8 I have now, for the Christ's sake, come to count as loss. More than that, I
 count everything as loss, for the sake of the exceeding value of the knowl-
 edge of Christ Jesus my Lord. And for his sake I have lost everything, and
 9 count it as refuse, if I may but gain Christ and be found in union with
 him; any righteousness that I have being, not the righteousness that results
 from Law, but the righteousness which comes through faith in Christ – the
 10 righteousness which is derived from God and is founded on faith. Then
 indeed I will know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and all that
 11 it means to share his sufferings, in the hope that, if I become like him in
 12 death, I may possibly attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I
 have already laid hold of it, or that I am already made perfect. But I press
 on, in the hope of actually laying hold of that for which indeed I was laid
 13 hold of by Christ Jesus. For I, friends, do not regard myself as having yet
 laid hold of it. But this one thing I do – forgetting what lies behind, and
 14 straining every nerve for that which lies in front, I press on to the goal, to
 gain the prize of that heavenward call which God gave me through Christ
 15 Jesus. Let all of us, then, whose faith is mature, think this way. Then, if
 on any matter you think otherwise, God will make that also plain to you.
 16 Only we are bound to order our lives by what we have already attained.

17 My friends, unite in following my example, and fix your eyes on those
 18 who are living by the pattern which we have set you. For there are many
 – of whom I have often told you, and now tell you even with tears – who
 19 are living in enmity to the cross of the Christ. The end of such people is
 20 ruin; for their appetites are their God, and they glory in their shame; their
 21 minds are given up to earthly things. But we are citizens of heaven, and
 from heaven we expect a saviour to come, the Lord Jesus Christ. By the
 exercise of his power to bring everything into subjection to himself, he will
 make our humble bodies like his glorious body.

4 So then, my dear friends, whom I am longing to see – you who are my
 2 joy and my crown, stand fast in union with the Lord, dear friends. I entreat
 Euodia, and I entreat Syntyche, to live in harmony, in union with the Lord;
 3 yes, and I ask you, my true comrade, to help them, remembering that they
 toiled by my side in spreading the good news; and so, too, did Clement
 4 and my other fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. All joy
 be yours at all times in your union with the Lord. Again I repeat – All
 5 joy be yours. Let your forbearing spirit be plain to everyone. The Lord is
 6 near. Do not be anxious about anything; but under all circumstances, by
 prayer and entreaty joined with thanksgiving, make your needs known to
 7 God. Then the peace of God, which is beyond all human understanding,

will stand guard over your hearts and thoughts, through your union with Christ Jesus.

8 In conclusion, friends, whenever you find things that are true or honourable, righteous or pure, loveable or praiseworthy, or if virtue and honour have any meaning, let them fill your thoughts. All that you learned and received and heard and saw in me put into practice continually; and 10 then God, the giver of peace, will be with you. It was a matter of great joy to me, as one in union with the Lord, that at length your interest in me had revived. The interest indeed you had, but not the opportunity. Do not think that I am saying this under the pressure of want. For I, however I am placed, have learned to be independent of circumstances. I know how to face humble circumstances, and I know how to face prosperity. Into all and every human experience I have been initiated – into plenty and hunger, 13 into prosperity and want. I can do everything in the strength of him who makes me strong! Yet you have acted nobly in sharing my troubles. And 14 you at Philippi know, as well as I, that in the early days of the good news – at the time when I had just left Macedonia – no church, with the one exception of yourselves, had anything to do with me as far as giving and 16 receiving are concerned. Indeed, even while I was still in Thessalonica, you 17 sent more than once to relieve my wants. It is not that I am anxious for your gifts, but I am anxious to see the abundant return that will be placed 18 to your account. I have enough of everything, and to spare. My wants are fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts which you sent me – the sweet fragrance of a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to 19 God. And my God, out of the greatness of his wealth, will, in glory, fully 20 satisfy your every need, through your union with Christ Jesus. To him, our 21 God and Father, be ascribed all glory for every and ever. Amen. Give my greeting to everyone of the people of Christ Jesus. The Lord's followers 22 who are with me send your their greetings. All Christ's people here, and especially those who belong to the Emperor's household, send theirs.

23 May the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ rest on your souls.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

Introduction

- 1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, and from Timothy,
2 also a follower of the Lord. To Christ's people at Colossae – the followers
who are faithful to him: May God, our Father, bless you and give you peace.
- 3 Whenever we pray we never fail to thank God, the Father of our Lord
4 Jesus Christ, for you, now that we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus
5 and of the love that you have for all his people, because of the hope which
is kept safe for you in heaven. Of this hope you heard long ago in the true
6 message of the good news which reached you, bearing fruit and growing,
as it does, through all the world, just as it did among you from the very
7 day that you heard of God's loving kindness, and understood what that
loving kindness really is. It is just what you learned from Epaphras, our
8 dear fellow servant, who, as a minister of the Christ, faithfully represents
us, and who told us of the love with which the Spirit has inspired you.
9 And therefore we, from the very day that we heard this, have never
ceased praying for you, or asking that you may be filled with the knowledge
of the will of God, which comes through all true spiritual wisdom and
10 insight. Then you will live lives worthy of the Master, and so please God
in every way. Your lives will be fruitful in every kind of good action, and
11 grow into a fuller knowledge of God; you will be made strong at all points
with a strength worthy of the power manifested in his glory – strong to
endure with patience, and even with gladness, whatever may happen to
12 you; and you will give thanks to the Father who made you fit to share the
lot which awaits Christ's people in the realms of light.

The Person and Work of the Christ

- 13 For God has rescued us from the tyranny of darkness, and has removed
14 us into the kingdom of his Son, who is the embodiment of his love, and
through whom we have found deliverance in the forgiveness of our sins.

15 For Christ is the incarnation of the invisible God – first-born and head
16 of all creation; for in him was created all that is in heaven and on earth,
the visible and the invisible – angels and archangels and all the powers of
17 heaven. All has been created through him and for him. He was before all
18 things, and all things unite in him; and he is the head of the church, which
is his body. The first-born from the dead, he is to the church the Source of
19 its life, that he, in all things, may stand first. For it pleased the Father that
20 in him the divine nature in all its fulness should live, and through him to
reconcile all things to himself (making peace by the shedding of Christ's
21 blood offered on the cross) – whether on earth or in heaven. And it pleased
God that you, once estranged from him and hostile towards him in your
22 thoughts, intent only on wickedness – But now he has reconciled you to
himself by the sacrifice of Christ's earthly body in death – it has pleased
23 God that you should stand in his presence holy, pure, and blameless, if
only you remain true to your faith, firm and immovable, never abandoning
the hope held out in the good news to which you listened, which has been
proclaimed among all created things under heaven, and of which I, Paul,
was made an assistant.

24 Now at last I can rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and in my own
person I supplement the afflictions endured by the Christ, for the sake of his
25 body, the church; of which I myself became a minister in virtue of the office
with which God entrusted me for your benefit, to declare the message of
26 God in all its fulness – That truth which has been hidden from former ages
27 and generations. But now it has been revealed to God's people, to whom
it was his pleasure to make known the surpassing glory of that hidden
truth when proclaimed among the Gentiles – "Christ among you! Your
28 hope of glory!" This is the Christ whom we proclaim, warning everyone,
and instructing everyone, with all the wisdom that we possess, in the hope
of bringing everyone into God's presence perfected by union with Christ.
29 It is for that I toil, struggling with all the energy which he inspires and
2 which works powerfully within me. I want you to know in how great a
struggle I am engaged for you and for Christ's people at Laodicea, and
2 for all who have not yet seen me; in the hope that they, being bound to
one another by love, and keeping in view the full blessedness of a firm
3 conviction, may be encouraged to strive for a perfect knowledge of God's
4 hidden truth, even Christ himself, in whom all treasures of wisdom and
5 knowledge lie hidden. I say this to prevent anyone from deceiving you by
plausible arguments. It is true that I am not with you in person, but I am

with you in spirit, and am glad to see the good order and the unbroken front resulting from your faith in Christ.

6 Since, therefore, you have received Jesus, the Christ, as your Lord, live
7 your lives in union with him – rooted in him, building up your characters
8 through union with him, growing stronger through your faith, as you
9 were taught, overflowing with faith and thanksgiving. Take care there is
10 not someone who will carry you away by his “philosophy” – a hollow
11 sham! – following, as it does, mere human traditions, and dealing with
12 puerile questions of this world, and not with Christ. For in Christ the
13 Godhead in all its fulness dwells incarnate; and, by your union with him,
14 you also are filled with it. He is the head of all archangels and powers of
15 heaven. By your union with him you received a circumcision that was not
16 performed by human hands, when you threw off the tyranny of the earthly
17 body, and received the circumcision of the Christ. For in baptism you were
18 buried with Christ; and in baptism you were also raised to life with him,
19 through your faith in the omnipotence of God, who raised him from the
20 dead. And to you, who once were dead, by reason of your sins and your
21 uncircumcised nature – to you God gave life in giving life to Christ! He
22 pardoned all our sins! He canceled the bond which stood against us – the
23 bond that consisted of ordinances – and which was directly hostile to us!
He has taken it out of our way by nailing it to the cross! He rid himself
of all the powers of evil, and held them up to open contempt, when he
celebrated his triumph over them on the cross!

16 Do not, then, allow anyone to take you to task on questions of eating or
17 drinking, or in the matter of annual or monthly or weekly festivals. These
things are only the shadow of what is to come; the substance is in the Christ.
18 Do not let anyone defraud you of the reality by affecting delight in so-called
“humility” and angel-worship. Such a person busies themselves with their
visions, and without reason are rendered conceited by their merely human
19 intellect. They fail to maintain union with the head, to whom it is due that
the whole body, nourished and knit together by the contact and connexion
of every part, grows with a divine growth.

20 Since, with Christ, you became dead to the puerile teaching of this world,
21 why do you submit, as if you still belonged to the world, to such ordinances
22 as “Do not handle, or taste, or touch”? For all the things referred to in them
cease to exist when used. You are following mere human directions and
23 instructions. Such prohibitions appear reasonable where there is a desire
for self-imposed service, and so-called “humility,” and harsh treatment

of the body, but are of no real value against the indulgence of our earthly
3 nature. Since, therefore, you were raised to life with the Christ, seek for
the things that are above; for it is there that the Christ is seated at the right
2 hand of God. Fix your thoughts on the things that are above, not on those
3 that are on earth. For you died, and your life now lies hidden, with the
4 Christ, in God. When the Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also
will appear with him in glory.

The Gospel in the Daily Life

5 Therefore destroy all that is earthly in you – immorality, uncleanness, pas-
6 sions, evil desires, and that greed which is idolatry. These are the things
7 because of which the wrath of God comes, and to which you, like others,
8 once devoted your lives, when you lived for them. You, however, must now
9 lay aside all such things – anger, passion, malice, slander, abuse. Never lie
10 to one another. Get rid of your old self and its habits, and clothe yourselves
with that new self, which, as it gains in knowledge, is being constantly
11 renewed in resemblance to him who made it. In that new life there is
no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all! – and in all!

12 Therefore, as God's people, consecrated and dear to him, clothe your-
13 selves with tenderness of heart, kindliness, humility, gentleness, forbear-
ance; bearing with one another, and, when there is any ground for com-
plaint, forgiving one another freely. As the Master freely forgave you, so
14 you must forgive one another. Over all these virtues put on love; for that
15 is the belt which makes all complete. Let the peace that the Christ gives
decide all doubts within your hearts; for you also were called to the enjoy-
16 ment of peace as members of one body. And show yourselves thankful. Let
the message of the Christ be alive in your minds in all its wealth, bringing
all wisdom with it. Teach and admonish one another with psalms, and
hymns, and sacred songs, full of the loving kindness of God, lifting your
17 hearts in song to him. And, whatever you say or do, do everything in the
name of the Lord Jesus; and through him offer thanksgiving to God the
father.

18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as befits those who belong to the Lord.
19 Husbands, love your wives, and never treat them harshly. Children, always
20 obey your parents; for that is pleasant to see in those who belong to the
21 Lord. Fathers, never irritate your children, otherwise they might become

- 22 disheartened. Slaves, always obey your earthly masters, not only when
23 their eyes are on you, as if you had but to please people alone, but giving
24 them ungrudging service, in your respect for the Master. Whatever you
25 do, do it with all your heart, as if working for the Master and not for
4 people, since you know that it is from the Master that you will receive the
inheritance which will be your reward. You are serving Christ, the Master.
Those who do wrong will reap the wrong they have done; and there will
4 be no partiality. Masters, do what is right and fair by your slaves, for you
know that you also have a Master – in heaven.
- 2 Devote yourselves to prayer. Give your whole mind to it, and also offer
3 thanksgiving; and at the same time pray for us, so that God may give us
4 an opening for our message, so that we may speak of the truths hidden
5 in the Christ – the truths for which I am in chains! Then I will make them
6 known, as I ought to do. Show tact in your behaviour to the outside world,
making the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation always be
kindly, but not bland, season it, as it were, with salt; be aware in each case
of the answer you should be giving.

Conclusion

- 7 Our dear friend, Tychicus, will tell you all about me. He is a faithful minis-
8 ter, and a fellow servant in the Master's cause. I send him to you expressly
9 that you may learn our circumstances, and that he may give you encour-
agement. With him will be Onesimus, our dear faithful friend, who is one
of yourselves. They will tell you all that is going on here.
- 10 My fellow prisoner, Aristarchus, sends you his greeting, and Barnabas's
cousin, Mark, sends his. (You have received directions about him. If he
11 comes to you, make him welcome.) Joshua, who is called Justus, also sends
his greeting. These are the only converts from Judaism who have worked
with me for the kingdom of God; I have found them a great comfort. Epa-
12 phras, who is one of yourselves, sends you his greeting. He is a servant
of Christ Jesus, and is always most earnest in your behalf in his prayers,
praying that you may stand firm, with a matured faith and with a sure con-
13 viction of all that is in accordance with God's will. I can bear testimony to
the deep interest he takes in you, as well as in the followers at Laodicea and
14 at Hierapolis. Luke, our dear doctor, sends you his greeting, and Demas
15 sends his. Give my greeting to the followers at Laodicea, and to Nymphe,

- 16 and to the church that meets at her house. And when this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read before the church at Laodicea, and that
- 17 you yourselves read the letter which will be forwarded from there. Give this message to Archippus – “Take care to discharge to the best of your ability the office to which you were appointed in the Master’s cause.”
- 18 I, Paul, add this greeting in my own handwriting. Remember these chains of mine. God’s blessing be with you.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Introduction

- 1 To the Thessalonian church in union with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. May God bless you and give you peace.

The Apostle and his Converts

- 2 We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all; recalling continually before our God and Father the efforts that have resulted from your faith, the toil prompted by your love, and the patient endurance sustained by your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Friends, whom God loves, we know that he has chosen you, because the good news that we brought came home to you, not merely as so many words, but with a power and a fulness of conviction due to the Holy Spirit. For you know the life that we lived among you for your good. And you yourselves began to follow, not only our example, but the Master's also; and, in spite of much suffering, you welcomed the message with a joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, and so became a pattern to all who believed in Christ throughout Macedonia and Greece. For it was from you that the Lord's message resounded throughout Macedonia and Greece; and, more than that, your faith in God has become known far and wide; so that there is no need for us to say another word.
- 9 Indeed, in speaking about us, the people themselves tell of the reception you gave us, and how, turning to God from your idols, you became servants of the true and living God, and are now awaiting the return from heaven of his Son whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, our deliverer from the coming wrath.
- 2 Yes, friends, you yourselves know that your reception of us was not without result. For, although we had experienced suffering and ill treatment,

as you know, at Philippi, we had the courage, by the help of our God, to
3 tell you God's good news in spite of great opposition. Our appeal to you
was not based on a delusion, nor was it made from unworthy motives, or
4 with any intention of misleading you. But, having been found worthy by
God to be entrusted with the good news, therefore we tell it; with a view to
5 please, not people, but God who proves our hearts. Never at any time, as
you know, did we use the language of flattery, or make false professions in
6 order to hide selfish aims. God will bear witness to that. Nor did we seek
to win honour from people, whether from you or from others, although,
7 as apostles of Christ, we might have burdened you with our support. But
we lived among you with the simplicity of a child; we were like a woman
8 nursing her own children. In our strong affection for you, that seemed to
us the best way of sharing with you, not only God's good news, but our
9 lives as well – so dear had you become to us. You will not have forgotten,
friends, our labour and toil. Night and day we used to work at our trades,
so as not to be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you God's
10 good news. You will bear witness, and God also, that our relations with
you who believed in Christ were pure, and upright, and beyond reproach.
11 Indeed, you know that, like a father with his own children, we used to
12 encourage and comfort every one of you, and solemnly plead with you; so
that you should make your daily lives worthy of God who is calling you
into the glory of his kingdom.

13 This, too, is a reason why we, on our part, are continually thanking God
– because, in receiving the teaching that you had from us, you accepted
it, not as the teaching of humans, but as what it really is – the teaching of
God, which is even now doing its work within you who believe in Christ.
14 For you, friends, began to follow the example of the churches of God in
Judea which are in union with Jesus Christ; you, in your turn, suffering
at the hands of your fellow citizens, in the same way as those churches
15 did at the hands of their people – who killed both the Lord Jesus and the
prophets, and persecuted us also. They do not try to please God, and they
16 are enemies to all humanity, for they try to prevent us from speaking to
the Gentiles with a view to their salvation, and so are always filling up the
measure of their iniquity. But the wrath of God has come upon them to
the full!
17 As for ourselves, friends, our having been bereaved of you even for a
short time – though in body only, and not in spirit – made us all the more
eager to see your faces again; and the longing to do so was strong on us.
18 That was why we made up our minds to go and see you – at least I, Paul,

19 did, more than once – but Satan put difficulties in our way. For what hope or joy will be ours, or what crown will we have to boast of, in the presence 20 of our Lord Jesus, at his coming, if it isn't you? You are our pride and our delight!

3 And so, as we could bear it no longer, we made up our minds to remain 2 behind alone at Athens, and sent Timothy, our dear friend and God's minister of the good news of the Christ, to strengthen you, and to encourage 3 you in your faith, so that none of you should be shaken by the troubles through which you are passing. You yourselves know that we are destined 4 to meet with such things. For, even while we were with you, we warned you beforehand that we were certain to encounter trouble. And so it proved, as 5 you know. Therefore, since I could no longer endure the uncertainty, I sent to make inquiries about your faith, fearing that the Tempter had tempted 6 you, and that our toil might prove to have been in vain. But, when Timothy recently returned to us from you with good news of your faith and love, and told us how kindly you think of us – always longing, he said, to see 7 us, just as we are longing to see you – on hearing this, we felt encouraged about you, friends, in the midst of all our difficulties and troubles, by your 8 faith. For it is new life to us to know that you are holding fast to the Lord. 9 How can we thank God enough for all the happiness that you are giving 10 us in the sight of our God? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face, and make good any deficiency in your faith.

11 May our God and Father himself, and Jesus, our Lord, make the way 12 plain for us to come to you. And for you, may the Lord fill you to overflowing with love for one another and for everyone, just as we are filled with 13 love for you; and so make your hearts strong, and your lives pure beyond reproach, in the sight of our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus, with all his Holy Ones.

Advice on Daily Life

4 Further, friends, we beg and urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus to carry out more fully than ever – as indeed you are already doing – all that you have heard from us as to what your daily life must be, if it is to please 2 God. For you have not forgotten the directions that we gave you on the authority of our Lord Jesus. 3 For this is God's purpose – that you should be pure; abstaining from all 4 immorality; each of you learning to gain control over your own body, in 5 a way that is holy and honourable, and not for the mere gratification of

6 your passions, like the Gentiles who know nothing of God; none of you overreaching or taking advantage of their fellow follower of the Lord in such matters. The Lord takes vengeance on all who do such things, as we
7 have already warned you and solemnly declared. For God's call to us does
8 not permit of an impure life, but demands purity. Therefore the person who disregards this warning disregards, not people, but God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

9 As to love for each other there is no need to write to you; for you have
10 yourselves been taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do act in this spirit towards all his people throughout Macedonia.

11 Yet, friends, we beg you to do even more. Make it your ambition to live quietly, and to attend to your own business, and to work with your
12 hands, as we directed you; so that your conduct may win respect from those outside the church, and that you may not want for anything.

The Dead in Christ at the coming of the Lord

13 We don't want you to be ignorant, friends, about those who have passed to their rest. We don't want you to grieve like other people who have no hope. For, as we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also we believe that God will bring, with Jesus, those who through him have passed to
15 their rest. This we tell you on the authority of the Lord – that those of us who are still living at the coming of the Lord will not anticipate those who
16 have passed to their rest. For, with a loud summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the trumpet-call of God, the Lord himself will come
17 down from heaven. Then those who died in union with Christ will rise first; and afterwards we who are still living will be caught up in the clouds, with them, to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be for ever with the
18 Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with what I have told you.

5 But as to the times and the moments, there is no need, friends, for anyone
2 to write to you. You yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will
3 come just as a thief comes in the night. When people are saying "All is quiet and safe," it is then that, like birth pains on a pregnant woman, ruin
4 comes suddenly upon them, and there will be no escape! You, however,
friends, are not in darkness, that the daylight should take you by surprise
5 as if you were thieves. For you all are children of light and children of the day.

6 We have nothing to do with night, or darkness. Therefore let us not
7 sleep as others do. No, let us be watchful and self-controlled. It is at night

- 8 that people sleep, and at night that drunkards get drunk. But let us, who belong to the day, control ourselves, and put on faith and love as a breast plate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God destined us, not for wrath, but to win salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us,
10 that, whether we are still watching or have fallen asleep, we may live with
11 him. Therefore encourage one another, and try to build up one another's characters, as indeed you are doing.

Conclusion

- 12 We beg you, friends, to value those who toil among you, and are your leaders in the Lord's service, and give you counsel. Hold them in the very greatest esteem and affection for the sake of their work. Live at peace with
14 one another. We entreat you also, friends – warn the disorderly, comfort the faint-hearted, give a helping hand to the weak, and be patient with
15 everyone. Take care that none of you ever pays back wrong for wrong, but always follow the kindest course with one another and with everyone.
16 Always be joyful; never cease to pray; under all circumstances give thanks
17 to God. For this is his will for you as made known in Christ Jesus. Do not
18 quench the Spirit; do not make light of preaching. Bring everything to
19 the test; cling to what is good; shun every form of evil. May God himself,
20 the giver of peace, make you altogether holy; and may your spirits, souls,
21 and bodies be kept altogether faultless until the coming of our Lord Jesus
22 Christ. He who calls you will not fail you; he will complete his work.

23 Friends, pray for us.

24 Greet all the Lord's followers with a sacred kiss. I order you in the Lord's
26 name to have this letter read to all the brethren.

28 May the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Introduction

- 1 To the Thessalonian church in union with God our Father and the Lord
- 2 Jesus Christ, From Paul, Silas, and Timothy. May God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

The Apostle and his Converts

- 3 Friends, it is our duty always to thank God about you, as is but right, considering the wonderful growth of your faith, and because, without exception, your love for one another is continually increasing. So much is this the case that we ourselves speak with pride, before the churches of God, of the patience and faith which you have shown, in spite of all the persecutions and troubles that you are enduring. These persecutions will vindicate the justice of God's judgment, and will result in your being reckoned worthy of God's kingdom, for the sake of which you are now suffering; since God deems it just to inflict suffering on those who are now inflicting suffering on you, and to give relief to you who are suffering, as well as to us, at the appearing of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire. Then he will inflict punishment on those who refuse to know God, and on those who turn a deaf ear to the good news of Jesus, our Lord. They will pay the penalty of unutterable ruin – banished from the presence of the Lord and from the glorious manifestation of his might, when he comes to be honoured in his people, and to be revered in all who have learned to believe in him (for you also believed our testimony)
- 11 – as he will be on that day. With this in view, our constant prayer for you is that our God may count you worthy of the call that you have received, and by his power make perfect your delight in all goodness and the efforts
- 12 that have resulted from your faith. Then, in the loving kindness of our God

and the Lord Jesus Christ, will the name of Jesus, our Lord, be honoured in you, and you in him.

Events that must precede the Lord's Coming

- 2 As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our being gathered to meet
2 him, we beg you, friends, not lightly to let your minds become unsettled, or
3 disturbed by any revelation, or by any message, or by any letter, purporting
3 to come from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is come. Do not let
anyone deceive you, whatever he may do. For it will not come until after
the Great Apostasy, and the appearing of that Incarnation of Wickedness,
4 that Lost Soul, who so opposes himself to everyone that is spoken of as
a God or as an object of worship, and so exalts himself above them, that
5 he seats himself in the Temple of God, and displays himself as God! Don't
you remember how, when I was with you, I used to speak to you of all
6 this? And you know now what the restraining influence is which prevents
7 his appearing before his appointed time. Wickedness, indeed, is already
at work in secret; but only until he who at present restrains it is removed
8 out of the way. Then will "Wickedness Incarnate" appear, but the Lord
Jesus will destroy him with the breath of his lips, and annihilate him by
9 the splendour of his coming. For at the coming of the Lord there will be
great activity on the part of Satan, in the form of all kinds of deceptive
10 miracles, signs, and marvels, as well as of wicked attempts to delude – to
the ruin of those who are on the path to destruction, because they have
11 never received and loved the truth to their own salvation. That is why God
places them under the influence of a delusion, to cause them to believe a
12 lie; so that sentence may be passed on all those who refuse to believe the
truth, but delight in wickedness.
- 13 But, friends, whom the Lord loves, it is our duty always to thank God
about you, for, from the first, God chose you for salvation through the
14 purifying influence of the Spirit, and your belief in the truth. To this you
were called by the good news which we brought you, to attain to the glory
15 of our Lord Jesus Christ. Stand firm then, friends, and hold fast to the
16 truths that we taught you, whether by word or by letter. And may our
Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and, in his
loving kindness, gave us unfailing consolation and good ground for hope,
17 console your hearts, and strengthen you to do and to say all that is right.

Conclusion

- 3 In conclusion, friends, pray for us – pray that the Lord's message may spread rapidly, and be received everywhere with honour, as it was among you; and that we may be preserved from wrong-headed and wicked people – for it is not everyone who believes in Christ. But the Lord will not fail you.
- 4 He will give you strength, and guard you from evil. Yes, and the confidence that our union with the Lord enables us to place in you leads us to believe
- 5 that you are doing, and will do, what we direct you. May the Lord bring you to the love of God, and to the patience of the Christ.
- 6 We beg you, friends, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid any follower who is living an ill-ordered life, which is not in agreement
- 7 with the teaching that you received from us. For you know well that you ought to follow our example. When we were with you, our life was not
- 8 ill-ordered, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it. Night and day, labouring and toiling, we used to work at our trades, so as not
- 9 to be a burden on any of you. This was not because we had not a right to receive support, but our object was to give you a pattern for you to copy.
- 10 Indeed, when we were with you, the rule we laid down was – "Whoever
- 11 does not choose to work will not get to eat." We hear that there are among you people who are living ill-ordered lives, and who, instead of attending
- 12 to their own business, are mere busybodies. All such people we beg, and implore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to attend quietly to their
- 13 business, and earn their own living. You, friends, must not grow weary of
- 14 doing what is right. If anyone disregards what we have said in this letter, take note of them and avoid their company, so that they may feel ashamed.
- 15 Yet do not think of them as an enemy, but caution them as you would a
- 16 brother or sister. May the Lord, from whom all peace comes, himself give you his peace at all times and in all ways. May he be with you all.
- 17 I, Paul, add this greeting in my own handwriting. It is my signature to
- 18 every letter. This is how I write. May the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Introduction

- 1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the appointment of God, our
- 2 Saviour, and Christ Jesus, our hope. To Timothy, my true child in the faith: May God, the Father, and Christ Jesus, our Lord, bless you, and be merciful to you, and give you peace.
- 3 I beg you, as I did when I was on my way into Macedonia, to remain at Ephesus; so that you may instruct certain people there not to teach new and
- 4 strange doctrines, nor to devote their attention to legends and interminable genealogies, which tend to give rise to argument rather than to further that
- 5 divine plan which is revealed in the faith. The object of all instruction is to call forth that love which comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and
- 6 a sincere faith. And it is because they have not aimed at these things that the attention of certain people has been diverted to unprofitable subjects.
- 7 They want to be teachers of the Law, and yet do not understand either the words they use, or the subjects on which they speak so confidently.
- 8 We know, of course, that the Law is excellent, when used legitimately, by
- 9 one who recognises that laws were not made for good people, but for the lawless and disorderly, for irreligious and wicked people, for those who are irreverent and profane, for those who ill-treat their fathers or mothers,
- 10 for murderers, for the immoral, for perverts, for slave-dealers, for liars, for perjurors, and for whatever else is opposed to sound Christian teaching –
- 11 as is taught in the glorious good news of the ever-blessed God, with which I was entrusted.
- 12 I am thankful to Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has been my strength, for showing that he thought me worthy of trust by appointing me to his
- 13 ministry, though I once used to blaspheme, and to persecute, and to insult. Yet mercy was shown me, because I acted in ignorance, while still an
- 14 unbeliever; and the loving kindness of our Lord was boundless, and filled me with that faith and love which come from union with Christ Jesus.
- 15 How true the saying is, and worthy of the fullest acceptance, that “Christ

Jesus came into the world to save sinners"! And there is no greater sinner
16 than I! Yet mercy was shown me for the express purpose that Christ Jesus
might exhibit in my case, beyond all others, his exhaustless patience, as
an example for those who were afterwards to believe on him and attain
17 eternal life. To the eternal King, ever-living, invisible, the one God, be
ascribed honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This, then, is the charge that I lay on you, Timothy, my child, in accordance
with what was predicted of you – Fight the good fight in the spirit of
19 those predictions, with faith, and with a clear conscience; and it is because
they have thrust this aside, that, as regards the faith, some have wrecked
20 their lives. Hymenaeus and Alexander are instances – the men whom I
delivered over to Satan so that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

General Directions on Church Matters

2 First of all, then, I ask that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings
2 should be offered for everyone, especially for kings and all who are
in high positions, in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in a
3 deeply religious and reverent spirit. This will be good and acceptable in
4 the eyes of God, our Saviour, whose will is that everyone should be saved,
5 and attain to a full knowledge of the truth. There is but one God, and one
6 mediator between God and humanity – the human, Christ Jesus, who gave
himself as a ransom on behalf of all.

7 This must be our testimony, as opportunities present themselves; and
it was for this that I was myself appointed a herald and an apostle (I am
telling the simple truth and no lie) – a teacher of the Gentiles in the faith
and truth.

8 My desire, then, is that it should be the custom everywhere for the
men to lead the prayers, with hands reverently uplifted, avoiding heated
controversy.

9 I also desire that women should adorn themselves with appropriate
dress, worn quietly and modestly, and not with wreaths or gold ornaments
10 for the hair, or pearls, or costly clothing, but – as is proper for women who
11 profess to be religious – with good actions. They must learn, listening
12 quietly to their teachers and showing them all deference. I do not consent
13 to them becoming teachers, or exercising authority over men; they ought
14 to not make a fuss. Adam was formed first, not Eve. And it was not Adam
who was deceived; it was the woman who was entirely deceived and fell

15 into sin. But she will be saved by the birth of a child, if they never abandon faith, love, or holiness, and behave with modesty.

3 How true is this saying: "To aspire to be a supervisor in the church
2 is to be ambitious for a noble task." The supervisor should be of blameless character; a faithful partner; living a temperate, discreet, and well-ordered life; hospitable, and a skilful teacher, not addicted to drink or brawling, but of a forbearing and peaceable disposition, and not a lover of money;
4 they should provide for own household well, and their children should
5 kept under control and be well-behaved. If someone does not know how to provide for their own household, how can they take charge of the church
6 of God? The supervisor should not be a recent convert, or they might become blinded by pride and fall under the same judgement as the devil.
7 They should also be well spoken of by outsiders, so that they may not incur
8 censure and so fall into the devil's trap. So, too, assistants should be serious and straightforward, not given to taking much drink or to questionable
9 money-making, but people who hold the deep truths of the faith and have
10 a clear conscience. They should be tested first, and only appointed to their
11 office if no objection is raised against them. It should be the same with the women in this office. They should be serious, not gossips, sober, and
12 trustworthy in all respects. Assistants should be faithful partners who
13 manage their children and their households well. Those who have filled that post with honour gain for themselves an honourable position, as well as great confidence through the faith that they place in Christ Jesus.

Special Directions to Timothy

14 I am writing this to you, though I hope that I will come to see you before
15 long; but in case I should be delayed, I want you to know what your conduct ought to be in the Household of God, which is the church of the living
16 God – the pillar and stay of the truth. Yes, and confessedly wonderful are the deep truths of our religion; for –

"He was revealed in our nature,
Pronounced righteous in spirit,
Seen by angels,
Proclaimed among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Taken up into glory."

- 4 But the Spirit distinctly says that in later times there will be some who
will fall away from the faith, and devote their attention to misleading spir-
2 its, and to the teaching of demons, who will make use of the hypocrisy of
3 lying teachers. These people's consciences are seared, and they discour-
age marriage and enjoin abstinence from certain kinds of food; though
4 God created these foods to be enjoyed thankfully by those who hold the
faith and have attained a full knowledge of the truth. Everything created
5 by God is good, and there is nothing that need be rejected – provided
only that it is received thankfully; for it is consecrated by God's blessing
and by prayer.
- 6 Put all this before the followers, and you will be a good servant of Christ
Jesus, sustained by the precepts of the faith and of that good teaching by
7 which you have guided your life. As for profane legends and old wives'
8 tales, leave them alone. Train yourself to lead a religious life; for while the
training of the body is of service in some respects, religion is of service in
all, carrying with it, as it does, a promise of life both here and hereafter.
- 9 How true that saying is and worthy of the fullest acceptance! With that
10 aim we toil and struggle, for we have set our hopes on the living God, who
is the Saviour of all, and especially of those who hold the faith.
- 11 Remember these things in your teaching. Do not let anyone look down on
12 you because you are young, but, by your conversation, your conduct, your
love, your faith, and your purity, be an example to those who hold the faith.
13 Until I come, apply yourself to public reading, preaching, and teaching. Do
14 not neglect the divine gift within you, which was given you, amid many a
prediction, when the hands of the church elders were laid on your head.
15 Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that your progress may
16 be plain to everyone. Look to yourself as well as to your teaching. Persevere
in this, for your doing so will mean salvation for yourself as well as for
your hearers.
- 5 Do not reprimand an older man, but plead with him as if he were your
2 father. Treat the young men as brothers, the older women as mothers,
3 and the younger women as sisters – with all purity. Show consideration
4 for widows – I mean those who are really widowed. But, if a widow has
children or grandchildren, they should learn to show proper regard for the
members of their own family first, and to make some return to their parents;
5 for that is pleasing in God's sight. As for the woman who is really widowed
and left quite alone, her hopes are fixed on God, and she devotes herself
6 to prayers and supplications night and day. But the life of a widow who
7 is devoted to pleasure is a living death. Those are the points you should

- 8 teach, so that there may be no call for your censure. Anyone who fails to provide for their own relatives, and especially for those under their own roof, has disowned the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. A widow, when her name is added to the list, should not be less than sixty years old; 10 she should have been a faithful wife, and be well spoken of for her kind actions. She should have brought up children, have shown hospitality to strangers, have washed the feet of her fellow Christians, have relieved those who were in distress, and devoted herself to every kind of good action.
- 11 But you should exclude the younger widows from the list; for, when they 12 grow restive under the yoke of the Christ, they want to marry, and so they bring condemnation on themselves for having broken their previous 13 promise. And not only that, but they learn to be idle as they go about from house to house. Nor are they merely idle, but they also become gossips 14 and busybodies, and talk of what they ought not. Therefore I advise young widows to marry, bear children, and attend to their homes, and so avoid 15 giving the enemy an opportunity for scandal. There are some who have 16 already left us, to follow Satan. Any Christian woman, who has relatives who are widows, ought to relieve them and not allow them to become a burden to the church, so that the church may relieve those widows who are really widowed.
- 17 Those church elders who fill their office well should be held deserving of especial consideration, particularly those whose work lies in preaching 18 and teaching. The words of scripture are –

“You should not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain.”

and again –

“The worker is worth their wages.”

- 19 Do not entertain a charge against an church elder, unless it is sup-
20 ported by two or three witnesses; but rebuke offenders publicly, so that
21 others may take warning. I charge you solemnly, before God and Christ
Jesus and the chosen angels, to carry out these directions, unswayed by
22 prejudice, never acting with partiality. Never ordain anyone hastily, and
23 take no part in the wrong-doing of others. Keep your life pure. Do not
continue to drink water only, but take a little wine because of the weak-
24 ness of your stomach, and your frequent ailments. There are some people
whose sins are conspicuous and lead on to judgment, while there are
25 others whose sins dog their steps. In the same way noble deeds become
conspicuous, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.

- 6 All who are in the position of slaves should regard their masters as deserving of the greatest respect, so that the name of God, and our teaching, may
- 2 not be maligned. Those who have Christian masters should not think less of them because they are also followers of Christ, but on the contrary they should serve them all the better, because those who are to benefit by their good work are dear to them as their fellow Christians.

Conclusion

Those are the things to insist on in your teaching.

- 3 Anyone who teaches otherwise, and refuses their assent to sound instruction – the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ – and to the teaching of
- 4 religion, is puffed up with conceit, not really knowing anything, but having a morbid craving for discussions and arguments. Such things only give
- 5 rise to envy, quarrelling, recriminations, base suspicions, and incessant wrangling on the part of these corrupt-minded people who have lost all
- 6 hold on the truth, and who think of religion only as a source of gain. Of course religion is a great source of gain – when combined with content-
- 7 ment! For we brought nothing into the world, because we cannot even carry
- 8 anything out of it. So, with food and shelter, we will be content. Those who
- 9 want to be rich fall into the net of temptation, and become the prey of many foolish and harmful ambitions, which plunge people into destruction and
- 10 ruin. Love of money is a source of all kinds of evil; and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith, and have been pierced to the heart by many a regret.
- 11 But you must, servant of God, avoid all this. Aim at righteousness, piety,
- 12 faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Run the great race of the faith, and win the eternal life. It was for this that you received the call, and, in the
- 13 presence of many witnesses, made the great profession of faith. I beg you, as in the sight of God, the source of all life, and of Christ Jesus who before
- 14 Pontius Pilate made the great profession of faith – I implore you to keep his command free from stain or reproach, until the appearing of our Lord
- 15 Jesus Christ. This will be brought about in his own time by the one ever-
- 16 blessed Potentate, the king of all kings and Lord of all lords, who alone is possessed of immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or ever can see – to whom be ascribed honour and power for ever. Amen.
- 17 Teach those who are wealthy in this life not to pride themselves, or fix their hopes, on so uncertain a thing as wealth, but on God, who gives us a

- 18 wealth of enjoyment on every side. Teach them to show kindness, to exhibit
- 19 a wealth of good actions, to be open-handed and generous, storing up for themselves what in the future will prove to be a good foundation, so that they may gain the only true life.
- 20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane prattle and contradictions of what some miscall “theology,” for there are those who, while asserting their proficiency in it, have yet, as regards the faith, gone altogether astray.

God bless you all.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Introduction

- 1 From Paul who, by the will of God, is an apostle of Christ Jesus, charged
- 2 to proclaim the life that comes from union with Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dear child: may God, the Father, and Christ Jesus, our Lord, bless you, and be merciful to you, and give you peace.

- 3 I am thankful to God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, when I remember you, as I never fail to do, in my prayers –
- 4 night and day alike, as I think of your tears, longing to see you, that my
- 5 happiness may be completed, now that I have been reminded of the sincere faith that you have shown. That faith was seen first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and is now, I am convinced, in you also.
- 6 And that is my reason for reminding you to stir into flame that gift of
- 7 God, which is yours through your ordination at my hands. For the Spirit which God gave us was not a spirit of cowardice, but a spirit of power, love,
- 8 and self-control. Do not, therefore, be ashamed of the testimony which we have to bear to our Lord, or of me imprisoned for his sake; but join
- 9 with me in suffering for the good news, as far as God enables you. It was God who saved us, and from him we received our solemn call – not as a reward for anything that we had done, but in fulfilment of his own loving purpose. For that love was extended to us, through Christ Jesus, before
- 10 time began, and has now been made apparent through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus; who has made an end of death, and has brought
- 11 life and Immortality to light by that good news, of which I was myself
- 12 appointed a herald and apostle, and teacher. That is why I am undergoing these sufferings; yet I feel no shame, for I know in whom I have put my faith, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to
- 13 him until that day. Keep before you, as an example of sound teaching, all that you learnt from me as you listened with that faith and love which
- 14 come from union with Christ Jesus. Guard by the help of the Holy Spirit, who is within us, the glorious trust that has been committed to you.

15 You know, of course, that all our friends in Roman Asia turned their
16 backs on me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. May the Lord show
mercy to the household of Onesiphorus; for he often cheered me and was
17 not ashamed of my chains. On the contrary, when he arrived in Rome, he
18 sought eagerly for me until he found me. The Lord grant that he may find
mercy at the hands of the Lord on that day. The many services that he
rendered at Ephesus you have the best means of knowing.

Injunctions to Timothy

2 You must, then, my child, find strength in the help which comes from the
2 union with Christ Jesus; and what you learnt from me, in the presence of
many listeners, entrust to reliable people, who will be able in their turn
3 to teach others. Share hardships with me, as a true soldier of Christ Jesus.
4 A soldier on active service, to please his superior officer, always avoids
5 entangling himself in the affairs of ordinary life. No athlete is ever awarded
6 the wreath of victory unless they have kept the rules. The labourer who
does the work should be the first to receive a share of the fruits of the
7 earth. Reflect on what I say; the Lord will always help you to understand.
8 Keep before your mind Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of
9 David, as told in the good news entrusted to me; in the service of which I
am suffering hardships, even to being put in fetters as a criminal. But the
10 message of God is not fettered; and that is why I submit to anything for
the sake of God's people: so that they also may obtain the salvation which
11 comes from union with Christ Jesus, and imperishable glory. How true
12 this saying is – "If we have shared his death, we will also share his life. If
we continue to endure, we will also share his throne. If we should ever
13 disown him, he, too, will disown us. If we lose our trust, he is still to be
trusted, for he cannot be false to himself!"
14 Remind people of all this; tell them solemnly, as in the sight of God, to
avoid controversy, a useless thing and the ruin of those who listen to it.
15 Do your utmost to show yourself true to God, a worker with no reason
16 to be ashamed, accurate in delivering the message of the truth. Avoid
profane prattle. Those who indulge in it only get deeper into irreligious
17 ways, and their teaching will spread like a cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus
18 are instances of this. They have gone completely astray as regards the truth;
they say that a resurrection has already taken place, and so upset some
19 people's faith. Yet God's firm foundation still stands unmoved, and it bears
this inscription –

"THE LORD KNOWS THOSE WHO ARE HIS";

and this –

"LET ALL THOSE WHO USE THE NAME OF THE LORD TURN AWAY FROM WICKEDNESS."

- 20 Now in a large house there are not only things of gold and silver, but also others of wood and earthenware, some for better and some for common use. If, then, a person has escaped from the pollution of such errors as I have mentioned, they will be like a thing kept for better use, set apart, serviceable to its owner, ready for any good purpose. Flee from the passions of youth, but pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, in the company of those who, with a pure heart, invoke the Lord. Shun foolish and ignorant discussions, for you know that they only breed quarrels; and a servant of the Lord should never quarrel. They ought, on the contrary, to be courteous to everyone, skilful teachers, and forbearing. They should instruct their opponents in a gentle spirit; for, possibly, God may give those opponents a repentance that will lead to a fuller knowledge of truth, and they may yet come to a sober mind, and escape from the devil's net, when captured by the Lord's servant to do the will of God.
- 3 Be sure of this, that in the last days difficult times will come. People will be selfish, mercenary, boastful, haughty, and blasphemous; disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, impure, incapable of affection, merciless, slanderous, wanting in self-control, brutal, careless of the right, treacherous, reckless, and puffed up with pride; they will love pleasure more than they love God; and while they retain the outward form of religion, they will not allow it to influence them. Turn your back on such people as these. For among them are to be found those who creep into homes and captivate weak women – women who, loaded with sins, and slaves to all kinds of passions, are always learning, and yet never able to attain to a real knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so do these people, in their turn, oppose the truth. Their minds are corrupted, and, as regards the faith, they are utterly worthless. They will not, however, make further progress; for their wicked folly will be plain to everyone, just as the folly Jannes and Jambres was. But you, Timothy, were a close observer of my teaching, my conduct, my purposes, my faith, my forbearance, my love, and my patient endurance, as well as of my persecutions, and of the sufferings which I met with at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. You know what persecutions I underwent; and yet the Lord brought me safe out of all! Yes, and all who aim at living a religious life in union with Christ Jesus will have

13 to suffer persecution; but wicked people and impostors will go from bad
14 to worse, deceiving others and deceived themselves. You, however, must
15 stand by what you learnt and accepted as true. You know who they were
16 from whom you learnt it; and that, from your childhood, you have known
17 the sacred writings, which can give you the wisdom that, through belief
in Christ Jesus, leads to salvation. All scripture is God-breathed: helpful
for teaching, for refuting error, for giving guidance, and for training others
in righteousness; so that God's people may be capable and equipped for
good work of every kind.

4 I solemnly charge you – in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus, who
will one day judge the living and the dead – I charge you by his appearing
2 and by his kingdom: Proclaim the message, be ready in season and out of
3 season, convince, rebuke, encourage, never failing to instruct with forbear-
ance. For a time will come when people will not tolerate sound teaching.
They will follow their own wishes, and, in their itching for novelty, procure
4 themselves a crowd of teachers. They will turn a deaf ear to the truth, and
5 give their attention to legends instead. But you, Timothy, must always be
temperate. Face hardships; do the work of a missionary; discharge all the
duties of your office.

6 As for me, my life blood is already being poured out; the time of my
7 departure is close at hand. I have run the great race; I have finished the
8 course; I have kept the faith. And now the crown of righteousness awaits
me, which the Lord, the just judge, will give me on that day – and not only
to me, but to all who have loved his appearing.

Conclusion

9 Do your utmost to come to me soon; for Demas, in his love for the world,
10 has deserted me. He has gone to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, and
11 Titus to Dalmatia. There is no one but Luke with me. Pick up Mark on your
12 way, and bring him with you, for he is useful to me in my work. I have sent
13 Tychicus to Ephesus. Bring with you, when you come, the cloak which I left
14 at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. Alexander,
the coppersmith, showed much ill feeling towards me. The Lord will give
15 him what his actions deserve. You must also on your guard against him,
16 for he is strongly opposed to our teaching. At my first trial no one stood
17 by me. They all deserted me. May it never be counted against them! But
the Lord came to my help and strengthened me, in order that, through me,
the proclamation should be made so widely that all the Gentiles should

- 18 hear it; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from all evil, and bring me safe into his Heavenly kingdom. All glory to him for ever and ever! Amen.
- 19 Give my greeting to Prisca and Aquila, and to the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Thophimus ill at Miletus.
- 21 Do your utmost to come before winter. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia send you their greetings, and so do the rest of the Lord's followers.
- 22 May the Lord be with your soul. God bless you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

Introduction

- 1 From Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, on behalf of the faith of God's chosen people, and their knowledge of that truth which makes for godliness – and is based on the hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began, and has revealed at his own time in his message, with the preaching of which I was entrusted by
- 2 the command of God our Saviour. To Titus, my true child in our shared faith: May God, the Father, and Christ Jesus, our Saviour, bless you and give you peace.

Mission of Titus in Crete

- 5 My reason for leaving you in Crete was that you might put in order what had been left unfinished, and appoint church elders in the various towns, as
- 6 I myself directed you. They are to be of irreproachable character, faithful to their partners, whose children are believers in Christ and have never been
- 7 open to the charge of being wild or unruly. For a supervisor, as God's steward, ought to be of blameless character – not arrogant or quick-tempered,
- 8 not given to drunkenness, violence or shady money-making. Instead, they should be hospitable, love what is good, self-controlled, upright, people
- 9 of holy life and disciplined, holding firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught – so that they may be able to encourage others by sound teaching, as well as to refute those who contradict it.
- 10 For there are many undisciplined persons who lead others astray with their nonsense, especially those of the group advocating the necessity of
- 11 circumcision. They need to be kept quiet as they disrupt whole households by teaching what they ought not to teach, simply to make shameful financial gain. It was a Cretan – one of their own prophets – who said: "Cretans

are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons." This statement is true.
13 Therefore rebuke them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, and
14 may pay no attention to Jewish legends, or to the directions of those who
15 turn their backs on the truth. To those whose minds are pure, all things
16 are ritually pure, but to those whose minds are tainted and unbelieving
nothing is pure, as their minds and consciences are alike polluted. They
claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable
and disobedient and useless for any good work.

2 You however, should speak of such subjects as properly have a place in
2 sound teaching. Teach that the older men should be soberly clear minded,
dignified and self-controlled – sound in faith, love, and patient endurance.
3 So, too, that the older women should live reverent lives, not slanderers,
4 not slaves to excessive drinking. They should teach what is good, so as to
5 train the younger women to love their husbands and children, and to be
self-controlled, pure-minded, to be watching over their home, to be kind,
respecting the authority of their husbands, so that no one will speak badly
6 of God's message. In the same way with the younger men – encourage
7 them to be self-controlled. In all things, set an example of doing good. In
8 your teaching, show integrity and seriousness – let the instruction that you
give be sound and above reproach, so that those who oppose you may be
9 ashamed when they fail to find anything bad to say about us. Tell slaves to
respect their owner's authority in all circumstances, and to try their best
10 to please them. Teach them not to contradict or to pilfer, but to show such
praiseworthy fidelity in everything, as to recommend the teaching about
God our Saviour by all that they do.

11 For the loving kindness of God has been revealed, bringing salvation
12 for all, leading us to renounce ungodliness and worldly desires, and to
13 live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives here in this present age, while
awaiting our blessed hope – the appearing in glory of our great God and
14 Saviour, Christ Jesus. For he gave himself on our behalf, to deliver us from
all wickedness, and to purify for himself a people who should be truly
15 his own and eager to do good. Tell them of all this, and encourage and
3 rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone belittle you. Remind them to
respect and obey the rulers and authorities, to be ready for every kind of
2 good work, to slander no one, to avoid quarrelling, to be reasonable, and
3 under all circumstances to show a gentle spirit with all. There was a time
when we ourselves were foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved to all kinds
4 of desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hating ourselves and
hating one another. But, when the kindness of God our Saviour and his

- 5 love for humanity appeared, he saved us, not as the result of any righteous actions that we had done, but due to his mercy. He saved us through the 6 washing of rebirth and renewal by the power of the Holy Spirit, which he 7 poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour – so that, having been put right with God through his grace, we become heirs to the 8 hope of eternal life. This saying is trustworthy! And it is on these subjects that I want you to lay special emphasis, so that those who have learned to trust in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing good. Such 9 subjects are excellent in themselves, and of benefit to all. But have nothing to do with foolish controversies, or with genealogies, or with quarrels, or 10 fights about the Law. They are useless and futile. If someone is causing divisions among you then, after giving them a second warning, excuse 11 yourself from them. You can be sure that such a person has forsaken the truth and is in the wrong. They stand self-condemned.

Conclusion

- 12 As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, join me as quickly as possible 13 at Nicopolis, for I have arranged to spend the winter there. Do your best to help Zenas, the teacher of the Law, and Apollos, on their way, and see 14 that they want for nothing. Let all our people learn to devote themselves to doing good, so as to meet the most pressing needs, and that their lives may not be unfruitful.
- 15 All who are with me here send you their greeting. Give my greeting to our friends in the faith.

God bless you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

Introduction

- 1 From Paul, now a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and from Timothy, a fellow
- 2 follower of the Lord. To our dear friend and fellow worker Philemon, to
- 3 our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus; and to the church that
- meets at Philemon's house; may God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ
- bless you and give you peace.

Request regarding runaway slave

- 4 I always mention you in my prayers and thank God for you, because I hear
- 5 of the love and the faith which you show, not only to the Lord Jesus, but
- 6 also to all his people; and I pray that your participation in the faith may
- result in action, as you come to a fuller realisation of everything that is good
- 7 and Christlike in us. I have indeed found great joy and encouragement in
- your love, knowing, as I do, how the hearts of Christ's People have been
- cheered, friend, by you.
- 8 And so, though my union with Christ enables me, with all confidence,
- 9 to dictate the course that you should adopt, yet the claims of love make me
- prefer to plead with you – yes, even me, Paul, though I am an ambassador
- 10 for Christ Jesus and, now a prisoner for him as well. I plead with you for
- this child of mine, Onesimus, to whom, in my prison, I have become a
- 11 father. Once he was of little service to you, but now he has become of great
- 12 service, not only to you, but to me as well; and I am sending him back to
- 13 you with this letter – though it is like tearing out of my heart. For my own
- sake I should like to keep him with me, so that, while I am in prison for the
- 14 good news, he might attend to my wants on your behalf. But I do not wish
- to do anything without your consent, because I want your generosity to be
- 15 voluntary and not, as it were, compulsory. It may be that he was separated

- from you for an hour, for this reason, so that you might have him back for
16 ever, no longer as a slave, but as something better – a dearly loved friend
and follower of the Lord, especially dear to me, and how much more so to
17 you, not only as a person, but as your fellow Christian! If, then, you count
18 me your friend, receive him as you would me. If he has caused you any
19 loss, or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, put my own hand to
it – I will repay you myself. I say nothing about your owing me your self.
20 Yes, friend, let me gain something from you because of your union with
the Lord. Cheer my heart by your Christlike spirit.
- 21 Even as I write, I have such confidence in your compliance with my
22 wishes, that I am sure that you will do even more than I am asking. Please
also get a lodging ready for me, for I hope that I will be given back to you
all in answer to your prayers.

Messages and Blessing

- 23 Epaphras, who is my fellow prisoner for Christ Jesus, sends you his greet-
24 ing; and Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers, send
their.
- 25 May the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ rest on your souls.

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

Christ the Mediator

- 1 God, who, of old, at many times and in many ways, spoke to our ancestors,
- 2 by the prophets, has in these latter days spoken to us by the Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.
- 3 For he is the radiance of the glory of God and the expression of his being, upholding all creation by the power of his word; and, when he had made an expiation for the sins of humanity, he took his seat at the right hand of
- 4 God's Majesty on high, having shown himself as much greater than the angels as the name that he has inherited surpasses theirs.
- 5 For to which of the angels did God ever say –
“You are my Son; this day I have become your Father”?
- or again –
“I will be to him a Father, and he will be to me a Son”?
- 6 And again, when God brought the first-born into the world, he said –
“Let all the angels of God bow down before him.”
- 7 Speaking of the angels, he said –
“He makes the winds his angels
And the flames of fire his servants”;
- 8 while of the Son he said –
“God is your throne for ever and ever;
The sceptre of his kingdom is the sceptre of Justice;
- 9 You love righteousness and hates iniquity;
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the festal oil
more abundantly than your peers.”
- 10 Again –
“You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth,

and the heavens are the work of your hands.

- 11 They will perish, but you remain;
as a garment they will all grow old;
12 As a mantle you will fold them up,
and as a garment they will be changed,
but you are the same, and your years will know no end."

- 13 To which of the angels has God ever said –

"Sit you at my right hand
until I put your enemies as a stool for your feet"?

- 14 Are not all the angels spirits in the service of God, sent out to minister for the sake of those who are destined to obtain salvation?

- 2 Therefore we must give still more heed to what we were taught, so we do
2 not drift away. For, if the message which was delivered by angels had its authority confirmed, so that every offence against it, or neglect of it, met
3 with a fitting requital, how can we, of all people, expect to escape, if we disregard so great a salvation? It was the Master who at the outset spoke of this salvation, and its authority was confirmed for us by those who heard
4 him, while God himself added his testimony to it by signs, and marvels, and many different miracles, as well as by imparting the Holy Spirit as he saw fit.

- 5 God has not given to angels the control of that future world of which
6 we are speaking! No; a writer has declared somewhere –

"What are mere mortals that you should remember them?
Or human beings that you should care for them?
7 You have made them, for a while, lower than angels;
With glory and honour you have crowned them;
You have set them over all that your hands have made;
8 You have placed all things beneath their feet."

- This "placing of everything" under humanity means that there was nothing which was not placed under them. As yet, however, we do not
9 see everything placed under humanity. What our eyes do see is Jesus, who was made for a while lower than angels, now, because of his sufferings and death, crowned with glory and honour; so that his tasting the bitterness of death should, in God's loving kindness, be on behalf of all
10 humanity. It was, indeed, fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, should, when leading many children to glory, make the
11 author of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who purifies,

and those whom he purifies, all spring from One; and therefore he is not
12 ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters. He says –

“I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters,
In the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

13 And again –

“As for me, I will put my trust in God.”

And yet again –

“See, here am I and the children whom God gave me.”

14 Therefore, since human nature is the common heritage of the children, Jesus also shared it, in order that by death he might render powerless him
15 whose power lies in death – that is, the devil – and so might deliver all
16 those who, from fear of death, had all their lives been living in slavery. It was not, surely, to the help of the angels that Jesus came, but to the help
17 of the descendants of Abraham. And consequently it was necessary that he should in all points be made like his brothers and sisters, in order that he might prove a merciful as well as a faithful high priest in humanity’s relations with God, for the purpose of expiating the sins of his people.
18 The fact that he himself suffered under temptation enables him to help those who are tempted.

3 Therefore, my Christian friends, you who, all alike, have received the call from heaven, fix your attention on Jesus, the apostle and high priest of
2 our religion. See how faithful he was to the God who appointed him, as
3 Moses was in the whole house of God. He has been deemed worthy of far higher honour than Moses, just as the founder of the house is held in
4 greater regard than the house itself. For every house has its founder, and
5 the founder of the universe is God. While the faithful service of Moses in the whole house of God was that of a servant, whose duty was to bear
6 testimony to a message still to come, the faithfulness of Christ was that of a son set over the house of God. And we are his house – if only we retain, unshaken to the end, the courage and confidence inspired by our hope.

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says –

“If today you hear God’s voice,
8 harden not your hearts, as when Israel provoked me
On the day when they tried my patience in the desert,
9 Where your ancestors tried my forbearance,
And saw my mighty deeds for forty years.

10 Therefore I was sorely vexed with that generation,
And I said – ‘Their hearts are always straying;
They have never learned my ways’;
11 While in my wrath I swore –
‘They will never enter upon my rest.’”

12 Be careful, friends, that there is never found in anyone of you a wicked
and faithless heart, shown by that person separating themselves from the
13 living God. Rather encourage one another daily – while there is a today –
to prevent anyone among you from being hardened by the deceitfulness
14 of sin. For we now all share in the Christ, if indeed we retain, unshaken
15 to the end, the confidence that we had at the first. To use the words of
scripture –

“If today you hear God’s voice,
Harden not your hearts, as when Israel provoked me.”

16 Who were they who heard God speak and yet provoked him? Were not
17 they all those who left Egypt under the leadership of Moses? And with
whom was it that God was sorely vexed for forty years? Was not it with
18 those who had sinned, and who fell dead in the desert? And who were
they to whom God swore that they should not enter upon his rest, if not
19 those who had proved faithless? We see, then, that they failed to enter
4 upon it because of their want of faith. We must, therefore, be very careful,
though there is a promise still standing that we will enter upon God’s
2 rest, that none of you even appear to have missed it. For we have had the
good news told us just as they had. But the message which they heard
did them no good, since they did not share the faith of those who were
3 attentive to it. Upon that rest we who have believed are now entering. As
God has said –

“In my wrath I swore –
‘They will never enter upon my rest.’”

4 Although God’s work was finished at the creation of the world; for, in a
passage referring to the seventh day, you will find these words –

“God rested on the seventh day after all his work.”

5 On the other hand, we read in that passage –
“They will never enter upon my rest.”

6 Since, then, there is still a promise that some will enter upon this rest,
and since those who were first told the good news did not enter upon

- 7 it, because of their disbelief, again God fixed a day. "Today," he said, speaking after a long interval through the mouth of David, in the passage already quoted –

"If today you hear God's voice
Harden not your hearts."

- 8 Now if Joshua had given "rest" to the people, God would not have spoken of another and later day. There is, then, a Sabbath rest still awaiting 9 God's people. For the person who enters upon God's rest do themselves 10 rest after their work, just as God did. Let us, therefore, make every effort 11 to enter upon that rest, so that none of us fall through such disbelief as 12 that of which we have had an example. God's message is a living and active power, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing its way until it penetrates soul and spirit – not the joints only but the marrow – and 13 detecting the inmost thoughts and purposes of the mind. There is no created thing that can hide itself from the sight of God. Everything is exposed and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we have to give account.
- 14 We have, then, in Jesus, the Son of God, a great high priest who has passed into the highest heaven; let us, therefore, hold fast to the faith which we 15 have professed. Our high priest is not one unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who has in every way been tempted, exactly as we 16 have been, but without sinning. Therefore, let us draw near boldly to the throne of love, to find pity and love for the hour of need.

- 5 Every high priest, taken from among the people, is appointed as their representative in their relations with God, to offer both gifts and sacrifices 2 in expiation of sins. And he is able to sympathise with the ignorant and 3 deluded, since he is himself subject to weakness, and is therefore bound to offer sacrifices for sins, not only for the people, but equally so for himself. 4 Nor does anyone take that high office on themselves, until they have been 5 called to do so by God, as Aaron was. In the same way, even the Christ did not take the honour of the high priesthood on himself, but he was appointed by him who said to him –

"You are my Son; this day I have become your Father";

- 6 and on another occasion also –

"You are a priest for all time of the order of Melchizedek."

- 7 Jesus, in the days of his earthly life, offered prayers and supplications, with earnest cries and with tears, to him who was able to save him from

8 death; and he was heard because of his devout submission. Son though
9 he was, he learned obedience from his sufferings; and, being made per-
fect, he became to all those who obey him the source of eternal salva-
10 tion, while God himself pronounced him a high priest of the order of
Melchizedek.

11 Now on this subject I have much to say, but it is difficult to explain it to
12 you, because you have shown yourselves so slow to learn. For whereas,
considering the time that has elapsed, you ought to be teaching others, you
still need someone to teach you the alphabet of the divine revelation, and
13 need again to be fed with milk instead of with "solid food." For everyone
who still has to take milk knows nothing of the teaching of righteousness;
14 they are a mere infant. But solid food is for Christians of mature faith –
those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish right
6 from wrong. Therefore, let us leave behind the elementary teaching about
the Christ and press on to perfection, not always laying over again a foun-
2 dation of repentance for a lifeless formality, of faith in God – teaching
concerning baptisms and the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the
3 dead and a final judgment. Yes and, with God's help, we will. For if those
4 who were once for all brought into the light, and learned to appreciate
5 the gift from heaven, and came to share in the Holy Spirit, and learned to
appreciate the beauty of the divine message, and the new powers of the
6 coming age – if those, I say, fell away, it would be impossible to bring them
again to repentance; they would be crucifying the Son of God over again
7 for themselves, and exposing him to open contempt. Ground that drinks
in the showers that from time to time fall on it, and produces vegetation
8 useful to those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God; but, if
it bears thorns and thistles, it is regarded as worthless, it is in danger of
being cursed, and its end will be the fire.

9 But about you, dear friends, even though we speak in this way, we are
10 confident of better things – of things that point to your salvation. For God
is not unjust; he will not forget the work that you did, and the love that
you showed for his name, in sending help to your fellow Christians – as
11 you are still doing. But our great desire is that every one of you should be
equally earnest to attain to a full conviction that our hope will be fulfilled,
12 and that you should keep that hope to the end. Then you will not show
yourselves slow to learn, but you will copy those who, through faith and
patience, are now entering upon the enjoyment of God's promises.

13 When God gave his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater
14 by whom he could swear, he swore by himself. His words were –

"I will assuredly bless you and increase your numbers."

- 15 And so, after patiently waiting, Abraham obtained the fulfilment of
16 God's promise. People, of course, swear by what is greater than them-
17 selves, and with them an oath is accepted as putting a matter beyond all
18 dispute. And therefore God, in his desire to show, with unmistakable
plainness, to those who were to enter on the enjoyment of what he had
promised, the unchangeableness of his purpose, bound himself with
an oath. For he intended us to find great encouragement in these two
unchangeable things, which make it impossible for God to prove false –
we, I mean, who fled for safety where we might lay hold on the hope set
before us. This hope is an anchor for our souls, secure and strong, and it
reaches into the sanctuary that lies behind the curtain, where Jesus, our
forerunner, has entered on our behalf, after being made for all time a high
priest of the order of Melchizedek.

Paramount Priesthood of the Christ

- 7 It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God,
who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and gave
2 him his blessing; and it was to him that Abraham allotted a tithe of all the
spoil. The meaning of his name is "king of righteousness," and besides
3 that, he was also king of Salem, which means "king of peace." There is no
record of his father, or mother, or lineage, nor again of any beginning of
his days, or end of his life. In this he resembles the Son of God, and stands
before us as a priest whose priesthood is continuous.
4 Consider, then the importance of this Melchizedek, to whom even the
5 patriarch Abraham himself gave a tithe of the choicest spoils. Those de-
scendants of Levi, who are from time to time appointed to the priesthood,
are directed to collect tithes from the people in accordance with the Law
– that is from their own kindred, although they also are descended from
6 Abraham. But Melchizedek, although not of this lineage, received tithes
from Abraham, and gave his blessing to the man who had God's promises.
7 Now no one can dispute that it is the superior who blesses the inferior.
8 In the one case the tithes are received by people who are mortal; in the
other case by one about whom there is the statement that his life still con-
9 tinues. Moreover, in a sense, even Levi, who is the receiver of the tithes,
10 has, through Abraham, paid tithes; for Levi was still in the body of his
ancestor when Melchizedek met Abraham.

11 If, then, perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood – and it was under this priesthood that the people received the Law – why was it still necessary that a priest of a different order should appear, a priest
12 of the order of Melchizedek and not of the order of Aaron? With the change
13 of the priesthood a change of the Law became a necessity. And he of whom all this is said belonged to quite a different tribe, no member of which has
14 ever served at the altar. For it is plain that our Lord had sprung from the tribe of Judah, though of that tribe Moses said nothing about their being
15 priests. All this becomes even yet plainer when we remember that a new
16 priest has appeared, resembling Melchizedek, and that he was appointed, not under a Law regulating only earthly matters, but by virtue of a life
17 beyond the reach of death; for that is the meaning of the declaration –

“You are for all time a priest of the order of Melchizedek.”

18 On the one hand, we have the abolition of a previous regulation as
19 being both inefficient and useless (for the Law never brought anything to perfection); and, on the other hand, we have the introduction of a better
20 hope, which enables us to draw near to God. Then again, the appointment of this new priest was ratified by an oath, which is not so with the
21 Levitical priests, but his appointment was ratified by an oath, when God said to him –

“The Lord has sworn, and will not change, ‘You are a priest for all time.’”

22 And the oath shows the corresponding superiority of the covenant of which Jesus is appointed the surety. Again, new Levitical priests are continually being appointed, because death prevents their remaining in office; but Jesus remains for all time, and therefore the priesthood that
25 he holds will never pass to another. And that is why he is able to save perfectly those who come to God through him, living for ever, as he does, to intercede of their behalf.

26 This was the high priest that we needed – holy, innocent, spotless, withdrawn from sinners, exalted above the highest heaven, one who has no need to offer sacrifices daily as those high priests have, first for their own sins, and then for those of the people. For this he did once and for all, when
28 he offered himself as the sacrifice. The Law appoints as high priests men who are weak, but the words of God’s oath, which was later than the Law, name the Son as, for all time, the perfect priest.

8 To sum up what I have been saying: Such is the high priest that we have, one who has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God’s

- 2 Majesty in heaven, where he serves in the sanctuary, in that true tent set
3 up by the Lord and not by man. Every high priest is appointed for the
purpose of offering gifts and sacrifices to God; it follows, therefore, that
4 this high priest must have some offering to make. If he were, however, still
on earth, he would not even be a priest, since there are already priests who
5 offer the gifts as the Law directs. (These priests, it is true, are engaged in
a service which is only a copy and shadow of the heavenly realities, as is
shown by the directions given to Moses when he was about to construct the
tent. "Look to it," are the words, "that you make every part in accordance
6 with the pattern shown you on the mountain.") But Jesus, as we see, has
obtained a ministry as far excelling theirs, as the covenant of which he
is the intermediary, based, as it is, on better promises, excels the former
7 covenant. If that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been
8 no occasion for a second. But, finding fault with the people, God says –

"A time is coming,' says the Lord,
'When I will ratify a new covenant with the people of Israel and
with the people of Judah –

- 9 Not such a covenant as I made with their ancestors
On the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of
the land of Egypt.

For they did not abide by their covenant with me,
And therefore I disregarded them,' says the Lord.

- 10 'This is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel
After those days,' says the Lord.

'I will impress my laws on their minds,
And will inscribe them on their hearts;
And I will be their God,
And they will be my people.

- 11 There will be no need for anyone to instruct their fellow citizen,
Or for a person to say to their relatives "Learn to know the Lord";
For everyone will know me,
From the lowest to the highest.

- 12 For I will be merciful to their wrong-doings,
And I will no longer remember their sins."

- 13 By speaking of a new covenant, God at once renders the former
covenant obsolete; and whatever becomes obsolete and loses its force
is virtually annulled.

The New Revelation and the Old

- 9 It is true that even the first covenant had its regulations for divine worship,
2 and its sanctuary – though only a material one. For a tent was constructed,
3 with an outer part which contained the stand for the lamps, and the table,
4 and the consecrated bread. This is called the sanctuary. The part of the tent
5 behind the second curtain is called the inner sanctuary. In it is the gold
incense-altar, and the ark containing the covenant, completely covered
6 with gold. In the ark is a gold casket containing the manna, Aaron's rod
7 that budded, and the tablets on which the covenant was written; while
above it, and overshadowing the cover on which atonement was made, are
the cherubim of the presence. Now is not the time to discuss these things
8 in detail. Such, then, was the arrangement of the tent. Into the outer part
9 priests are constantly going, in the discharge of their sacred duties; but
into the inner only the high priest goes, and that but once a year, and never
without taking the blood of a victim, which he offers on his own behalf,
10 and on behalf of the errors of the people. By this the Holy Spirit is teaching
that the way into the sanctuary was hidden, as long as the outer part of
the tent still remained. For that was only a type, to continue down to the
present time; and, in keeping with it, both gifts and sacrifices are offered,
11 though incapable of satisfying the conscience of the worshiper; the whole
system being concerned only with food and drink and various ablutions –
external ceremonials imposed until the coming of the new order.
- 11 But, when Christ came, he appeared as high priest of that better system
which was established; and he entered through that nobler and more
perfect tent, not made by human hands – that is to say, not a part of this
12 present creation. Nor was it with the blood of goats and calves, but with
his own blood, that he entered, once and for all, into the sanctuary, and
13 obtained our eternal deliverance. For, if the blood of goats and bulls, and
the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, purify those who have been defiled
14 (as far as ceremonial purification goes), how much more will the blood
of the Christ, who, through his eternal Spirit, offered himself up to God,
as a victim without blemish, purify our consciences from a lifeless for-
15 mality, and fit us for the service of the living God! And that is why he is
the intermediary of a new covenant; in order that, as a death has taken
place to effect a deliverance from the offences committed under the first
covenant, those who have received the call may obtain the eternal inheri-
16 tance promised to them. Whenever such a covenant as a will is in question,
17 the death of the testator must of necessity be alleged. For such a covenant
takes effect only on death, it does not come into force as long as the testator

18 is alive. This explains why even the first covenant was not ratified without
19 the shedding of blood. For, when every command had been announced
to all the people by Moses in accordance with the Law, he took the blood
of the calves and of the goats, with water, scarlet wool, and a bunch of
hyssop, and sprinkled even the book of the Law, as well as all the people,
20 saying, as he did so – ‘This is the blood that renders valid the covenant
21 which God has commanded to be made with you.’ And in the same way
he also sprinkled with the blood the tent and all the things that were used
22 in public worship. Indeed, under the Law, almost everything is purified
with blood; and, unless blood is shed, no forgiveness is to be obtained.

23 While, then, it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly realities
to be purified by such means as these, the heavenly realities themselves
24 required better sacrifices. For it was not into a sanctuary made by human
hands, which merely foreshadowed the true one, that Christ entered, but
into heaven itself, so that he might now appear in the presence of God on
25 our behalf. Nor yet was it to offer himself many times, as year after year the
high priest entered the sanctuary with an offering of blood – but not his
26 own blood; for then Christ would have had to undergo death many times
since the creation of the world. But now, once and for all, at the close of
the age, he has appeared, in order to abolish sin by the sacrifice of himself.
27 And, as it is ordained for people to die but once (death being followed
28 by judgment), so it is with the Christ. He was offered up once and for all,
to bear away the sins of many; and the second time he will appear – but
without any burden of sin – to those who are waiting for him, to bring
salvation.

10 The Law, though able to foreshadow the better system which was coming,
never had its actual substance. Its priests, with those sacrifices which they
offer continuously year after year, can never make those who come to
2 worship perfect. Otherwise, would not the offering of these sacrifices have
been abandoned, as the worshipers, having been once purified, would
3 have had their consciences clear from sins? But, on the contrary, these
4 sacrifices recall their sins to mind year after year. For the blood of bulls
5 and goats is powerless to remove sins. That is why, when he was coming
into the world, the Christ declared –

“Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you provide for me a
body;

6 You take no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin.
7 So I said, ‘See, I have come’ (as is written of me in the pages of the
book),

'To do your will, God.'"

8 First come the words – "You do not desire, nor do you take pleasure in, sacrifices, offerings, burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin" (offerings regularly made under the Law), and then there is added – "See, I have come to do your will." The former sacrifices are set aside to be replaced by the latter. And it is in the fulfilment of the will of God that we have been purified by the sacrifice, once and for all, of the body of Jesus Christ.

10 Every other priest stands day after day at his ministrations, and offers the same sacrifices over and over again – sacrifices that can never take sins away. But, this priest, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, which should serve for all time, "took his seat at the right hand of God," and has since then been waiting "for his enemies to be put as a stool for his feet." By a single offering he has made perfect for all time those who are being purified. We have also the testimony of the Holy Spirit. For, after saying –

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them

After those days,' says the Lord;

'I will impress my laws on their hearts,
And will inscribe them on their minds,'"

17 then we have –

"And their sins and their iniquities I will no longer remember."

18 And, when these are forgiven, there is no further need of an offering for sin.

Encouragement and Warning

19 Therefore, friends, since we may enter the sanctuary with confidence, in virtue of the blood of Jesus, by the way which he inaugurated for us – a new and living way, a way through the sanctuary curtain (that is, his human nature); and, since we have in him "a great priest set over the house of God," let us draw near to God in all sincerity of heart and in perfect faith, with our hearts purified by the sprinkled blood from all consciousness of wrong, and with our bodies washed with pure water. Let us maintain the confession of our hope unshaken, for he who has given us his promise will not fail us. Let us vie with one another in a rivalry of love and noble actions. And let us not, as some do, cease to meet together; but, on the contrary, let us encourage one another, and all the more, now that you see

26 the day drawing near. Remember, if we sin wilfully after we have gained a
27 full knowledge of the truth, there can be no further sacrifice for sin; there is
28 only a fearful anticipation of judgment, and a burning indignation which
29 will destroy all opponents. When someone disregarded the Law of Moses,
they were, on the evidence of two or three witnesses, put to death without
pity. How much worse then, think you, will be the punishment deserved
by those who have trampled underfoot the Son of God, who have treated
the blood that rendered the covenant valid – the blood by which they were
purified – as if it were not holy, and who have outraged the Spirit of love?

30 We know who it was that said –

“It is for me to avenge, I will requite”;

and again –

“The Lord will judge his people.”

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
32 Call to mind those early days in which, after you had received the light,
33 you patiently underwent a long and painful conflict. Sometimes, in conse-
quence of the taunts and injuries heaped on you, you became a public
spectacle; and sometimes you suffered through having shown yourselves
to be the friends of people who were in the same position in which you
34 had been. For you not only sympathised with those who were in prison,
but you even took the confiscation of your possessions joyfully, knowing,
as you did, that you had in yourselves a greater possession and a lasting
35 one. Do not, therefore, abandon the confidence that you have gained, for it
36 has a great reward awaiting it. You still have need of patient endurance, in
order that, when you have done God’s will, you may obtain the fulfilment
of his promise.

37 “For there is indeed but a very little while
Ere He who is coming will have come, without delay;
38 And through faith the righteous will find life,
But, if anyone draws back, my heart can find no pleasure in
them.”

39 But we do not belong to those who draw back, to their ruin, but to
those who have faith, to the saving of their souls.

Heroes of Faith

- 11 Faith is the realisation of things hoped for – the proof of things not seen.
- 2 And it was for faith that the people of old were renowned. Faith enables
- 3 us to perceive that the universe was created at the bidding of God – so
- 4 that we know that what we see was not made out of visible things. Faith
- made the sacrifice which Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain's,
- and won him renown as a righteous man, God himself establishing his
- renown by accepting his gifts; and it is by the example of his faith that
- 5 Abel, though dead, still speaks. Faith led to Enoch's removal from earth, so
- that he might not experience death. "He could not be found because God
- had removed him." For, before his removal, he was renowned as having
- 6 pleased God; but without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who
- comes to God must believe that God exists, and that he rewards those who
- seek for him.
- 7 It was faith that enabled Noah, after he had received the divine warning
- about what could not then be foreseen, to build, in reverent obedience, an
- ark in which to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world, and
- became possessed of that righteousness which follows on faith.
- 8 It was faith that enabled Abraham to obey the call that he received, and
- to set out for the place which he was afterwards to obtain as his own; and
- 9 he set out not knowing where he was going. It was faith that made him
- go to live as an emigrant in the promised land – as in a strange country –
- living there in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who shared the promise with
- 10 him. For he was looking for the city with the sure foundations, whose
- architect and builder is God.
- 11 Again, it was faith that enabled Sarah to conceive (though she was past
- the age for child-bearing), because she felt sure that he who had given her
- 12 the promise would not fail her. And so from one man – and that when his
- powers were dead – there sprang a people as numerous "as the stars in
- the heavens or the countless grains of sand on the shore."
- 13 All these died sustained by faith. They did not obtain the promised
- blessings, but they saw them from a distance and welcomed the sight,
- and they acknowledged themselves to be only aliens and strangers on the
- 14 earth. Those who speak like this show plainly that they are seeking their
- homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left, they
- 16 could have found opportunities to return. But no, they were longing for a
- better, a heavenly, land! And therefore God was not ashamed to be called
- 17 their God; indeed he had already prepared them a city. It was faith that
- enabled Abraham, when put to the test, to offer Isaac as a sacrifice – he

- 18 who had received the promises offering up his only son, of whom it had been said –

“It is through Isaac that there will be descendants to bear your name.”

- 19 For he argued that God was even able to raise a man from the dead – and indeed, figuratively speaking, Abraham did receive Isaac back from 20 the dead. It was faith that enabled Isaac to bless Jacob and Esau, even 21 with regard to the future. Faith enabled Jacob, when dying, to give his blessing to each of the sons of Joseph, and “to bow himself in worship 22 as he leant on the top of his staff.” Faith caused Joseph, when his end 23 was near, to speak of the future migration of the Israelites, and to give 24 instructions with regard to his bones. Faith caused the parents of Moses 25 to hide the child for three months after his birth, for they saw that he 26 was a beautiful child; and they would not respect the king’s order. It was 27 faith that caused Moses, when he was grown up, to refuse the title of 28 “son of a daughter of Pharaoh.” He preferred sharing the hardships of 29 God’s people to enjoying the short-lived pleasures of sin. For he counted 30 “the reproaches that are heaped on the Christ” of greater value than the 31 treasures of Egypt, looking forward, as he did, to the reward awaiting 32 him. Faith caused him to leave Egypt, though undaunted by the king’s 33 anger, for he was strengthened in his endurance by the vision of the 34 invisible God. Faith led him to institute the Passover and the sprinkling 35 of the blood, so that the Destroyer might not touch the eldest children of 36 the Israelites. Faith enabled the people to cross the Red Sea, as if it had 37 been dry land, while the Egyptians, when they attempted to do so, were drowned. Faith caused the walls of Jericho to fall after being encircled for seven days. Faith saved Rahab, the prostitute, from perishing with the unbelievers, after she had entertained the spies with friendliness.
- 32 Need I add anything more? Time would fail me if I attempted to relate the stories of Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah, and those of David, 33 Samuel, and the prophets. By their faith they subdued kingdoms, ruled 34 righteously, gained the fulfilment of God’s promises, shut the mouths of lions, quelled the fury of the flames, escaped the edge of the sword, found strength in the hour of weakness, displayed their prowess in war, and 35 routed hostile armies. Women received back their dead raised to life. Some 36 were tortured on the wheel, and refused release in order that they might rise to a better life. Others had to face taunts and blows, and even chains 37 and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were tortured, they were swan asunder, they were put to the sword; they wandered about

clothed in the skins of sheep or goats, destitute, persecuted, ill-used –
38 people of whom the world was not worthy – roaming in lonely places, and
39 on the mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. Yet, though they
40 all won renown by their faith, they did not obtain the final fulfilment of
God's promise; since God had in view some better thing for us, so that
they would only reach perfection together with us.

12 Seeing, therefore, that there is on every side of us such a throng of
witnesses, let us also lay aside everything that hinders us, and the sin that
clings about us, and run with patient endurance the race that lies before us,
2 our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfect example of our faith, who,
for the joy that lay before him, endured the cross, heedless of its shame,
3 and now "has taken his seat at the right hand" of the throne of God. Weigh
well the example of him who had to endure such opposition from "people
who were sinning against themselves," so that you should not grow weary
4 or faint-hearted. You have not yet, in your struggle with sin, resisted to the
5 death; and you have forgotten the encouraging words which are addressed
to you as God's children –

"My child, think not lightly of the Lord's discipline,
Do not despond when he rebukes you;
6 For it is him whom he loves that he disciplines,
And he chastises every child whom he acknowledges."

7 It is for your discipline that you have to endure all this. God is dealing
with you as his children. For where is there a child whom his father does
8 not discipline? If you are left without that discipline, in which all children
9 share, it shows that you are bastards, and not true children. Further,
when our earthly fathers disciplined us, we respected them. Should we
not, then, much rather yield submission to the Father of souls, and live?
10 Our fathers disciplined us for only a short time and as seemed best to
them; but God disciplines us for our true good, to enable us to share
11 his holiness. No discipline is pleasant at the time; on the contrary, it is
painful. But afterwards its fruit is seen in the peacefulness of a righteous
12 life which is the lot of those who have been trained under it. Therefore
"lift again the down-dropped hands and straighten the weakened knees;
13 make straight paths for your feet," so that the lame limb may not be put
out of joint, but rather be cured.

Conclusion

14 Try earnestly to live at peace with everyone, and to attain to that purity
15 without which no one will see the Lord. Take care that no one fails to use
the loving help of God, "that no bitterness is allowed to take root and
16 spring up, and cause trouble," and so poison the whole community. Take
care that no one becomes immoral, or irreligious like Esau, who sold his
17 birthright for a single meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he
wished to claim his father's blessing, he was rejected – for he never found
an opportunity to repair his error – though he begged for the blessing with
tears.

18 It is not to tangible "flaming fire" that you have drawn near, nor to
19 "gloom, and darkness, and storm, and the blast of a trumpet, and an audible
voice." Those who heard that voice entreated that they might hear no more,
20 for they could not bear to think of the command – "If even an animal
21 touches the mountain, it is to be stoned to death;" and so fearful was the
22 sight that Moses said – "I tremble with fear." No, but it is to Mount Zion that
you have drawn near, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to
23 countless hosts of angels, to the festal gathering and assemblage of God's
firstborn whose names are enrolled in heaven, to God the judge of all
24 people, to the spirits of the righteous who have attained perfection, to
Jesus, the intermediary of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that
25 tells of better things than the blood of Abel. Beware how you refuse to
hear him who is speaking. For, if the Israelites did not escape punishment,
when they refused to listen to him who taught them on earth the divine
will, far worse will it be for us, if we turn away from him who is teaching
26 us from heaven. Then his voice shook the earth, but now his declaration is

–
"Still once more I will cause not only the earth to tremble, but also
the heavens."

27 And those words "still once more" indicate the passing away of all
that is shaken – that is, of all created things – in order that only what is
28 unshaken may remain. Therefore, let us, who have received a kingdom
that cannot be shaken, be thankful, and so offer acceptable worship to
29 God, with awe and the deepest respect. For our God is "a consuming
fire."
13 Let your love for the Lord's followers continue. Do not neglect to show
2 hospitality; for, through being hospitable, people have all unawares enter-
3 tained angels. Remember the prisoners, as if you were their fellow prison-
ers, and the oppressed, not forgetting that you also are still in the body.

- 4 Let marriage be honoured by all and the married life be pure; for God will
5 judge those who are immoral and those who commit adultery. Do not let
your conduct be ruled by the love of money. Be content with what you
have, for God himself has said –

“I will never forsake you, nor will I ever abandon you.”

- 6 Therefore we may say with confidence –

“The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.
What can mere people do to me?”

- 7 Do not forget your leaders, who told you God’s message. Recall the
close of their lives, and imitate their faith.

- 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today – yes, and for ever! Do not
9 let yourselves be carried away by the various novel forms of teaching. It is
better to rely for spiritual strength on the divine help, than on regulations
regarding food; for those whose lives are guided by such regulations have
10 not found them of service. We are not without an altar; but it is one at which
11 those who still worship in the tent have no right to eat. The bodies of those
animals whose blood is brought by the high priest into the sanctuary, as an
offering for sin, are burnt outside the camp. And so Jesus, also, to purify
13 the people by his own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us
14 go out to him “outside the camp,” bearing the same reproaches as he; for
here we have no permanent city, but are looking for the city that is to be.
15 Through him let us offer, as our sacrifice, continual praise to God – an
offering from lips that glorify his name. Never forget to do kindly acts and
to share what you have with others, for such sacrifices are acceptable to
17 God. Obey your leaders, and submit to their control, for they are watching
over your souls, since they will have to render an account, so that they may
do it with joy, and not in sorrow. That would not be to your advantage.

- 18 Pray for us, for we are sure that our consciences are clear, since our wish
19 is to be occupied with what is good. And I the more earnestly ask for your
prayers, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

- 20 May God, the source of all peace, who brought back from the dead
him who, “by virtue of the blood that rendered valid the unchangeable
21 covenant, is the great shepherd of God’s Sheep,” Jesus, our Lord – may
God make you perfect in everything that is good, so that you may be able to
do his will. May he bring out in us all that is pleasing in his sight, through
Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- 22 I beg you, friends, to bear with these words of advice. For I have written
only very briefly to you.

- 23 You will be glad to hear that our friend, Timothy, has been set free. If he comes here soon, we will visit you together.
- 24 Give our greeting to all your leaders, and to all Christ's people. Our friends from Italy send their greetings to you.
- 25 May God bless you all.

THE LETTER FROM JAMES

Greeting

- 1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, greets the twelve tribes that are living abroad.

Advice on Various Subjects

- 2 My friends, whatever trials you may face from time to time, always regard them as a reason for rejoicing, knowing, as you do, that the testing of your faith develops endurance. And let endurance do its work perfectly, so that you may be altogether perfect, and in no respect lacking.
- 5 If any one of you lacks wisdom, they should ask wisdom from the God who gives freely to everyone without reproach, and it will be given to them.
- 6 But they should ask with confidence, never doubting; for the person who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven here and there at the mercy of the wind – Such a person must not expect that they will receive anything from the Lord, vacillating as they are, irresolute at every turn.
- 9 Let a follower in humble circumstances be proud of their exalted position, but a rich follower of their humiliation; for the rich will pass away like a wild flower. As the sun rises, and the hot wind blows, the plant withers, its flower fades, and all its beauty is gone. So is it with the rich. In the midst of their pursuits they will wither away.
- 12 Blessed is the person who remains firm under temptation, for, when they have stood the test, they will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love him. Let no one say, when they are tempted, 'It is God who is tempting me!' For God, who cannot be tempted to do wrong, does not himself tempt anyone. A man is in every case tempted by their own passions – allured and enticed by them. Then passion conceives and gives birth to sin, and sin, on reaching maturity, brings forth death. Do
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16

- 17 not be deceived, my dear friends. Every good thing given us, and every perfect gift, is from above, and comes down to us from the Father of the lights in the heavens, who is himself never subject to change or to eclipse.
- 18 Because he so willed, he gave us life, through the message of the truth, so that we should be, as it were, a kind of first fruits of his creation.
- 19 Mark this, my dear friends – Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak,
- 20 and slow to get angry; for human anger does not forward the righteous purpose of God. Therefore, get rid of all filthiness and whatever wickedness still remains, and in a humble spirit receive that message which has been
- 21 planted in your hearts and is able to save your souls. Put that message into
- 22 practice, and do not merely listen to it – deceiving yourselves. For, when
- 23 anyone listens to it and does not practice it, they are like a person looking
- 24 at their own face in a mirror. They look at themselves, then go on their
- 25 way, but the person who looks carefully into the perfect Law, the Law of
- 26 freedom, and continues to do so, not listening to it and then forgetting it,
- 27 but putting it into practice – that person will be blessed in what they do.
- When a person appears to be religious, yet does not bridle their tongue, but imposes on their own conscience, that person's religious observances are valueless. That religious observance which is pure and spotless in the eyes of God our Father is this – to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself uncontaminated by the world.

Warning on Various Subjects

- 2 My friends, are you really trying to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our
- 2 glorified Lord, with discrimination? Suppose a visitor should enter your
- 3 synagogue, with gold rings and in grand clothes, and suppose a poor man
- 3 should come in also, in shabby clothes, and you show more respect to
- the visitor who is wearing grand clothes, and say – ‘There is a good seat
- 4 for you here,’ but to the poor man – ‘You must stand; or sit down there
- 4 by my footstool.’ Haven’t you made distinctions among yourselves, and
- 5 used evil standards of judgement? Listen, my dear friends. Has not God
- chosen those who are poor in the things of this world to be rich through
- their faith, and to possess the kingdom which he has promised to those
- 6 who love him? But you – you insult the poor man! Isn’t it the rich who
- 7 oppress you? Isn’t it they who drag you into law courts? Isn’t it they who
- 8 malign that honourable name spoken over you at your baptism? If you
- keep the royal law which runs – “You must love your neighbour as you

9 love yourself," you are doing right; but, if you discriminate, you commit a sin, and stand convicted by that same law of being offenders against it.
10 For a person who has laid the Law, as a whole, to heart, but has failed in
11 one particular, is accountable for breaking all its provisions. He who said
"You must not commit adultery" also said "You must not murder." If, then,
12 you commit murder but not adultery, you are still an offender against the
13 Law. Therefore, speak and act as people who are to be judged by the "Law
of freedom." For there will be justice without mercy for the person who
has not acted mercifully. Mercy triumphs over Justice.

14 My friends, what good is it if someone claims that they have faith, but
15 they do not prove it by actions? Can such faith save them? Suppose some
16 brother or sister should be in need of clothes and of daily bread, and one
17 of you says to them – 'Go, and peace be with you; keep warm and eat well!'
18 and yet you do not actually give them the necessities of life, what good
would it be to them? In just the same way faith, if not followed by actions,
is, by itself, a lifeless thing. Someone, indeed, may say – 'You are a man of
faith, and I am a man of action.'

'Then show me your faith,' I reply, 'apart from any actions, and I will
19 show you my faith by my actions.' It is a part of your faith, is it not, that
there is one God? Good; yet even the demons have that faith, and tremble
20 at the thought. Now do you really want to understand, fool, how it is that
21 faith without actions leads to nothing? Look at our ancestor, Abraham.
Was he not justified by his actions after he had offered his son, Isaac, on
22 the altar? You see how, in his case, faith and actions went together; that
23 his faith was perfected as the result of his actions; and that in this way
the words of scripture came true – 'Abraham believed God, and that was
regarded by God as righteousness,' and 'He was called the friend of God.'
24 You see, then, that a person is justified by actions, and not by faith alone.
25 Wasn't it the same with the prostitute, Rahab? Was she not justified by her
actions, after she had welcomed the messengers and helped them escape
26 by another road? Just as a body is dead without a spirit, so faith is dead
without actions.

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my friends, because you know
2 that we who teach will be judged more strictly than others. We often make
mistakes, every one of us. Anyone who does not make mistakes when
speaking is indeed a perfect person, able to bridle their whole body as
3 well. When we put bits into horses' mouths to make them obey us, we
4 change their course the rest of their bodies. Again, think of ships. Large
as they are, and even when driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a
very small rudder and steered in whatever direction the man at the helm

5 may determine. So is it with the tongue. Small as it is, it is a great boaster.
6 Think how a tiny spark may set the largest forest ablaze! And the tongue is
like a spark. It is a world of unrighteousness among the parts of our body.
It contaminates the whole body; it sets the whole course of our existence
7 on fire, and is itself set on fire by the flames of Gehenna. For while all
kinds of animals, birds and reptiles and sea creatures can be tamed and
8 have been tamed by humans, no human being can tame the tongue. It is a
9 restless plague! It is charged with deadly poison! With it we bless our Lord
and Father, and with it we curse people who are made "in God's likeness."
10 From the very same mouth come blessings and curses! My friends, it is not
11 right that this should be so. Does a spring give both good and bad water
12 from the same source? Can a fig tree, my friends, bear olives? Or a vine
bear figs? No, nor can a brackish well give good water.

13 Who among you claims to be wise and intelligent? They should show
that their actions are the outcome of a good life lived in the humility of
14 true wisdom. But if you harbour bitter envy and a spirit of rivalry in
15 your hearts, do not boast or deny the truth. That is not the wisdom which
16 comes from above; no, it is earthly, animalistic, demonic. For where envy
and rivalry exist, there you will also find disorder and all kinds of bad,
17 worthless actions. But the wisdom from above is, before everything else,
pure; then peace-loving, gentle, open to conviction, rich in compassion and
18 good deeds, and free from partiality and insincerity. Justice is the harvest
peacemakers will reap from seeds sown in a spirit of peace.

4 What is the cause of the fighting and quarrelling that goes on among
you? Isn't it to be found in the desires which are always at war within you?
2 You crave, yet do not have, so you commit murder, so You covet, yet cannot
gain your end. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not
3 ask. You ask, yet do not receive, because you ask for a wrong purpose –
4 to spend what you get on your pleasures. Unfaithful people! Don't you
know that to be friends with the world means to be at enmity with God?
Therefore whoever chooses to be friends with the world makes himself
5 an enemy to God. Do you suppose scripture means nothing when it says,
"Envy results from the longings of the spirit which God has implanted
6 within you?" But he gives us greater grace; and that is why it says, –

"God opposes the haughty,
but gives grace to the humble."

7 Therefore submit to God. Stand up to the devil, and he will flee from
8 you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Make your hands

- 9 clean, you sinners; and your hearts pure, you vacillators! Grieve, mourn, and lament! Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your happiness to gloom! Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.
- 10 Do not disparage one another, friends. The person who disparages others, or passes judgment on them, disparages the Law and passes judgment on the Law. But, if you pass judgment on the Law, you are not obeying
- 11 it, but judging it. There is only one lawgiver and judge – he who has the power both to save and to destroy. So then who are you to pass judgment on your neighbour?
- 13 Listen to me, you who say “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money,”
- 14 yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow! For you are but
- 15 a puff of smoke that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead
- 16 you should say “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” But as
- 17 it is, you are boasting presumptuously! All such boasting is wicked. The person, then, who knows what is right but fails to do it – that is sin in them.
- 5 Listen to me, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are
- 2 coming upon you! Your riches have wasted away, and your clothes have
- 3 become moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are rusted; and the rust on them
- 4 will be evidence against you, and will eat into your flesh. It was fire, so
- to speak, that you stored up for yourselves in these last days. Listen! The
- wages you have held back from the labourers who mowed your fields are
- crying out against you, and the outcries of your harvesters have reached
- 5 the ears of the Lord of Hosts! You have lived on earth a life of extravagance
- 6 and luxury; you have indulged your fancies in a time of bloodshed. You
- have condemned, you have murdered, the righteous one! Must not God
- be opposed to you?

Concluding Appeal

- 7 Be patient, then, friends, until the coming of the Lord. Even the farmer has to wait for the precious fruit of the earth, watching over it patiently,
- 8 until it has had the spring and summer rains. And you must be patient
- 9 also, and not be discouraged; for the Lord’s coming is near. Do not make
- complaints against one another, friends, or judgment will be passed on
- 10 you. The judge is already standing at the door! Friends, as an example of
- the patient endurance of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the
- 11 name of the Lord. We count those who displayed such endurance blessed!

You have heard, too, of Job's endurance, and have seen what the Lord's purpose was, for "the Lord is full of pity and compassion."

- 12 Above all things, my friends, never take an oath, either by heaven, or by earth, or by anything else. Let your "Yes" suffice for yes, and "No" for no, so that you may escape condemnation.
- 13 If anyone of you is in trouble, they should pray; if anyone is happy, they should sing hymns. If anyone of you is ill, they should send for the church elders, and let them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer offered in faith will save the person who is sick, and the Lord will raise them from their bed; and if they have committed sins, they will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be cured. Great is the power of a good person's fervent prayer. Elijah was only human like ourselves, but, when he prayed fervently that it might not rain, no rain fell on the land for three and a half years. And, when he prayed again, the clouds brought rain, and the land bore crops. My friends, should one of you be led astray from the truth, and someone bring them back again, be sure that the person who brings a sinner back from their mistaken ways will save that person's soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.

PETER'S FIRST LETTER

Introduction

- 1 To the people of God who are living abroad, dispersed throughout Pontus,
- 2 Galatia, Cappadocia, Roman Asia, and Bithynia, and who were chosen in accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the consecration of the Spirit, to learn obedience, and to be purified by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. May blessing and peace be yours in ever increasing measure.

The Christian's Hope of Salvation

- 3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has, in his great mercy, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, given us the new life of undying hope, that promises an inheritance, imperishable, stainless, unfading, which has been reserved for you in heaven – for you who, through faith, are being guarded by the power of God, awaiting a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last days. At the thought of this you are full of exultation, though (if it has been necessary) you have suffered for the moment somewhat from various trials; that the genuineness of your faith – a thing far more precious than gold, which is perishable, yet has to be tested by fire – may win praise and glory and honour at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Though you have never seen him, yet you love him; though you do not even now see him, yet you believe in him, and exalt with a triumphant happiness too great for words, as you receive the reward of your faith in the salvation of your souls! It was this salvation that the prophets, who spoke long ago of the blessing intended for you, sought, and strove to comprehend; as they strove to discern what that time could be, to which the Spirit of Christ within them was pointing, when foretelling the sufferings that Christ would have to endure, and the glories that would follow. And it was revealed to them that it was not for themselves, but for you, that they were acting as Ministers of the truths which have now been told to you, by those who, with the help of the Holy Spirit

sent from heaven, have brought you the good news – truths into which even angels long to look.

The Christian's Character

- 13 Therefore concentrate your minds, with the strictest self-control, and fix your hopes on the blessing that is coming for you at the appearing of Jesus
- 14 Christ. Be like obedient children; do not let your lives be shaped by the
- 15 passions which once swayed you in the days of your ignorance, but in your whole life show yourselves to be holy, after the pattern of the Holy One
- 16 from whom you received your call. For scripture says –

“You will be holy, because I am holy.”

- 17 And since you call on him as “Father,” who judges everyone impartially by what he has done, let respectful awe be the spirit of your lives
- 18 during the time of your stay on earth. For you know that it was not by perishable things, such as silver and gold, that you were ransomed from the aimless way of living which was handed down to you from your ancestors, but by precious blood, as it were of a lamb, unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. Destined for this before the beginning of
- 19 the world, he has been revealed in these last days for your sakes, who,
- 20 through him, are faithful to God who raised him from the dead and gave him honour, so that your faith and hope are now in God.
- 21 Now that, by your obedience to the truth, you have purified your lives, so that there is growing up among you a genuine affection, love one another
- 22 earnestly with all your hearts; since your new life has come, not from perishable, but imperishable, seed, through the message of the Everliving
- 23 God. For –

“All earthly life is but as grass,
and all its splendour as the flower of grass.

The grass fades,
its flower falls,

- 25 but the teaching of the Lord remains for ever.”

And that is the teaching of the good news which has been told to you.

- 2 Now that you have done with all malice, all deceitfulness, insincerity,
- 2 jealous feelings, and all backbiting, like newly born infants, crave pure spiritual milk, so that you may be enabled by it to grow until you attain

- 3 salvation – since “you have found by experience that the Lord is kind.”
- 4 Come to him, then, as to a living stone, rejected, indeed, by men, but in
- 5 God’s eyes choice and precious; and, as living stones, form yourselves into a spiritual house, to be a consecrated priesthood, for the offering of spiritual sacrifices that will be acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- 6 For there is a passage of scripture that runs –

“See, I am placing in Zion a choice and precious corner-stone;
And those who believe in him will have no cause for shame.”

- 7 It is to you, then, who believe in him that he is precious, but to those who do not believe he is “a stone which, though rejected by the builders,
- 8 has now itself become the corner-stone,” and “a stumbling-block, and a rock which will prove a hindrance.” They stumble because they do
- 9 not accept the message. This was the fate destined for them. But you are “a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, God’s own people,” entrusted with the proclamation of the goodness of him who
- 10 called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were “not a people,” but now you are “God’s people”; once you “had not found mercy,” but now you “have found mercy.”

Practical Appeals in view of the Dangers of the Times.

- 11 Dear friends, I beg you, as pilgrims and strangers on earth, to refrain from indulging the cravings of your earthly nature, for they make war on the soul. Let your daily life among the Gentiles be so upright, that, whenever they malign you as evil-doers, they may learn, as they watch, from the uprightness of your conduct, to praise God “at the time when he will visit them.”
- 13 Submit to all human institutions for the Lord’s sake, alike to the emperor as the supreme authority, and to governors as sent by him to punish evildoers and to commend those who do right. For God’s will is this – that you should silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing what is right.
- 14 Act as free people, yet not using your freedom as those do who make it a cloak for wickedness, but as Servants of God. Show honour to everyone, love the Lord’s followers, “revere God, honour the emperor.”
- 18 Those of you who are domestic servants should always be submissive and respectful to their masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are arbitrary. For this wins God’s approval

when, because conscious of God's presence, a person who is suffering unjustly bears their troubles patiently. What credit can you claim when, after doing wrong, you take your punishment for it patiently? But, on the other hand, if, after doing right, you take your sufferings patiently, that does win the approval of God. For it was to this that you were called! For Christ, too, suffered – on your behalf – and left you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He "never sinned, nor was anything deceitful ever heard from his lips." He was abused, but he did not answer with abuse; he suffered, but he did not threaten; he entrusted himself to him whose judgments are just. And he "himself carried our sins" in his own body to the cross, so that we might die to our sins, and live for righteousness. "His bruising was your healing." Once you were straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Again, you married women should submit to your husbands, so that if any of them reject the message, they may, apart from the message, be won over, by the conduct of their wives, as they see your pure, reverent conduct. Yours should be, not the external adornment of the arrangement of the hair, the wearing of jewellery, or the putting on of dresses, but the inner life with the imperishable beauty of a quiet and gentle spirit; for this is very precious in God's sight. It was by this that the holy women of old, who rested their hopes on God, adorned themselves; submitting to their husbands, as Sarah did, who obeyed Abraham, and called him master. And you are her true children, as long as you live good lives, and let nothing terrify you.

Again, those of you who are married men should live considerately with their wives, showing due regard to their sex, as physically weaker than their own, and not forgetting that they share with you in the gift of life. Then you will be able to pray without hindrance.

Lastly, you should all be united, sympathetic, full of love for each other, kind-hearted, humble-minded; never returning evil for evil, or abuse for abuse, but, on the contrary, blessing. It was to this that you were called – to obtain a blessing!

"The person who wants to enjoy life
And see happy days –
They should keep their tongue from evil
And their lips from deceitful words,
they should turn from evil and do good,
They should seek for peace and follow after it;
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,

And his ears are attentive to their prayers,
But the face of the Lord is set against those who do wrong."

13 Who, indeed, is there to harm you, if you prove yourselves to be eager for
14 what is good? Even if you should suffer for righteousness, count yourselves
blessed! "Do not let people terrify you, or allow yourselves to be dismayed."
15 Revere the Christ as Lord in your hearts; always ready to give an answer
to anyone who asks your reason for the hope that you cherish, but giving
16 it with courtesy and respect, and keeping your consciences clear, so that,
whenever you are maligned, those who vilify your good and Christian
17 conduct may be put to shame. It is better that you should suffer, if that
18 should be God's will, for doing right, than for doing wrong. For Christ
himself died to atone for sins once for all – the good on behalf of the bad
– that he might bring you to God; his body being put to death, but his
19 spirit entering on new life. And it was then that he went and preached to
20 the imprisoned spirits, who once were disobedient, at the time when God
patiently waited, in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared;
21 in which some few lives, eight in all, were saved by means of water. And
baptism, which this foreshadowed, now saves you – not the mere cleansing
of the body, but the search of a clear conscience after God – through the
22 resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven, and is at God's
right hand, where angels and archangels and the powers of heaven now
yield submission to him.

4 Since, then, Christ suffered in body, arm yourselves with the same resolve
2 as he; for he who has suffered in body has ceased to sin, and so will live the
rest of his earthly life guided, not by human passions, but by the will of God.
3 Surely in the past you have spent time enough living as the Gentiles delight
to live. For your path has lain among scenes of debauchery, licentiousness,
4 drunkenness, revelry, hard-drinking, and profane idolatry. And, because
you do not run to the same extremes of profligacy as others, they are
5 astonished, and malign you. But they will have to answer for their conduct
6 to him who is ready to judge both the living and the dead. For that was
why the good news was told to the dead also – that, after they have been
judged in the body, as people are judged, they might live in the spirit, as
God lives.

7 But the end of all things is near. Therefore exercise self-restraint and be
8 calm, so that you may be able to pray. Above all things, let your love for
9 one another be earnest, for "Love throws a veil over countless sins." Never
10 grudge hospitality to one another. Whatever the gift that each has received,

- use it in the service of others, as good stewards of the varied bounty of
- 11 God. When anyone speaks, they should speak as one who is delivering the oracles of God. When anyone is endeavouring to serve others, they should do so in reliance on the strength which God supplies; so that in everything God may be honoured through Jesus Christ – to whom be ascribed all honour and might for ever and ever. Amen.
- 12 Dear friends, do not be astonished at the trial of fire that you are passing through, to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.
- 13 No, the more you share the sufferings of the Christ, the more may you rejoice, that, when the time comes for the manifestation of his glory, you
- 14 may rejoice and exult. If you are insulted for bearing the name of Christ, count yourselves blessed; because the divine glory and the Spirit of God
- 15 are resting on you. I need hardly say that no one among you must suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a criminal, or for interfering in matters which do
- 16 not concern Christians. But, if someone suffers as a Christian, they should not be ashamed of it; they should bring honour to God even though they
- 17 bear that name. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the house of God; and, if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who
- 18 reject God's good news? If "a good person is saved only with difficulty,
- 19 what will become of the godless and the sinful?" Therefore, I say, let those who suffer, because God wills it so, commit their lives into the hands of a faithful Creator, and persevere in doing right.

Conclusion

- 5 As for the older ones among you, who are elders in the church, I, their fellow elder, and a witness to the sufferings of the Christ, who will also
- 2 share in the glory that is to be revealed – I beg you to be true shepherds of the flock of God among you, not because you are compelled, but of your
- 3 own free will; not from a base love of gain, but with a ready spirit; not
- 4 as lords of your charges, but as examples to your flock. Then, when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades.
- 5 Again, you younger ones should show deference to the older. And all of you should put on the badge of humility in mutual service, for "God is opposed to the proud, but gives his help to the humble."
- 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that
- 7 he may exalt you in his good time, laying all your anxieties on him, for he

- 8 makes you his care. Exercise self-control, be watchful. Your adversary, the
9 devil, like a roaring lion, is prowling about, eager to devour you. Stand firm
against him, strong in your faith; knowing, as you do, that the sufferings
which you are undergoing are being endured to the full by the Lord's
10 followers throughout the world. God, from whom all help comes, and who
called you, by your union with Christ, into his eternal glory, will, when
you have suffered for a little while, himself perfect, establish, strengthen
11 you. To him be ascribed dominion for ever. Amen.
- 12 I have been writing to you briefly by the hand of Silas, our true-hearted
friend (for so I regard him), to encourage you, and to bear my testimony
that in what I have written is to be found the true love of God. On that take
13 your stand. Your sister church in "Babylon" sends you greeting, and so
14 does Mark, who is as a son to me. Greet one another with the kiss of love.

May God give his peace to you all in your union with Christ.

PETER'S SECOND LETTER

Introduction

- 1 To those to whom, through the justice of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, there has been granted faith equally privileged with our own, from Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ.
- 2 May blessing and peace be yours in ever increasing measure, as you
- 3 advance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus, our Lord. For his divine power has given us everything that is needful for a life of piety, as we advance in the knowledge of him who called us by a glorious manifestation
- 4 of his goodness. For it was through this that he gave us what we prize as the greatest of his promises, that through them you might participate in the divine nature, now that you have fled from the corruption in the world,
- 5 resulting from human passions. Yes, and for this reason do your best to
- 6 supplement your faith by goodness, goodness by knowledge, knowledge
- 7 by self-control, self-control by endurance, endurance by piety, piety by
- 8 mutual affection, and mutual affection by love. For, when these virtues are yours, in increasing measure, they prevent your being indifferent to,
- 9 or destitute of, a fuller knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely the person who has not these virtues is shortsighted even to blindness, and
- 10 has chosen to forget that they have been purified from their sins of the past! Therefore, friends, do your best to put God's call and selection of you
- 11 beyond all doubt; for, if you do this, you will never fall. For in this way you will be given a triumphant admission into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The Transfiguration and the "Second Coming" of the Christ

- 12 I will, therefore, always be ready to remind you of all this, even though
- 13 you know it and are firmly established in the truth that you now hold. But I think it my duty, as long as I live in this "tent," to rouse you by awakening
- 14 memories of the past; for I know that the time for this "tent" of mine to be put away is soon coming, as our Lord Jesus Christ himself assured me. So I will do my best to enable you, at any time after my departure, to call these

16 truths to mind. For we were not following cleverly devised stories when
we told you of the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had
17 been eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from
God the Father, when from the glory of the Divine Majesty there were
borne to his ears words such as these – “This is my dearly loved son, who
18 brings me great joy.” These were the words that we heard, borne to our
19 ears from heaven, when we were with him on that sacred mountain. And
still stronger is the assurance that we have in the teaching of the prophets;
to which you will do well to pay attention (as if it were a lamp shining in
a gloomy place), until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your
20 hearts. But first be assured of this: There is no prophetic teaching found
21 in scripture that can be interpreted by a person’s unaided reason; for no
prophetic teaching ever came in the old days at the mere wish of people,
but people, moved by the Holy Spirit, spoke direct from God.

Warning against separating Christianity from a Holy Life

2 But there were false prophets also in the nation, just as there will be false
teachers among you, people who will secretly introduce ruinous divisions,
disowning even the Lord who bought them, and bringing speedy ruin
2 on themselves. There will be many, too, who will follow their licentious
3 courses, and cause the way of the truth to be maligned. In their covetous-
ness they will try to make you a source of profit by their fabrications; but
4 for a long time past their sentence has not been standing idle, nor their
ruin slumbering. Remember, God did not spare angels when they sinned,
but sent them down to Tartarus, and consigned them to caverns of dark-
5 ness, to be kept under guard for judgment. Nor did he spare the world of
old; though he preserved Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and seven
6 others, when he brought a flood on the godless world. He condemned
the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and reduced them to ashes, holding
7 them up as a warning to the godless of what was in store for them; but he
rescued righteous Lot, whose heart was vexed by the wanton licentious-
8 ness of his neighbours; for, seeing and hearing what he did, as he lived
his righteous life among them, day after day, Lot’s righteous soul was tor-
9 tured by their wicked doings. The Lord, therefore, knows how to deliver
the pious from temptation, and to keep the wicked, who are even now
10 suffering punishment, in readiness for “the day of judgment” – especially
those who, following the promptings of their lower nature, indulge their

polluting passions and despise all control. Audacious and self-willed, they
11 feel no awe of the celestial beings, maligning them, even where angels,
though excelling them in strength and power, do not bring against them
12 a malignant charge before the Lord. These people, however, like animals
without reason, intended by nature to be caught and killed – these people,
I say, malign those of whom they know nothing, and will assuredly perish
13 through their own corruption, suffering themselves, as the penalty for the
suffering that they have inflicted. They think that pleasure consists in the
self-indulgence of the moment. They are a stain and a disgrace, indulging,
as they do, in their wanton revelry, even while joining you at your feasts.
14 They have eyes only for adulteresses, eyes never tired of sin; they entice
weak souls; their minds are trained to covet; they live under a curse. Leav-
15 ing the straight road, they have gone astray and followed in the steps of
Balaam, the son of Beor, who set his heart on the reward for wrong-doing,
16 but was rebuked for his offence. A dumb animal spoke with a human
17 voice, and checked the prophet's madness. These people are like springs
without water, or mists driven before a gale; and for them the blackest
18 darkness has been reserved. With boastful and foolish talk, they appeal
to the passions of people's lower nature, and, by their profligacy, entice
those who are just escaping from the people who live such misguided
19 lives. They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves to
corrupt habits; for a person is the slave of anything to which they give
20 way. If, after having escaped the polluting influences of the world, through
knowing our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, people are again entangled
21 in them, and give way to them, their last state has become worse than their
first. It would, indeed, have been better for them not to have known the
way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn away from the holy
22 command delivered to them. In their case is seen the truth of the proverb
– "A dog returns to what it has vomited" and "A sow after washing to her
wallowing-place in the mud."

A Reassertion of the "Second Coming" of the Christ

- 3 This, dear friends, is my second letter to you. In both of them I have tried, by
2 appealing to your remembrance, to arouse your better feelings. I want you
to recall what was foretold by the holy prophets, as well as the command of
3 our Lord and Saviour given to you through your apostles. First be assured
of this, that, as the age draws to an end, scoffers, led by their own passions,

- 4 will come and ask scoffingly – “Where is his promised coming? Ever since our ancestors passed to their rest, everything remains just as it was when
5 the world was first created!” For they wilfully shut their eyes to the fact that long ago the heavens existed; and the earth, also – formed out of water
6 and by the action of water, by the fiat of God; and that by the same means
7 the world which then existed was destroyed in a deluge of water. But the present heavens and earth, by the same fiat, have been reserved for fire, and are being kept for the day of the judgment and destruction of the godless.
- 8 But you, dear friends, must never shut your eyes to the fact that, to the Lord, one day is the same as a thousand years, and a thousand years as
9 one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise, as some count slowness; but he is forbearing with you, as it is not his will that any of you should
10 perish, but that all should be brought to repentance. The day of the Lord will come like a thief; and on that day the heavens will pass away with a crash, the elements will be burnt up and dissolved, and the earth and
11 all that is in it will be disclosed. Now, since all these things are in the process of dissolution, think what you yourselves ought to be – what holy and pious lives you ought to lead, while you wait for the coming of the day of God and strive to make it come soon³¹. At its coming the heavens
12 will be dissolved in fire, and the elements melted by heat, but we look for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will have its home, in fulfilment of the promise of God.
- 14 Therefore, dear friends, in expectation of these things, make every effort
15 to be found by him spotless, blameless, and at peace. Regard our Lord’s forbearance as your one hope of salvation. This is what our dear friend
16 Paul wrote to you, with the wisdom that God gave him. It is the same in all his letters, when he speaks in them about these subjects. There are some things in them difficult to understand, which untaught and weak
17 people distort, just as they do all other writings, to their own ruin. You must, therefore, dear friends, now that you know this beforehand, be on your guard against being led away by the errors of reckless people, and
18 so lapsing from your present steadfastness; and advance in the love and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. All glory be to him now and for ever.

³¹ 3:12 Or: and desire its coming.

JOHN'S FIRST LETTER

Preface

- 1 We write to you about the Word of life, which has been in existence from the beginning. We write of what we have heard, of what we have seen with our eyes, of what we watched reverently and touched with our hands.
- 2 That life was made visible, and we have seen it. We bear our testimony to it, and tell you of that eternal life which was with the Father and was made
- 3 visible to us. It is of what we have seen and heard that we now tell you, so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the
- 4 Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing all this to you that our joy may be complete.

Fellowship with God

- 5 This is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you:
 - 6 God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and yet continue to walk in the darkness, our words
 - 7 and our lives are a lie. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses
 - 8 us from all sin. If we say, 'we have no sin,' then we are deceiving ourselves,
 - 9 and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is just and may be
 - 10 trusted to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all wrongdoing. If we say that we haven't sinned, we make God a liar, and his Word is not in us.
- 2 My children, I am writing to you to keep you from sinning. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the righteous.
 - 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but the sins of
 - 3 the whole world. It is by keeping God's commands that we can be sure we
 - 4 know him. Whoever says 'I know him,' but does not keep his commands,
 - 5 is a liar. The truth has no place in them. But the person who keeps God's word, in them the love of God has indeed reached its perfection. This is
 - 6 how we can be sure we are in him: whoever claims to live in him should live just as Jesus did.

A new commandment

- 7 Dear friends, it is no new command that I am writing to you, but an old command, which you have had from the beginning. That old command is
- 8 the message you have already heard. Yet, in a way, it is a new command that I am writing to you – which is shown true in Christ's life and in yours – for the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.
- 9 The person who says that they are in the light, and yet hates others, is still
- 10 in the darkness. The person who loves others is always in the light, and
- 11 there is nothing within them to cause them to stumble. The person who hates is in the dark. They stumble along in the darkness; they do not know where they are going because the darkness blinds them.

Those who know God should not love the world

- 12 Little children, I am writing to you
because your sins have been forgiven for Christ's sake.
- 13 Parents, I am writing to you
because you have come to know him who has been from the beginning.
- Young people, I am writing to you
because you have conquered the evil one.
- Children, I write to you
because you have come to know the Father.
- 14 Parents, I write to you
because you have learned to know him who has been from the beginning.
- Young people, I write to you
because you are strong,
and God's message is always in your hearts,
and you have conquered the evil one.
- 15 Do not love the world or what the world can offer. When anyone loves the world, there is no love for the Father in them. For all that the world can offer – the desires for physical pleasure, the enticements to the eye, the arrogance of wealth – belongs, not to the Father, but to the world. And the
- 16
- 17

world, and all that it gratifies, is passing away, but they who do God's will remain for ever.

Warnings against an antichrist

- 18 My children, it is the last hour. You were told that an antichrist was coming; and many antichrists have already arisen. This is why we know that this
- 19 is the last hour. These people come from our ranks, but they were never truly part of us – if they had been then they would have stayed with us.
- 20 They left so it would be clear that none of them really belonged to us. You, however, have been anointed by the Holy One. You all know the truth.
- 21 I am not writing to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie can come from the truth.
- 22 Who is a liar, if not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? That
- 23 person is the antichrist – one who rejects the Father and the Son. No one who rejects the Son has the Father; to acknowledge the Son is to have
- 24 the Father also. As for you, you must let what you have heard from the beginning continue to live in you. If what you heard from the beginning
- 25 dwells in you, you will remain both in the Son and the Father. And this is what he himself promised us – eternal life!
- 26 In writing this to you, I have in mind those who are trying to mislead
- 27 you. As for you, the anointing which you received from him remains with you. You do not need anyone to teach you. His anointing teaches you about everything. What it teaches you is true, it is not a lie. Do what it has taught
- 28 you: abide in him. Yes, my children, remain in him, so that when he appears our confidence doesn't fail us, and we are not ashamed to meet him at his
- 29 coming. Since you know he is righteous, you realise that everyone who does what is right is his child.

God's Children

- 3 See what great love the Father has lavished on us: he lets us be called God's children! For that is what we are. The reason why the world does
- 2 not know us is that it has not learned to know him. Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is that, when it is revealed, we will be like him, because we

- 3 will see him as he is. And just as he is pure, everyone who has this hope, makes and keeps themselves pure.
- 4 Everyone who lives sinfully is living in violation of God's law. Sin is lawlessness. You know that Christ appeared to take away our sins and that there is no sin in him. No one who lives in him continues to sin; the sinner has not seen or known him. My children, don't let anyone mislead you. The person who does what is right is righteous, just as Christ is righteous.
- 8 The person who lives in sin is a child of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. To undo the devil's work is the reason the Son of God appeared.
- 9 No child of God sins, because God's nature dwells in them. They can't live in sin, because they are God's children. By this it is made clear who are the children of God and who are the devil's: anyone who doesn't do what is right or doesn't love others is not a child of God. For this is the message we heard from the beginning: we are to love one another. We must not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his actions were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

Love each other

- 13 Do not be surprised, friends, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love each other. The person who does not love remains in a state of death. The person who hates another is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within them.
- 16 This is how we know that love is: Christ gave his life for us. So we should lay down our own lives for each other. If anyone has material possessions, and sees one of our own in need, but closes their heart against that person, how can it be said that the love of God is within them? My children, our love must not be mere words or talk. It must be true and show itself in actions.
- 19 This is how we will know we belong to the truth and reassure ourselves in God's presence: though our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and knows everything. Dear friends, if our conscience does not condemn us, then we approach God with confidence, and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we are keeping his commands, and are doing what pleases him. His command is that we should believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as Christ commanded us.

- 24 The person who keeps his commands dwells in God and God dwells in them. And we are sure he lives in us because of the Spirit he has given us.

True and False Inspiration

- 4 Dear friends, do not trust every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- 2 This is the way to recognise the Spirit of God: those who acknowledge
- 3 Jesus Christ as come in the flesh have God's Spirit, while a spirit that doesn't acknowledge Jesus isn't from God. Instead it is the spirit of the antichrist; you have heard that it was coming, and it is now already in the world!
- 4 You, my children, come from God, and you have successfully resisted such people as these, because he who is in you is greater than the one who
- 5 is in the world. Those people belong to the world and therefore they speak
- 6 as the world speaks, and the world listens to them. We come from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; the person who does not come from God does not listen to us. This is how we distinguish the spirit of truth and the spirit of deception.

God is love

- 7 Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God and
- 8 everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. Those who do not
- 9 love know nothing of God, for God is love. This is how God showed his
- 10 love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might
- 11 live through him. This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but
- 12 that he loved us and sent his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
- 11 Dear friends, since God loved us in this way, we should love one another.
- 12 No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and
- 13 his love reaches perfection within us. We know that we live in him, and
- 14 he lives in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. Moreover,
- 15 we have seen for ourselves and testify that the Father has sent the Son to
- 16 be the Saviour of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus Christ is
- the Son of God, God lives in them, and they live in God. And so we have
- come to know and believe the love which God has for us.

God is love; and whoever lives in love lives in God, and God lives in
17 them. This is the way love has reached its perfection among us, so that we
may have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we
18 are like Christ. There is no fear in love; perfect love drives out fear because
fear has to do with punishment. So anyone who is afraid has not reached
19 perfection in love. We love, because God first loved us. If someone says "I
20 love God," and yet hates others, they are a liar. For the person who does
not love their brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God,
21 whom they have not seen. Indeed, we have this command from Christ:
Those who love God must also love each other.

Faith and Confidence

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every-
2 one who loves a parent loves his child. By this we know that we love God's
3 children – when we love God and carry out his commands. For to love God
4 is to do what he commands and his commands are not a burden, for what-
ever is born of God overcomes the world. What is the victory by which the
5 world is overcome? Our faith! Who can overcome the world but the person
6 who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? Jesus Christ, the one who came
by water and blood – not by water only but by water and blood – and the
7 Spirit testifies to this because the Spirit is truth. Indeed three testify: the
8 Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree. We accept human
9 testimony, surely God's testimony is even stronger! And God's testimony
10 is the testimony he has given about his Son. The person who believes in
the Son of God has that testimony within them. The person who does not
believe God has made God a liar, by not believing the testimony God has
11 given about his Son. And this is that testimony: God gave us eternal life,
12 and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever who
doesn't have God's Son does not have life.

Final words

13 I have written these things to you who believe in the name of God's Son,
14 so that you may know that you have eternal life. We can approach him
with this confidence, that whenever we ask anything that is in accordance

- 15 with his will, he listens to us. And if we know he hears us – whatever we
16 ask – we know also that what we ask for is ours. If anyone sees one of our
people committing some sin that is not a sin leading to death, they should
ask, and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to
death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should
17 pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead
to death.
- 18 We know that those who have been born of God do not keep sinning.
19 God protects his children and the evil one cannot get hold of them. We
know that we are God's children, though the whole world lies in the power
20 of the evil one. We also know that the Son of God has come and has given
us understanding, so that we may know the true God – and we are in him
who is true, by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal
21 life. My children, guard yourselves against false ideas of God.

JOHN'S SECOND LETTER

Greetings

- 1 From the elder, to the lady chosen by God and her children. I truly love you all, and I am not the only one but all who know the truth love you as well.
- 2 We love you for the sake of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever.
- 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be ours – the gift of God, the Father, and of Jesus Christ, the Father's Son – in truth and love.

Live in truth and love

- 4 It was a great joy to me to find the lives of some of your children guided by the truth, in obedience to the command that we received from the Father.
- 5 And now I implore you, dear lady, let us love one another This is not a new command I am writing to you. It is the command we have had from the beginning. – Let us love one another. And this is love – to live in obedience to the Father's commands. This is the command as you learned from the beginning, to live a life of love. I say this because many deceivers have gone out into the world – men who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ came in flesh and blood. Any such person is a deceiver and antichrist. Take care so that you do not what we have worked for but instead receive your full reward. Anyone who goes beyond and fails to live inside of the teaching of Christ does not have God. The person who lives inside that teaching – they have both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive them into your house or even welcome them; because the person who welcomes them is sharing with them in his evil work.

Final words

- 12 Though I have many other things to tell you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come and see you, and to speak with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete. The children of your sister, who is chosen by God, send you their greetings.

JOHN'S THIRD LETTER

Greetings

- 1 From the elder to his dear friend Gaius, whom he sincerely loves.
- 2 Dear friend, I pray that all may be well with you and that you may have
- 3 good health – I know that all is well with your soul. For it was a great joy to me, when some followers of the Lord came and testified to your fidelity to
- 4 the truth. I know that your own life is guided by the truth. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to hear from time to time that the lives of my children are guided by the truth.

Gaius

- 5 Dear friend, you are faithful in all the things you do for other followers –
- 6 even when they are strangers to you. They themselves have testified before the church to your love. You will do well to help them on their way in a
- 7 manner worthy of the service of God. For it was on behalf of Christ's name
- 8 that they set out, not accepting even one thing from the Gentiles. Therefore, we should support people like them, and so take our share in their work for the truth.

Diotrephes and Demetrius

- 9 I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes (who loves to be the leader among them) doesn't welcome us. So if I come, I will bring up his actions in telling wicked nonsense about us. Not content with that, he not only refuses to personally welcome our friends who are followers, but actually stops those who would, and expels them from the church.
- 11 Dear friend, do not follow a bad example, but a good one. The person who does what is good is from God; the person who does what is bad has
- 12 never seen God. Everyone has always had a good word for Demetrius, and

the truth itself speaks for him. Yes, and we also add our good word, and you know that what we say is true.

Final words

- 13 I have many things to tell you, but I would rather not use pen and ink. I
- 14 hope to see you soon, and then we will speak face to face. Peace be with you.
- 15 The friends here send you their greetings. Greet each one of our friends.

THE LETTER FROM JUDE

Introduction

- 1 To those who, having received the call, have been loved by God the Father and protected by Jesus Christ, From Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and the brother of James. May mercy, peace, and love be yours in ever increasing measure.

Warnings against moral corruption

- 3 Dear friends, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt that I must write to you at once to encourage you to fight in defence of the faith that has once for all been entrusted to
- 4 the keeping of Christ's people. For there have crept in among you certain godless people, whose sentence has long since been pronounced, and who make the mercy of God an excuse for profligacy, and disown our only lord and master, Jesus Christ.
- 5 Now I want to remind you – but you already know it all – that, though the Lord delivered the people from Egypt, yet he afterwards destroyed
- 6 those who refused to believe in him; and that even those angels, who did not keep to their appointed spheres, but left their proper homes, have been kept by him for the judgment of the great day in everlasting chains
- 7 and black darkness. Like Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns near them, which gave themselves up to fornication, and fell into unnatural vice, these angels now stand out as a warning, undergoing, as they are, punishment in eternal fire.
- 8 Yet in the same way these people, too, cherishing vain dreams, pollute
- 9 our human nature, reject control, and malign the celestial beings. Yet even Michael, the archangel, when, in his dispute with the devil, he was arguing

about the body of Moses, did not venture to charge him with maligning, but
10 said merely "The Lord rebuke you!" But these people malign whatever they
do not understand; while they use such things as they know by instinct (like
11 the animals that have no reason) for their own corruption. Alas for them!
They walk in the steps of Cain; led astray by Balaam's love of gain, they
12 plunge into sin, and meet their ruin through rebellion like Korah. These are
the people who are blots on your "love-feasts," when they feast together
and provide without scruple for themselves alone. They are clouds without
rain, driven before the winds; they are leafless trees without a vestige of
13 fruit, dead through and through, torn up by the roots; they are wild sea
waves, foaming with their own shame; they are "wandering stars," for
which the blackest darkness has been reserved for ever.

14 To these people, as to others, Enoch, the seventh in descent from Adam,
declared – "See! The Lord has come with his hosts of holy ones around
15 him, to execute judgment on all people, and to convict all godless people
of all their godless acts, which in their ungodliness they have committed,
and of all the harsh words which they have spoken against him, godless
sinners that they are!"

16 These people are always murmuring, and complaining of their lot; they
follow where their passions lead them; they have arrogant words on their
lips; and they flatter others for the sake of what they can get from them.

17 But you should, dear friends, recall what was foretold by the apostles
18 of our Lord Jesus Christ; how they used to say to you – "As time draws to
an end, there will be scoffers, who will be led by their godless passions."
19 These are the people – animal and unspiritual – who cause divisions. But
20 you must, dear friends, build up your characters on the foundation of
21 your most holy faith, pray under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and keep
within the love of God, while waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus
22 Christ, to bring you to eternal life. To some show pity, because they are in
23 doubt. "Drag them out of the fire," and save them. To others show pity,
but with caution, hating the clothing polluted by their touch.

Ascription

24 To him who is able to guard you from falling, and to bring you into his
25 glorious presence, blameless and rejoicing – to the one God, our Saviour,
be ascribed, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, glory, majesty, power, and

dominion, as it was before time began, is now, and will be for all time to come. Amen.

THE REVELATION TO JOHN

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to make known to his servants, concerning what must shortly take place, and which he
2 sent and revealed by his angel to his servant John, who testified to the message of God and to the testimony to Jesus Christ, omitting nothing of
3 what he had seen. Blessed is the one who reads, and blessed are they who listen to, the words of this prophecy, and lay to heart what is here written; for the time is near.

Messages to the Seven Churches

4 From John, to the seven churches which are in Roman Asia. Blessing and peace be yours from him who is, and who was, and who will be, and
5 from the seven spirits that are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the Ruler of all the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his
6 own blood – and he made us a kingdom of priests in the service of God,
7 his Father! – to Him be ascribed glory and dominion for ever. Amen. He is coming among the clouds! Every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the nations of the earth will mourn over him. So will it be. Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord, the God who is, and who was, and who will be, the Almighty.

9 I, John, who am your brother, and who share with you in the suffering and kingship and endurance of Jesus, found myself on the island called
10 Patmos, for the sake of the message of God and the testimony to Jesus. I fell into a trance on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice,
11 like the blast of a trumpet. It said – “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira,
12 Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.” I turned to see what voice it was
13 that spoke to me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lamps, and in the midst of the lamps one like a man, in a robe reaching to his feet, and
14 with a golden sash across his breast. The hair of his head was as white as wool, as white as snow; his eyes were like flaming fire; and his feet were like brass as when molten in a furnace; his voice was like the sound of

16 many streams, in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun in the fulness of its power. And, when I saw him, I fell at his feet like one dead. He laid his hand on me and said – “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last, the Everliving. I died, and I am alive for ever and ever. And I hold the keys of death and of Hades. Therefore write of what you have seen and of what is happening now and of what is about to take place – the mystic meaning of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lamps. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamps are the seven churches.

2 ‘To the angel of the church in Ephesus write

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, and walks among the seven golden lamps: I know your life, your toil and endurance, and I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers. I know, too, how you tested those who declare that they are apostles, though they are not, and how you proved them false. You possess endurance, and have borne much for my name, and have never grown weary. But this I have against you – You have abandoned your first love. Therefore remember from what you have fallen, and repent, and live the life that you lived before; or else, I will come and remove your Lamp from its place, unless you repent. But this is in your favour – You hate the life lived by the Nikolaitans, and I also hate it. Anyone with ears should hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To him who conquers – to him I will give the right to eat the fruit of the Tree of life, which stands in the Paradise of God.

8 ‘To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died, but is restored to life: I know your persecution and your poverty – yet you are rich! I know, too, the slander that comes from those who declare that they are God’s people,³² though they are not, but are a congregation of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tempted, and may undergo persecution for ten days.

³² 2:9 God’s people: Literally “Jews.” These people claimed to be God’s people because they were Jews.

11 Be faithful even to death, and I will give you the Crown of life. Let those who have ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Those who conquer will suffer no hurt from the Second Death.

12 'To the angel of the church in Pergamus write:

These are the words of him who holds the sharp two-edged sword:
13 I know where you live, where the throne of Satan stands. And yet you hold to my name, and you did not disown my faith even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death
14 among you where Satan dwells. Yet I have a few things against you – You have among you those who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put temptations in the way of the Israelites, so that they should eat idol-offerings and commit licentious acts.
15 Again you have among you those who hold in the same way to the teaching of the Nikolaitans. Therefore repent, or else, I will come quickly and contend with such people with words that will cut like a sword. Let those who have ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To those who conquer – to them I will give a share of the mystic manna, and I will give them a white stone; and on the stone will be inscribed a new name, which no one knows except the person who receives it.

18 'To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like flaming fire, and whose feet are like brass: I know your life, your love, faith, service, and endurance; and I know that your life of late has been better than it was at first. Yet I have this against you – You tolerate the woman Jezebel, who declares that she is a prophet, and misleads my servants by her teaching, until they commit licentious acts and eat idol-offerings. I gave her time to repent, but she is determined not to turn from her licentiousness. Therefore I am laying her on a bed of sickness, and bringing great suffering on those who are unfaithful with her, unless they repent and turn from a life like hers. I will also put her children to death; and all the churches will learn that I am he who looks into people's hearts and souls; and I will give to each one of you what their life deserves. But I say to the rest of you at Thyatira – all who do not accept such teaching, whose who did not learn the secrets of Satan, as people call them – I am not laying on you any further burden; only hold fast to what you have received, until I come. To those who conquer and are careful to live

27 my life to the end – to them I will give authority over the nations,
28 and they will rule them with an iron rod, as when earthen vessels
29 are broken in pieces (as I myself have received from my Father) and
I will give them the morning star. Let those who have ears hear
what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

3 'To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the
seven stars; – I know your life, and that people say of you that you
2 are living, though you are dead. Be on the watch, and strengthen
3 what still survives, though once it was all but dead; for I have not
found your life perfect in the eyes of my God. Therefore remember
4 what you have received and heard, and lay it to heart and repent.
Unless you are on the watch, I will come like a thief, and you will
5 not know at what hour I am coming to you. Yet there are some few
among you at Sardis who did not soil their robes; they will walk
5 with me, robed in white, for they are worthy. Those who conquer
6 will be clothed in these white robes, and I will not strike their name
out of the book of life; but I will own them before my Father, and
6 before his angels. Let those who have ears hear what the Spirit is
saying to the churches.

7 'To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the
Key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no
8 one opens: I know your life (see, I have set a door open before you
which no one is able to shut), I know that, though you have but little
strength, you kept my teaching in mind, and did not disown my
9 name. Listen, I give some of the congregation of Satan, the people
who declare that they are God's people,³³ though they are not, but
are lying – I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and
they will learn that I loved you. Because you kept in mind the story
10 of my endurance, I will keep you in the hour of trial that is about
to come on the whole world, the hour that will test all who are
11 living on earth. I will come quickly. Hold to what you have received
12 so that no one may take your crown. Those who conquer – I will

³³ 3:9 God's people: Literally "Jews." These people claimed to be God's people because they were Jews.

make them a pillar in the Temple of my God; and never more will they leave it; and I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God, and I will write on them my new name. Let those who have ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

13 14 'To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Unchanging One, the witness faithful and true, the beginning of the Creation of God: I know your life; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. If only you were either cold or hot! But now, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say "I am rich and have grown rich, and I want for nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked! Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold which has been refined by fire so that you may grow rich; and white robes, so that you may be clothed and your shameful nakedness be hidden; and ointment to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. All whom I love I rebuke and discipline. Therefore be in earnest and repent. I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in, and will feast with them, and they will feast with me. To those who conquer – to them I will give the right to sit beside me on my throne, as I, when I conquered, took my seat beside my Father on his throne. Let those who have ears hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.'

The Vision of the Seven Seals

4 After this, in my vision, I saw an open door in the heavens, and the first voice that I heard was like the blast of a trumpet speaking to me. It said –
2 "Come up here and I will show you what must take place." Immediately after this I fell into a trance. There stood a throne in heaven, and on the throne
3 was One seated. He who was seated on it was in appearance like a jasper and a sardius; and round the throne there was a rainbow of the colour of
4 an emerald. And round the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and on these I saw twenty-four elders sitting clothed in white robes; and on
5 their heads they had crowns of gold. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning, cries, and peals of thunder! There are seven torches burning

- 6 in front of the throne, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne is what seemed to be a sea of glass, resembling crystal, while within the space before the throne and round the throne are four creatures
7 full of eyes in front and behind. The first creature is like a lion, the second creature like a calf, the third creature has a face like a man's, and the fourth
8 creature is like an eagle on the wing. These four creatures have each of them six wings, and all round, and within, they are full of eyes; and day and night they never cease to say –

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, our God, the Almighty, who was, and who is, and who will be.”

- 9 And, whenever these creatures give praise and honour and thanks to
10 him who is seated on the throne, to him who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders prostrate themselves before him who is seated on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever, and throw down their crowns before the throne, saying –

- 11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive all praise, and honour, and power, for you did create all things, and at your bidding they came into being and were created.”

- 5 Then I saw at the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a
2 book, with writing inside and out, and sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel who was proclaiming in a loud voice – “Who is worthy
3 to open the book and break its seals?” But no one either in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the book or look within it.
4 At this I wept long, because no one could be found who was worthy to
5 open the book or look within it. But one of the elders said to me – “Do not weep. The Lion conquered – the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Scion of David – and can therefore open the book with its seven seals.”
6 Then, within the space between the throne and the four creatures, and in the midst of the elders, I saw, standing, a Lamb, which seemed to have been sacrificed. It had seven horns and seven eyes. (These eyes are the
7 seven spirits of God, and they are sent into all the world.) The Lamb came forward; and he has taken the book from the right hand of him who was
8 seated on the throne. And, when he had taken the book, the four creatures and the twenty-four elders prostrated themselves before the Lamb, each of them holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense. (These are the
9 prayers of Christ's people.) And they are singing a new song –

“You are worthy to take the book and break its seals, for you were sacrificed, and with your blood you did buy for God people of every

- 10 tribe, and language, and people, and nation, and did make them a kingdom of priests in the service of our God, and they are reigning on the earth."
- 11 Then, in my vision, I heard the voices of many angels round the throne, and of the creatures, and of the elders. In number they were ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and they cried in a loud voice –
- "Worthy is the Lamb that was sacrificed to receive all power, and wealth, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and praise, and blessing."
- 13 And I heard every created thing in the air, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all that is in them crying –
- "To him who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb be ascribed all blessing, and honour, and praise, and dominion for ever and ever."
- 14 And the four creatures said "Amen," and the elders prostrated themselves and worshiped.
- 6 Then I saw the Lamb break one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the 2 four creatures crying with a voice like thunder – "Come." And in my vision I saw a white horse. Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he went out conquering and to conquer.
- 3 When the Lamb broke the second seal, I heard the second creature crying 4 – "Come." Then there went out another horse, a red horse, and to its rider was given the power to deprive the earth of peace, so that people should kill one another; and he was given a great sword.
- 5 When the Lamb broke the third seal, I heard the third creature crying 6 – "Come." And in my vision I saw a black horse. Its rider held scales in his hand. And I heard what seemed to be a voice, coming from among the four creatures, crying – "A quart of wheat for a silver coin, and three quarts of barley for a silver coin! But do not harm the oil and the wine."
- 7 When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth 8 creature crying – "Come." And in my vision I saw a grey horse. His rider's name was Death, and Hades rode behind him; and power was given them over the fourth part of the earth, so that they might destroy with sword and famine and death, and by means of the wild Beasts of the earth.
- 9 When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed for the sake of God's message and for the

- 10 testimony which they had borne. They cried in a loud voice – “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, before you will give judgment and avenge our blood on all who are living on the earth?” Then to each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to rest yet a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and of their friends in Christ’s service who were about to be put to death, as they had been, should be complete.
- 12 And I saw the Lamb break the sixth seal, and then there was a great earthquake. The sun became black, like sackcloth, and the moon, which
13 was at its full, like blood. The stars of the heavens fell to the earth, as when
14 a fig-tree, shaken by a strong wind, drops its unripe fruit. The heavens disappeared like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and
15 island was moved from its place. Then all the kings of the earth, and the
princes, and the generals, and the rich, and the powerful, and every slave
and free person, hid themselves in the caves and under the rocks of the
16 mountains; and they are crying to the mountains and the rocks – “Fall on
us, and hide us from the eyes of him who is seated on the throne, and from
17 the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath is come, and who
can stand to meet it?”
- 7 After this, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, restraining the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow over
2 the earth, or over the sea, or against any tree. And, in the east, I saw another
angel, ascending, holding the seal of the living God; and he cried in a loud
voice to the four angels, to whom there had been given power to harm the
3 earth and the sea – “Do not harm the earth, or the sea, or the trees, until we
4 have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” I heard, too, the
number of those who had been sealed. It was one hundred and forty-four
thousand; and they were from every tribe of the Israelites.
- 5 From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed,
from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,
6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Napthali twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,
7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,
8 from the tribe of Zebulon twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

9 After this, in my vision, I saw a vast throng which no one could number, of people from every nation and of all tribes, and peoples, and languages. They stood in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, robed
10 in white, holding palm branches in their hands. And they are crying in a loud voice –

“Salvation be ascribed to our God who is seated on his throne and to the Lamb.”

11 And all the angels were standing round the throne and the elders and the four creatures, and they prostrated themselves on their faces in front
12 of the throne and worshiped God, saying –

“Amen. Blessing and praise, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be ascribed to our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

13 Then one of the elders turned to me and said “Who are these who are robed in white? And where did they come from?”

14 “My Lord,” I answered, “it is you who know.”

15 “These,” he said, “are they who come through the Great Persecution; they washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. And therefore it is that they are before the throne of God, and are serving him day and night in his Temple; and he who is seated on the throne will shelter them.
16 Never again will they be hungry, never again will they be thirsty, nor will
17 the sun smite them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb that stands in the space before the throne will be their shepherd, and will lead them to life-giving springs of water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

8 As soon as the Lamb had broken the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for, it might be, half an hour.

Vision of Seven Trumpet-Blasts

2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

3 Next, another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer in his hand; and a great quantity of incense was given to him, to mingle with the prayers of all Christ’s people on the golden altar before the throne.

4 The smoke of the incense ascended, with the prayers of Christ’s people, from the hand of the angel before God. Then the angel took the censer, and

filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it down on the earth; and there followed peals of thunder, cries, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

6 Then the seven angels holding the seven trumpets prepared to blow their blasts.

7 The first blew; and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it fell on the earth. A third part of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees, and every blade of grass.

8 Then the second angel blew; and what appeared to be a great mountain, 9 burning, was hurled into the sea. A third of the sea became blood, and a third part of all created things that are in the sea – that is, of all living things – died, and a third of the ships was destroyed.

10 Then the third angel blew; and there fell from the heavens a great star, burning like a torch. It fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs.

11 (The star is called "Wormwood.") A third of the water became bitter as wormwood, and so bitter was the water that many died from drinking it.

12 Then the fourth angel blew; and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were blasted, so that a third of them was eclipsed, and for a third part of the day there was no light, and at night it was the same.

13 And, in my vision, I heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven and crying in a loud voice – "Woe, woe, woe for all who live on the earth, at the other trumpet-blasts of the three angels who have yet to blow."

9 Then the fifth angel blew; and I saw a star that had fallen on the earth 2 from the heavens, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. He opened the bottomless pit, and from the pit rose a smoke like the smoke of a great furnace. The sun and the air grew dark because of the smoke

3 from the pit. Out of the smoke locusts descended on the earth, and they 4 received the same power as that possessed by scorpions. They were told not to harm the grass, or any plant, or any tree, but only those who have

5 not the seal of God on their foreheads. Yet they were not allowed to kill them, but it was ordered that those men should be tortured for five months. Their torture was like the torture caused by a scorpion when it stings a

6 person. In those days people will seek Death and will not find it; They will 7 long to die, but Death flees from them. In appearance the locusts were like horses equipped for battle. On their heads there were what appeared to

8 be crowns that shone like gold, their faces resembled human faces, and they had hair like the hair of a woman, their teeth were like lions' teeth, 9 and they had what seemed to be iron breastplates, while the noise of their wings was like the noise of chariots drawn by many horses, galloping into

10 battle. They have tails like scorpions, and stings, and in their tails lies their
11 power to harm people for five months. They have as their king the angel of
the bottomless pit, whose name, in Hebrew, is “Abaddon,” while, in Greek,
his name is “Apollyon” (the Destroyer).

12 The first Woe has passed; and still there are two Woes to follow!

13 Then the sixth angel blew; and I heard a voice proceeding from the
14 corners of the golden altar that stood before God. It spoke to the sixth
angel – the angel with the trumpet – and said “Let loose the four angels
15 that are in chains at the great river Euphrates.” Then the four angels, that
were held in readiness for that hour and day and month and year, were let
16 loose, to destroy a third of mankind. The number of the hosts of cavalry was
17 ten thousand times ten thousand, twice told; I heard their number. And
this is what the horses and their riders appeared to be like in my vision:
They had breastplates of fire, blood-red and sulphurous, and the heads
18 of the horses were like lions’ heads, while out of their mouths issue fire,
and smoke, and sulphur. Through these three curses a third of humanity
perished – because of the fire, and the smoke, and the sulphur that issued
19 from their mouths; for the power of the horses lies in their mouths and in
their tails. For their tails are like snakes, with heads, and it is with them that
20 they do harm. But those who were left of humanity, who had not perished
through these curses, did not repent and turn away from what their own
hands had made; they would not abandon the worship of demons, and of
idols made of gold or silver or brass or stone or wood, which can neither
21 see, nor hear, nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders, or their
sorceries, or their licentiousness, or their thefts.

10 Then I saw another mighty angel, descending from heaven. His robe
was a cloud; over his head was the rainbow; his face was like the sun, and
2 his feet like pillars of fire; in his hand he held a little book open. He set his
3 right foot on the sea, and his left on the land; and he cried in a loud voice
like the roaring of a lion. At his cry the seven peals of thunder spoke, each
4 with its own voice. And, when they spoke, I was about to write; but I heard
a voice from heaven say – “Keep secret what the seven peals of thunder
5 said, and do not write it down.” Then the angel, whom I had seen standing
6 on the sea and on the land, raised his right hand to the heavens, and swore
by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that
is in them, and the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it,
7 that time should cease to be. Moreover at the time when the seventh angel
will speak, when he is ready to blow his blast, then the hidden purposes
of God, of which he told the good news to his servants, the prophets, are

- 8 at once fulfilled. Then came the voice which I had heard from heaven. It spoke to me again, and said – “Go and take the book that is open in the
9 hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land.” So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little book. And he said “Take it, and eat it. It will be bitter to your stomach, but in your mouth it will be as
10 sweet as honey.” I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and, while in my mouth, it was like the sweetest honey; but, when I had
11 eaten it, it was bitter to my stomach. And I was told – “You must prophesy again about men of many peoples, and nations, and languages, and about many kings.”
- 11 Then I was given a measure like a rod, and a voice said to me – “Go and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count the worshiper there.
2 But omit the court outside the Temple, and do not measure that, for it has been given up to the nations; and the holy City will be under their heel
3 for forty-two months. Then I will give permission to my Two Witnesses, and for those twelve hundred and sixty days they will continue teaching,
4 clothed in sackcloth.” These men are represented by the two olive trees
5 and the two lamps that stand before the Lord of the earth. When anyone wishes to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and consumes their enemies; and whoever wishes to harm them will, in this way, inevitably
6 perish. These men have the power to close the heavens, so that no rain may fall during the time that they are teaching; and they have power to turn the streams into blood, and to smite the land with any curse, whenever they
7 will. As soon as they have completed their testimony, the wild Beast that ascends from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer and
8 kill them. Their dead bodies will lie in the streets of the great city, which is mystically spoken of as “Sodom” and “Egypt,” where their Master was
9 crucified. People of all nations, and tribes, and languages, and races look at their dead bodies for three days and a half, and do not allow them to be
10 laid in a grave. Those who live on the earth rejoice over them and are merry, and they will send presents to one another, because these two prophets
11 brought torments on those who live on the earth. After three days and a half the life-giving breath of God entered these men, and they stood up on their feet, and a great terror took possession of those who were watching
12 them. The two men heard a loud voice from heaven which said to them – “Come up here,” and they went up to heaven in the cloud, while their
13 enemies watched them. At that very time a great earthquake occurred. A tenth part of the city fell, and seven thousand people perished in the earthquake. Those who escaped were much terrified, and praised the God of heaven.

- 14 The second Woe has passed; and there is a third Woe soon to follow!
- 15 Then the seventh angel blew; and loud voices were heard in heaven saying –
- “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.”
- 16 At this the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before
- 17 God, prostrated themselves on their faces and worshiped Him, saying –
- “We thank you, Lord, our God, the Almighty, who is and who was, that you have assumed your great power and reigned. The nations were enraged, and your wrath fell on them; the time came for the dead to be judged, and for you to give the reward to your servants the prophets, and to the people of Christ, and to those who honour your name – the high and the low alike – and to destroy those who are destroying the earth.”
- 19 Then the Temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark containing his covenant was seen in his Temple; and there followed flashes of lightning, cries, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a great storm of hail.

Vision of Seven Figures

- 12 Then a great portent was seen in the heavens – a woman whose robe was the sun, and who had the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant; and she is crying out in the pain and agony of childbirth. Another portent also was seen in the heavens There was a great red Dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. His tail draws after it a third of the stars in the heavens, and it hurled them down on the earth. The Dragon is standing in front of the woman who is about to give birth to the child, so that he may devour it as soon as it is born. The woman gave birth to a son, a male child, who is destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was at once caught up to God on his throne. But the woman fled into the wilderness, where there is a place prepared for her by God, to be tended there for twelve hundred and sixty days.
- 7 Then a battle took place in the heavens. Michael and his angels fought
- 8 with the Dragon. But though the Dragon, with his angels, fought, he did

not prevail; and there was no place left for them any longer in the heavens.
9 Then the great Dragon, the primeval snake, known as the "devil" and
"Satan," who deceives all the world, was hurled down to the earth, and his
10 angels were hurled down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven
which said –

"Now has begun the day of the salvation, and Power, and Dominion
of our God, and the Rule of his Christ; for the Accuser of our people
has been hurled down, he who has been accusing them before our
11 God day and night. Their victory was due to the blood of the Lamb,
and to the message to which they bore their testimony. In their love
12 of life they shrank not from death. Therefore, be glad, heaven, and
all who live in heaven! Alas for the earth and for the sea, for the
devil has gone down to you in great fury, knowing that he has but
little time."

13 When the Dragon saw that he was hurled down to the earth, he
14 pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But to the
woman were given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she might
fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is being tended for one year,
15 and for two years, and for half a year in safety from the snake. Then the
snake poured water from its mouth after the woman, like a river, so that
16 it might sweep her away. But Earth came to her help, and opened her
mouth and drank up the river which the Dragon had poured out of its
17 mouth. The Dragon was enraged at the woman, and went to fight with
the rest of her offspring – those who lay to heart the commands of God
18 and bear their testimony to Jesus; and he took his stand on the sea-shore.
13 Then I saw, rising out of the sea, a wild Beast with ten horns and seven
heads. On its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous
2 names. The Beast that I saw was like a leopard; but its feet were like a bear's,
and its mouth like the mouth of a lion. The Dragon gave it his power and
3 his throne, and wide dominion. One of its heads seemed to me to have been
mortally wounded, but its deadly wound had been healed. The whole earth
4 followed the Beast, wondering; and men worshiped the Dragon, because
he had given his dominion to the Beast; while, as they worshiped the Beast,
they said – "Who can compare with the Beast? And who can fight with
5 it?" The Beast was given a mouth that spoke proudly and blasphemously,
6 and it was empowered to work its will for forty-two months. It opened its
mouth only to blaspheme God, to blaspheme his name and his tent – those
7 who live in his tent in heaven. It had been permitted to fight with Christ's
people and to conquer them, and it had received power over men of every

8 tribe, and people, and language, and nation. All who are living on earth will worship it – all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb that has been sacrificed from the foundation of the
9 world. Let those who have ears hear. Whoever is destined for captivity
10 goes into captivity. Whoever will kill with the sword must inevitably be killed with the sword. (Here there is need for endurance and faith on the part of Christ's people.)

11 Then I saw, rising out of the earth, another wild Beast. It had two horns
12 like those of a lamb, and its voice was like a dragon's. It exercises all the authority of the first Beast under its eyes; and it makes the earth and all who are living on it worship that first Beast, whose mortal wound was
13 healed. It performs great marvels, even causing fire to fall from the heavens
14 to the earth, before people's eyes; and in consequence of the marvels which it was allowed to perform under the eyes of the Beast, it is able to deceive all who are living on the earth. It tells those who live on the earth to make a statue in honour of the Beast, who, despite the wound from the sword,
15 yet lived. It was permitted to breathe life into the image of the Beast, so that the image of the Beast might speak; and it was also permitted to cause
16 all who refused to worship the image of the Beast to be put to death. High and low, rich and poor, free and enslaved – it causes a brand to be put on
17 the right hand or on the forehead of every one of them, so that no one is able to buy or sell, except those that bear this brand – either the name of
18 the Beast or the number indicated by the letters of his name. (Here there is need for discernment.) The person with ability can compute the number of the Beast; for the number indicates a person's name. Its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

14 Then, in my vision, I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. With him were a hundred and forty-four thousand, with his name and the name of
2 his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of a loud peal of thunder; the sound that I heard was like the music of harpers playing on their harps.
3 They are singing what seems to be a new song, before the throne, and before the four creatures and the elders; and no one was able to learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from
4 earth. These are the men who never defiled themselves in their intercourse with women; they are as pure as virgins. These are the men who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were redeemed as the first-fruits of mankind
5 for God and for the Lamb. No lie was ever heard on their lips. They are beyond reach of blame.

- 6 Then I saw another angel, flying in mid-heaven. He had the good news, decreed from eternity, to announce to those who live on the earth – to men
7 of every nation, and tribe, and language, and people; and he cried in a loud voice – “Reverence God, and give him praise (for the hour of his judgment has come) and worship him who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all springs of water.”
8 Then a second angel followed, crying – “She has fallen! She has fallen – Babylon the Great, who has made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her licentiousness!”
9 Then a third angel followed them, crying in a loud voice – “Whoever worships the Beast and its image, and receives its brand on his forehead or
10 on his hand, that person will drink the maddening wine of God that has been poured unmixed into the cup of his wrath, and they will be tortured with fire and sulphur before the eyes of the holy angels and before the
11 eyes of the Lamb. The smoke from their torture rises for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night – those who worship the Beast and its image, and all who are branded with its name.” (Here there is need for endurance on the part of Christ’s people – those who lay to heart the
12 commands of God and the faith of Jesus.) Then I heard a voice from heaven saying “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who from this hour die in union with the Lord.’”

‘Yes,’ answers the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their toil. Their good deeds go with them.’

- 14 Then, in my vision, I saw a white cloud, and on the cloud there was sitting one like a man. On his head he had a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle.
15 Then another angel came out from the Temple, crying in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud – “Take your sickle and reap, for the time to reap has come; the Harvest of Earth is ready.” He who was sitting on the cloud brought his sickle down on the earth, and the Harvest of Earth was reaped.
16 Then another angel came out of the Temple in heaven; he, also, had a sharp sickle.
17 Then another angel came out of the altar; he had power over fire, and he called in a loud voice to the angel that had the sharp sickle – “Take your sharp sickle, and gather the bunches from the vine of Earth, for its grapes are ripe.” The angel brought his sickle down on the earth and gathered the fruit of the vine of Earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the
18 wrath of God. The grapes were trodden in the press outside the city; and

blood came out of the press, rising as high as the bridles of the horses for a distance of two hundred miles.

Vision of Seven Curses

- 15 Then I saw another portent in the heavens – a great and marvellous portent – seven angels with the seven last curses; because with them the wrath of God is ended.
- 2 Then I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire; and, standing by this sea of glass, holding the harps of God, I saw those who had come victorious out of the conflict with the Beast and its image and
- 3 the number that formed its name. They are singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb –
- “Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord, our God, the Almighty.
- 4 Righteous and true are your ways, eternal King. Who will not honour and praise your name, Lord? You alone are holy! All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have become manifest.”
- 5 After this I saw that the inmost shrine of the tent of testimony in
- 6 heaven was opened, and out of it came the seven angels with the seven curses. They were adorned with precious stones, pure and bright, and
- 7 had golden girdles round their breasts. One of the four creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls, filled with the wrath of God who lives
- 8 for ever and ever. The Temple was filled with smoke from the glory and majesty of God; and no one could enter the Temple, until the seven curses
- 16 inflicted by the seven angels were at an end. Then I heard a loud voice, which came from the Temple, saying to the seven angels – “Go and empty the seven bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”
- 2 The first angel went and emptied his bowl on the earth; and it turned to loathsome and painful sores on all who bore the brand of the Beast and who worshiped its image.
- 3 Then the second angel emptied his bowl on the sea; and it turned to blood like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died – everything in the sea.
- 4 Then the third angel emptied his bowl on the rivers and springs of
- 5 water; and it turned to blood. And I heard the angel of the Waters saying – “Righteous are you, you who is and who is, the Holy One, in inflicting this
- 6 judgment; for men shed the blood of Christ’s people and of the prophets,

- 7 and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve.” And I heard the response from the altar – “Yes, Lord, our God, the Almighty, true and righteous are they judgments.”
- 8 Then the fourth angel emptied his bowl on the sun; and he was permitted
9 to scorch men with fire; and men were scorched by the intense heat. They blasphemed the name of God who controlled these curses, yet they did not repent and give him praise.
- 10 Then the fifth angel emptied his bowl on the throne of the Beast; and
11 darkness fell on its kingdom. Men gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and because of their sores; yet they did not repent of what they had done.
- 12 Then the sixth angel emptied his bowl on the great river Euphrates; and
the water in the river was dried up, so that the road for the kings of the East
13 might be made ready. And I saw three foul spirits, like frogs, come from
the mouth of the Dragon and from the mouth of the Beast and from the
14 mouth of the false prophet. They are the spirits of demons, and perform
marvels; they go to kings all over the world, to collect them for the battle
15 on the great day of Almighty God. (“I am coming like a thief! Happy will
he be who is on the watch, and keeps his clothing at hand, so that he will
16 not have to walk about unclothed and let men see his nakedness.”) And the
spirits collected the kings at the place called in Hebrew “Har-Magedon.”
- 17 Then the seventh angel emptied his bowl on the air. (A loud voice came
from the throne in the Temple; it said “All is over.”) There followed flashes
of lightning, cries, and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake,
such as had not occurred since man began to be on the earth – none so
19 great; and the great city was torn in three, and the cities of the nation fell,
and God remembered Babylon the Great, and gave her the maddening
20 wine-cup of his wrath; and every island vanished, and the mountains
21 disappeared. Great hailstones, a pound in weight, are falling on men from
the heavens. And men blasphemed God because of the curse of the hail,
for it was a very terrible curse.

Doom of the Enemies of Christ

- 17 Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls came and spoke to me. “Come here,” he said, “and I will show you the sentence passed on that
2 Great Harlot who is seated at the meeting of many waters, and with whom
all the kings of the earth have had licentious intercourse; while all who live
3 on the earth have been make drunk by the wine of her licentiousness.” And

he bore me away in a trance to a lonely place, and I saw a woman seated on a scarlet Beast, which was covered with blasphemous names; it had

4 seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold ornaments, precious stones, and pearls. In her hand she held a gold cup, full of idolatrous abominations, and the unclean

5 fruits of her licentiousness; while on her forehead there was written this mystic name – “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS

6 AND OF ALL IDOLATROUS ABOMINATIONS ON EARTH.” And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of Christ’s people and with the blood of the martyrs for Jesus. When I saw her, I was amazed beyond measure;

7 but the angel said to me – “Why were you amazed? I will tell you the mystic meaning of the vision of this woman, and of the Beast, with the

8 seven heads and ten horns, that carries her. The Beast that you saw was, but is not, and is about to rise out of the bottomless pit, and is on its way to destruction. Those who are living on earth will be amazed – those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world – when they see that the Beast was, but is not, and yet will come.”

9 (Here there is need for the discerning mind.) The seven heads are seven

10 mountains on which the woman is seated. They are also seven kings; of whom five have fallen and one remains, while one is not yet come. When

11 he comes, he must stay for a little while. So must the Beast that was, but is not. He counts as an eighth king, although he is one of the seven, and

12 is on his way to destruction. The ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received their kingdoms, but for an hour they receive the

13 authority of kings, together with the Beast. These kings are of one mind

14 in surrendering their power and authority to the Beast. They will fight with the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; so, too, will those with him who have received the call

15 and are chosen and faithful. And the angel said to me – “The waters that you saw, where the Harlot is seated, are throngs of people and men of all

16 nations and languages. The ten horns that you saw, and the Beast – they will hate the Harlot, and cause her to become deserted and strip her bare;

17 they will eat her flesh and utterly consume her with fire. For God has put it into their minds to carry out his purpose, in carrying out their common purpose and surrendering their kingdoms to the Beast, until God’s decrees

18 will be executed. As for the woman whom you saw, she is the great city that holds sway over all the kings of the earth.”

18 After this I saw another angel, descending from heaven, invested with

2 great authority; and the earth was illuminated by his splendour. With a mighty voice he cried – ‘She has fallen! She has fallen – Babylon the

Great! She has become an abode of demons, a stronghold of every wicked spirit, a stronghold of every foul and hateful bird. For, after drinking the maddening wine of her licentiousness, all the nations have fallen; while all the kings of the earth have had licentious intercourse with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich through the excess of her luxury.' Then I heard another voice from heaven saying – 'Come out of her, my people, so that you may not participate in her sins, and that you may not suffer from the curses inflicted on her. For her sins are heaped up to the heavens, and God has not forgotten her misdeeds. Pay her back the treatment with which she has treated you; yes, repay twice over what her actions deserve; in the cup which she mixed for you, mix for her as much again; for her self-glorification and her luxury, give her now an equal measure of torture and misery. In her heart she says "I sit here a queen; no widow am I; I will never know misery." Therefore in one day will these curses strike her – death, misery, and famine, and she will be utterly consumed by fire; for mighty is the Lord God who condemned her.' All the kings of the earth who had licentious intercourse with her and shared her luxury will weep and lament over her, when they see the smoke from the burning city, while they stand at a distance, horrified at her torture, and cry – 'Alas! Alas! Great city! Mighty city of Babylon! In a single hour your judgment fell.' And the merchants of the earth weep and wail over her, because no longer does anyone buy their cargoes – their cargoes of gold, or silver, or precious stones, or pearls, or fine linen, or purple robes, or silk, or scarlet cloth; nor their many scented woods; nor their many articles of ivory; nor their many articles of choicest wood, or brass, or iron, or marble; nor their cinnamon, or spice, or incense, or perfumes, or frankincense, or wine, or oil, or fine flour, or wheat, or cattle, or sheep; nor their horses, or chariots, or slaves; nor the bodies and souls of people. The fruit that your soul craved is no longer within your reach, and all dainties and luxuries are lost to you, never to be found again. The merchants who sold these things, and grew rich by her, will stand at a distance weeping and wailing, horrified at her torture, and crying – 'Alas! Alas! Great city! City clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet cloth! City adorned with gold ornaments, and precious stones, and pearls! In a single hour your vast wealth vanished.' Every ship's captain and all who sail to any port, and sailors, and all who get their living from the sea, stood at a distance, and seeing the smoke from the burning city, cried – 'What city can compare with the Great city?' They threw dust on their heads, and, as they wept and wailed, they cried – 'Alas! Alas! Great city! All who have ships on the sea grew rich through her magnificence. In a single hour it has vanished.'

20 Rejoice over her, heaven, and people of Christ, and apostles, and prophets,
21 for God has avenged you on her! Then a mighty angel took up a stone like
22 a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, crying – ‘So will Babylon, the
23 great city, be violently overthrown, never more to be seen. No more will
the music of harpers, or minstrels, or flute players, or trumpeters be heard
in you, no more will any worker, skilled in any art, be found in you; no
24 more will the sound of a mill be heard in you; no more will the light of a
lamp shine in you; no more will the voices of groom and bride be heard in
you. Your merchants were the great men of the earth, for all the nations
were deceived by your magical charms.’ Yes, and in her was to be found
the blood of the prophets and of Christ’s people, and of all who have been
put to death on the earth.

19 After this, I heard what seemed to be a great shout from a vast throng
in heaven, crying –

2 “Hallelujah! To our God belong salvation, and glory, and Power, for
true and righteous are his judgments. For he has passed judgment
on the Great Harlot who was corrupting the earth by her licen-
tiousness, and he has taken vengeance on her for the blood of his
servants.”

3 Again they cried – “Hallelujah!” And the smoke from her ruins rises
4 for ever and ever. Then the twenty-four elders and the Four creatures
prostrated themselves and worshiped God who was seated on the throne,
5 crying – “Amen, Hallelujah!”; and from the throne there came a voice
which said –

“Praise our God all you who serve him, You who worship him,
both high and low.”

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the shout of a vast throng, like the
sound of many waters, and like the sound of loud peals of thunder, cry-
ing –

7 “Hallelujah! For the Lord is king, our God, the Almighty. Let us
rejoice and exalt; and we will pay him honour, for the hour for the
Marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself
8 ready. And to her it has been granted to robe herself in fine linen,
white and pure, for that linen is the good deeds of the people of
Christ.”

9 Then a voice said to me “Write – ‘Blessed are those who have been
summoned to the marriage feast of the Lamb.’” And the voice said –

- 10 "These words of God are true." I prostrated myself at the feet of him who spoke to worship him, but he said to me – "No! I am your fellow servant, and the fellow servant of your brothers and sisters who bear their testimony to Jesus. Worship God. For to bear testimony to Jesus
11 needs the inspiration of the prophets." Then I saw that heaven lay open. There appears a white horse; its rider is called "Faithful" and "True";
12 righteously does he judge and make war. His eyes are flaming fires; on his head there are many diadems, and he bears a name, written, which no
13 one knows but himself; he has been clothed in a garment sprinkled with
14 blood; and the name by which he is called is "The Word of God." The armies of heaven followed him, mounted on white horses and clothed in
15 fine linen, white and pure. From his mouth comes a sharp sword, with which to smite the nations; and he will rule them with an iron rod. He treads the grapes in the press of the maddening wine of the wrath of
16 Almighty God; and on his robe and on his thigh he has this name written – "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."
- 17 Then I saw an angel standing on the sun. He cried in a loud voice to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven – "Gather and come to the great feast of
18 God, to eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of commanders, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all
19 free and enslaved, and of high and low." Then I saw the Beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to fight with him who sat
20 on the horse and with his army. The Beast was captured, and with him was taken the false prophet, who performed the marvels before the eyes of the Beast, with which he deceived those who had received the brand of the Beast and those who worshiped his image. Alive, they were thrown,
21 both of them, into the lake of fire – of burning sulphur. The rest were killed by the sword which came out of the mouth of him who rode on the horse; and all the birds fed on their flesh.
- 20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, with the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He seized the Dragon, the primeval snake (who is the "devil" or "Satan"), and bound him in chains
2 for a thousand years. He flung him into the bottomless pit and locked it, and set his seal on it; that he should not deceive the nations any more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let loose for a while.
4 Then I saw thrones, and to those who took their seats on them authority was given to act as judges. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony to Jesus and because of the message

of God, for they had refused to worship the Beast or its image, and had not received the brand on their foreheads and on their hands. They were restored to life, and they reigned with the Christ for a thousand years.

5 (The rest of the dead were not restored to life until the thousand years
6 were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy will he be who shares in that first resurrection. The second Death has no power over them; but they will be priests of God, and the Christ, and they will reign with him for the thousand years.

7 When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be let loose from his prison, and he will come out to deceive the nations that live in the four corners of the earth – Gog and Magog. He will come to gather them together for battle; and their number will be as great as the sand on the sea-shore.
9 They went up over the breadth of the whole earth, and surrounded the camp of Christ's people and the city that he loves. Then fire fell from the
10 heavens and consumed them; and the devil, their deceiver, was hurled into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the Beast and the false prophet already were, and they will be tortured day and night for ever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne, and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence; no place was left for them. And I saw the dead, high and low, standing before the throne; and books were opened. Then another book was opened, the book of life; and the dead were judged, according to their actions, by what was written in the books.
13 The sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead; and
14 they were judged, one by one, each according to his actions. Then Death and Hades were hurled into the lake of fire. This is the Second Death – the
15 lake of fire; and all whose names were not found written in the book of life were hurled into the lake of fire.

The New Creation

21 Then I saw new heavens and a new earth. The former heavens and the
2 former earth had passed away; and the sea has ceased to be. And I saw the
Holy City, Jerusalem, descending new out of heaven from God, like a bride
3 adorned in readiness for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the
throne, which said – "See! The tent of God is set up among people. God
will live among them, and they will be his Peoples, and God himself will
4 be among them, and he will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will
be no more death, nor will there be any more grief or crying or pain. The

5 old order has passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said –
"See, I make all things new!" And he said – "Write this, for these words
6 may be trusted and are true." And he said to me – "They are fulfilled. I am
the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the End. To those who thirst
7 I will give of the spring of the water of life, freely. Those who conquer will
enter into possession of these things, and I will be their God, and they will
8 be my children. But as for cowards, unbelievers, the degraded, murderers,
the impure, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars – their place will be in the
burning lake of fire and sulphur. That is the Second Death."

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, and were laden
with the seven last curses, came and spoke to me. "Come here," he said,
10 "and I will show you the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb." He carried me away
in a trance to a great high mountain, and showed me Jerusalem, the Holy
11 City, descending out of heaven from God, filled with the glory of God. Its
brilliance was like a precious stone, like a jasper, transparent as crystal.
12 It had a great high wall, in which were twelve gates; and at these gates
there were twelve angels, and there were names inscribed on the gates,
13 the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. There were three gates
on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three
14 gates on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, on
15 which were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And
the angel who was speaking to me had as a measure a gold rod, with
16 which to measure the city and its gates and its wall. The city is square; the
length and the breadth are the same. The angel measured with his rod; it
was twelve hundred miles; its length, and breadth, and height are equal.
17 Then he measured the wall; it was two hundred and eighty-eight feet, as
18 people measure, that is as the angel measured. The material of the wall
of the city was jasper, and the city was built of pure gold, which shone
19 like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were ornamented
with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was a jasper;
20 the second a sapphire; the third a chalcedony; the fourth an emerald; the
fifth a sardonyx; the sixth a carnelian; the seventh a chrysolite; the eighth
a beryl; the ninth a topaz; the tenth a chrysoprase; the eleventh a hyacinth;
21 and the twelfth an amethyst. The twelve gates were made of twelve pearls,
each gate of one pearl. The street of the city was of pure gold, transparent
22 as glass. And I saw no Temple there, for the Lord, our God, the Almighty,
23 and the Lamb are its Temple. The city has no need of the sun or the moon
to shine on it, for the glory of God illuminated it, and its Lamp was the
24 Lamb. The nations walk by the light of it; and the kings of the earth bring

25 their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day, and there will be no
26 night there. And people will bring the glory and honour of the nations
27 into it. Never will any unhallowed thing enter it, nor they whose life is
22 shameful and false, but only those whose names have been written in the
2 Lamb's book of life. And the angel showed me a river of the water of life,
3 as clear as crystal, issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in
the middle of the street of the city. On each side of the river was a Tree
4 of life which bore twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and
5 the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Every thing that
is accursed will cease to be. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be
within it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his
name will be on their foreheads. Night will cease to be. They have no need
of the light of a lamp, nor have they the light of the sun; for the Lord God
will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

Conclusion

6 Then the angel said to me – 'These words may be trusted and are true.
The Lord, the God that inspires the prophets, sent his angel to show his
7 servants what must quickly take place; and they said "I will come quickly."
Blessed will he be who lays to heart the words of the prophecy contained
in this book.'

8 It was I, John, who heard and saw these things; and, when I heard and
saw them, I prostrated myself in worship at the feet of the angel that
9 showed them to me. But he said to me – 'Forbear; I am your fellow servant,
and the fellow servant of your fellow prophets, and of all who lay to heart
the words in this book. Worship God.'

10 Then the angel said to me – 'Do not keep secret the words of the prophecy
11 contained in this book; for the time is near. Let the wrong-doer continue to
do wrong; the filthy-minded continue to be filthy; the righteous continue
12 to act righteously; and the holy-minded continue to be holy.' ("I will come
quickly. I bring my rewards with me, to give to each what their actions
13 deserve. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the begin-
14 ning and the End.") Blessed will they be who wash their robes! They will
have the right to approach the Tree of life, and may enter the city by the
15 gates. Outside will be the filthy, the sorcerers, the impure, the murderers,
the idolaters, and all who love the false and live it.

- 16 “I, Jesus, sent my angel to bear testimony to you about these things before the churches. I am the Scion and the Offspring of David, the bright star of the Morning.”
- 17 “Come,” say the Spirit and the Bride; and all who hear, say “Come.” All who thirst, come; anyone who wants, take the water of life freely.
- 18 I declare to all who hear the words of the prophecy contained in this book – “If anyone adds to it, God will add to his troubles the curses described in
- 19 this book; and if anyone takes away any of the words in the book containing this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of life, and in the Holy City – as described in this book.”
- 20 He whose testimony this is says – “Assuredly I will come quickly.” “Amen, come, Lord Jesus.”
- 21 May the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, be with his people.