

1:14 2Ch 20:3;
Jl 2:12, Jl 2:15,
Jl 2:16; Jon 3:8

1:17 Is 17:10,
Is 17:11;
Mal 2:3

1:19 Ps 50:15;
Jer 9:10; Am 7:4

2:3 Gn 2:8;
Is 51:3;
Eze 28:13,
Eze 31:9,
Eze 36:35

because the grain offering and the drink offering
have gone from the temple of your God.

- ¹⁴Demand a fast,
request a special assembly.
Gather the elders and all the land's people
to the temple of the LORD your God,
and cry out to the LORD.

Time of suffering

- ¹⁵What a terrible day!
The day of the LORD is near; it comes like chaos from the Almighty.^d
¹⁶Isn't the food cut off right before our eyes?
Aren't joy and gladness also gone from our God's house?
¹⁷The grain shrivels under the shovels;^e
the barns are empty.
The granaries are in ruin because the grain has dried up.
¹⁸How the animals groan!
Herds of cattle are in distress because there is no pasture for them;
even the flocks of sheep pant.

The prophet's prayer

- ¹⁹To you, LORD, I cry,
for fire has completely destroyed the pastures of the wilderness;
and flames have burned all the trees of the field.
²⁰Even the field's wild animals cry to you because the streams have dried up;
the fire has completely destroyed the meadows of the wilderness.

Announcement of alarm and peril

- 2** Blow the horn in Zion;
give a shout on my holy mountain!
Let all the people of the land tremble,
for the day of the LORD is coming.
It is near—
^{2a}a day of darkness and no light,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread out upon the mountains,
a great and powerful army^f comes,
unlike any that has ever come before them,
or will come after them in centuries ahead.
³In front of them a fire consumes;
and behind them a flame burns.
Land ahead of them is like Eden's garden,
but they leave behind them a barren wasteland;
nothing escapes them.
⁴They resemble horses,
and like warhorses they charge,
⁵like the rumbling of chariots.

^dHeb *Shaddai* ^eHeb uncertain ^fOr *a great and strong people*

have the grain and drink offerings from the fields, so they should cry out to the Lord. This follows up the thought expressed in Joel 1:9.

1:15 *day of the LORD*: Chaos is coming to the land, and it is the Lord's work. The "day" is a decisive moment or time.

1:17-18 *grain . . . animals*: The lack of grain affects animals as well as people. Sheep and goats graze on the stubble in grainfields after harvest. Now they will have less to eat.

1:19-20 *fire*: The destruction by fire may refer to wildfires that can break out when fields are stripped of their crops.

It could be a metaphor and refer to what the locusts eat (see Joel 2:3-5).

2:1-11 These verses describe in detail the locust destruction coming on the day of the Lord. They use various images to show the effects of the locust.

2:1 *horn*: A horn signals a public alarm. Here it alerts the nation to the coming of the day of the Lord (see Hos 5:8).

2:2 *clouds and thick darkness*: main features of the day of the Lord. Amos 5:18-20 describes judgment to come on the day of the Lord in similar language.

2:3 *Eden's garden*: the fruitful land of Judah. But destruction

They leap on the mountaintops—
 like the crackling of a fire's flame,
 devouring the stubble;
 like a powerful army ready for battle.
 6 In their presence, peoples shake with fear;
 all faces turn red with worry.
 7 Like warriors they charge;
 like soldiers they climb the wall.
 Each keeps to their own path;
 they didn't change their course.
 8 They don't crowd each other;
 each keeps to their own path.
 Even if they fall among the weapons,
 they won't stop.
 9 They rush upon the city; they run upon the walls.
 They climb into the houses; they enter through the windows like thieves.
 10 The earth quakes before them;
 the heavens shake.
 The sun and the moon are darkened;
 the stars have stopped shining,
 11 because the LORD utters his voice at the head of his army.
 How numerous are his troops!
 Mighty are those who obey his word.
 The day of the LORD is great;
 it stirs up great fear—who can endure it?

Mourning Customs The Israelites, following customs from the ancient world, employed ritual forms to display their sorrow over pain and suffering, death, their return to the Lord concerning sin, or their horror at blasphemy. These ritual acts included fasting, tearing clothes, wearing rough goat hair garments, sprinkling dirt or ashes upon their heads, shaving or pulling out hair and beards, and chanting laments. For examples, see Job 1:20; Esther 4:1-3; Jonah 3:1-9; 2 Samuel 1:2; Ezra 9:3.

2:5 Is 5:24;
 Na 1:10, Na 3:2;
 Rev 9:9
 2:10 Is 13:10;
 Eze 32:7;
 Jl 2:31, Jl 3:15;
 Mt 24:29
 2:11 Jl 2:25,
 Jl 2:31, Jl 3:16;
 Mal 3:2;
 Rev 6:17
 2:12 Dt 4:30;
 Isa 7:3;
 Is 22:12;
 Hos 12:6; Jl 1:14
 2:13 Ex 34:6;
 Ps 34:18,
 Ps 51:17;
 Is 57:15; Jon 4:2
 2:14 Jl 1:9,
 Jl 1:13;
 Am 5:15;
 Jon 3:9;
 Hg 2:19
 2:15 Nm 10:3;
 Jl 1:14, Jl 2:1

Change your hearts

12 Yet even now, says the LORD,
 return to me with all your hearts,
 with fasting, with weeping, and with sorrow;
 13 tear your hearts and not your clothing.
 Return to the LORD your God,
 for he is merciful and compassionate, very patient, full of faithful love,
 and ready to forgive.
 14 Who knows whether he will have a change of heart
 and leave a blessing behind him,
 a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God?
 15 Blow the horn in Zion;
 demand a fast;
 request a special assembly.

will come to it. According to Joel 3:21, Judah will again be like a garden.

2:11 *the LORD utters his voice:* The Lord is at the head of the invading army and speaks for it. See Joel 3:16 for a similar claim.

2:12-17 In light of the difficult circumstances, the prophet calls the people to return to the Lord in a special assembly. The priests should lead them in fasting and public worship at the temple, where all can seek a renewed relationship with the Lord.

2:12 *now... return:* There is still time to return. Sorrow and weeping come with the call. The heart represents the intentions, desires, and expectations of a person. Note the calls in Deuteronomy 6:5 and 10:12 for Israelites to love and serve the Lord with "with all your heart." Jesus understands this to be the first and greatest commandment (Matt 22:37-38).

2:13 *tear your hearts:* In the ancient world people would tear their clothing to show that they were sorry and wanted a change of circumstances. King Josiah

tore his clothing after hearing the contents of a scroll found during temple repairs. He then led the people in a ceremony to return to the Lord (2 Kgs 22:8-23:3). Joel knows that people will show signs of sorrow such as weeping and fasting at the temple. He urges them to make sincere and lasting changes and not simply outward signs. *merciful and compassionate:* The Lord is ready to forgive. The prophet reminds the people of this core belief. When the Israelites failed in the wilderness and made a gold calf, judgment came upon them (Exod 32-34). Nevertheless, the Lord offered them mercy and forgiveness (Exod 34:6-7). Jonah 4:2 describes the Lord's mercy in similar terms.

2:14 Forgiveness is God's free choice. Even at this late date God may still give a blessing to the distraught people, based on their heartfelt response to God.

2:15-17 Everyone should participate in the special assembly. The altar for sacrifice is in the courtyard in front of the door to the temple. The priests stand between the altar and the temple when leading worship. See Joel 2:1.

2:16 Ps 19:5;

Jl 1:14

2:17 Ps 79:10,

Ps 115:2;

Eze 8:16

2:21 Ps 126:3;

Is 54:4;

Zep 3:16,

Zep 3:17

2:22 Ps 65:12;

Jl 1:18;

Zec 8:12

2:23 Lv 26:4;

Ps 149:2;

Hab 3:18;

Zec 10:1,

Zec 10:7

2:25 Jl 1:4;

Am 4:9

2:26 Is 62:9

16 Gather the people;

prepare a holy meeting; assemble the elders;

gather the children, even nursing infants.

Let the groom leave his room and the bride her chamber.

17 Between the porch and the altar let the priests, the LORD's ministers, weep.

Let them say, "Have mercy, LORD, on your people,

and don't make your inheritance a disgrace,

an example of failure among the nations.

Why should they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?"

Words of compassion and promise

18 Then the LORD became passionate about this land,^g and had pity on his people.

19 The LORD responded to the people:

See, I am sending you the corn, new wine, and fresh oil,

and you will be fully satisfied by it;

and I will no longer make you a disgrace among the nations.

20 I will remove the northern army far from you

and drive it into a dried-up and desolate land,

its front into the eastern sea,

and its rear into the western sea.

Its stench will rise up;

its stink will come to the surface.

The LORD is about to do great things!

21 Don't fear, fertile land;

rejoice and be glad, for the LORD is about to do great things!

22 Don't be afraid, animals of the field,

for the meadows of the wilderness will turn green;

the tree will bear its fruit; the fig tree and grapevine will give their full yield.

23 Children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in the LORD your God,

because he will give you the early rain as a sign of righteousness;

he will pour down abundant rain for you,

the early and the late rain, as before.^h

24 The threshing floors will be full of grain;

the vats will overflow with new wine and fresh oil.

25 I will repay you for the years that the cutting locust, the swarming locust,

the hopping locust,

and the devouring locust have eaten—

my great army, which I sent against you.

26 You will eat abundantly and be satisfied,

and you will praise the name of the LORD your God,

who has done wonders for you;

and my people will never again be put to shame.

^gOr then the LORD became jealous for his land ^hOr at the first

2:17 *inheritance*: Israel is God's family (Exod 4:22; Hos 11:1). As such, they're also God's inheritance (Deut 32:8-9).

2:18-27 *Forgiveness and restoration* will come. The locust plague will go away, the land will be fertile again, and God will bless the people.

2:19 *disgrace*: In Joel 2:17 the people cried out concerning their disgrace among the nations. The Lord will remove it from them and bring back the lost crops (Joel 1:9-13).

2:20 *northern army*: The locust army (see Joel 2:2, 23) will die.

2:21-22 *fertile land . . . animals of the field*: On the Lord's behalf, the prophet speaks to the land and to the wild animals that inhabit it (see Joel 1:20). The land will be fruitful and support all who live on it.

2:23 *Children of Zion*: the people of Judah. Zion is another

name for Jerusalem. In the ancient world, cities and land were widely spoken of as female persons. Other biblical writers speak of Jerusalem or Zion as a mother with children (Isa 49:21-22; 50:4; Ps 87:5-6; Gal 4:26-27).

2:26-27 *shame*: or "disgrace" (Joel 2:17, 19). It is the people's condition when they fail the Lord. Here the Lord promises to remove their shame. *midst of Israel*: The temple in Jerusalem was the Lord's house, representing the divine presence in the midst of Israel. People went up to Jerusalem to worship and to meet the Lord. In Joel 2:27, Joel promises that the people will again know that the Lord is in their midst (see Zeph 3:17). This is an important theme in the prophetic books. After judgment the land of Israel will be restored, and the people will know that the Lord is with them.

- ¹⁵The one who is high and lifted up,
 who lives forever, whose name is holy, says:
 I live on high, in holiness,
 and also with the crushed^k and the lowly,
 reviving the spirit of the lowly,
 reviving the heart of those who have been crushed.¹
- ¹⁶I won't always accuse,
 nor will I be enraged forever.
 It is my own doing that their spirit is exhausted—
 I gave them breath!
- ¹⁷I was enraged about their illegal profits;
 I struck them; in rage I withdrew from them.
 Yet they went on wandering wherever they wanted.
- ¹⁸I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.
 I will guide them, and reward them with comfort.
 And for those who mourn,
- ¹⁹I will create reason for praise:^m
 utter prosperity to those far and near,
 and I will heal them, says the LORD.
- ²⁰But the wicked are like the churning sea that can't keep still.
 They churn up from their waters muck and mud.
- ²¹There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.

57:15 Dt 33:27;
 Ps 34:18,
 Ps 51:17;
 Is 66:2; Lk 1:49

57:16 Ps 103:9

57:17 Is 56:11;
 Jer 6:13

57:18 Jer 3:22;
 Hos 14:4

57:19 Ac 2:39;
 Eph 2:17;
 Heb 13:15

57:20 Job 18:5;
 Jud 1:13

57:21 Is 48:22

58:1 Mi 3:8

58:2 Is 1:11,
 Is 29:13, Is 48:1;
 Ti 1:16

58:3 Ps 69:10;
 Jer 14:12;
 Zec 7:5;
 Mal 3:14

58:4 Dt 1:12;
 1Ki 21:9;
 Prv 17:19,
 Prv 26:21;
 Is 59:2

Fasting from injustice

- 58** Shout loudly; don't hold back;
 raise your voice like a trumpet!
 Announce to my people their crime,
 to the house of Jacob their sins.
- ²They seek me day after day, desiring knowledge of my ways
 like a nation that acted righteously, that didn't abandon their God.
 They ask me for righteous judgments, wanting to be close to God.
- ³"Why do we fast and you don't see;
 why afflict ourselves and you don't notice?"
 Yet on your fast day you do whatever you want,
 and oppress all your workers.
- ⁴You quarrel and brawl, and then you fast;
 you hit each other violently with your fists.
 You shouldn't fast as you are doing today
 if you want to make your voice heard on high.

^kOr *contrite* ^lOr *contrite* ^mHeb uncertain

57:15 *The one who is high and lifted up*: For the same language about God, see Isaiah 6:1; 33:10. For God's opposition to the proud, see Isaiah 2:12-17. For a similar treatment of God's exaltation yet tenderness toward the lowly, see Isaiah 66:1-2.

57:16 *I won't always accuse*: Compare with Psalm 103:9.

57:18 *I will heal them*: Compare with Lamentations 2:13; Jeremiah 3:22; 30:17; 33:6; Hosea 14:4.

57:19 *utter prosperity*: The words in Hebrew are *shalom, shalom*. This verse is quoted in reference to Jesus in Ephesians 2:17.

57:21 *There is no peace*: Compare with Isaiah 48:22. In contrast to the peace God gives to those who are mourning, the wicked who churn up trouble will find no peace.

58:1-14 A lesson on insincere and sincere worship: Devout rituals are meaningless when accompanied by self-serving practices. But fasting from injustice and actively pursuing the interests of those who are socially

defenseless—the hungry, oppressed, naked, and homeless—benefits the whole society.

58:1-2 *Shout loudly; don't hold back*: The prophet is instructed to correct those expecting God to hear their prayers. For similar language, see Micah 3:8. The chapter's structure reflects not condemnation but ethical instruction.

58:3 *Why do we fast and you don't see*: Fasting often expressed mourning, petition, or a change of heart and mind, and carried hope for divine response (Judg 20:26; 1 Sam 7:6; 2 Sam 12:16-23; Ezra 8:21-23; Neh 1:4; 9:1-2; Esth 4:3, 16; Pss 35:13; 109:24; Jer 14:12; Dan 9:3; Joel 1:14; 2:12-17; Jon 3:5). The question suggests divine neglect: We are doing right; why does God fail to respond? The difficulties of life in the early decades of post-exilic Jerusalem may have led to such frustration—see, for instance, Haggai 1:6-11; 2:16-19; Zechariah 8:10. But the fact that people continue to act unjustly even on fast days suggests that

58:5 1Ki 21:27;
Zec 7:5

58:6 Neh 5:10

58:7 Job 31:19;

Is 16:4;

Eze 18:7;

Mt 25:35;

Mt 25:36

58:8 Job 11:17;

Is 52:12;

Is 58:10

58:9 Ps 12:2,

Ps 50:15;

Prv 6:13;

Is 30:19;

Is 65:24

58:10 Dt 15:7;

Job 11:17;

Prv 11:25;

Prv 28:27;

Is 58:8

58:11 Ps 48:14,

Ps 107:9;

Is 57:18;

Jer 31:12

58:12 Is 49:8,

Is 61:4

58:13 Ex 20:8;

Is 56:2;

Jer 17:21

58:14 Dt 32:13;

Job 22:26;

Is 1:20

59:1 Nm 11:23;

Josh 4:24;

Is 50:2, Is 58:9;

Is 65:24

- 5** Is this the kind of fast I choose,
a day of self-affliction,
of bending one's head like a reed
and of lying down in mourning clothing and ashes?
Is this what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?
- 6** Isn't this the fast I choose:
releasing wicked restraints, untying the ropes of a yoke,
setting free the mistreated, and breaking every yoke?
- 7** Isn't it sharing your bread with the hungry
and bringing the homeless poor into your house,
covering the naked when you see them,
and not hiding from your own family?
- 8** Then your light will break out like the dawn,
and you will be healed quickly.
Your own righteousness will walk before you,
and the LORD's glory will be your rear guard.
- 9** Then you will call, and the LORD will answer;
you will cry for help, and God will say, "I'm here."
If you remove the yoke from among you,
the finger-pointing, the wicked speech;
- 10** if you open your heart to the hungry,
and provide abundantly for those who are afflicted,
your light will shine in the darkness,
and your gloom will be like the noon.
- 11** The LORD will guide you continually
and provide for you, even in parched places.
He will rescue your bones.
You will be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water that won't run dry.
- 12** They will rebuild ancient ruins on your account;
the foundations of generations past you will restore.
You will be called Mender of Broken Walls,
Restorer of Livable Streets.
- 13** If you stop trampling the Sabbath,
stop doing whatever you want on my holy day,
and consider the Sabbath a delight,
sacred to the LORD, honored,
and honor it instead of doing things your way,
seeking what you want and doing business as usual,
- 14** then you will take delight in the LORD.
I will let you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will sustain you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob.
The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Alienation from God

59 Look! The LORD does not lack the power to save,
nor are his ears too dull to hear,

religious devotion isn't causing worshippers to think about their treatment of others.

58:5-7 Displays of piety that simply draw attention to the practice of fasting produce nothing (see likewise Zech 7:5-10). As in earlier prophets' criticisms of religious practices, it isn't the fast itself that's in question but the spirit in which it's carried out (see Amos 5:21-25; Isa 1:12-27; Mic 6:6-8). The acceptable fast means refraining from taking economic advantage of others, and instead offering

assistance necessary for health and dignity. Complaints mentioned in Nehemiah 5:1-8 suggest the economic desperation of some Judeans during Persian rule.

58:8-12 Generosity toward others results in healing, communion with God, guidance, renewal, and restoration.

58:13-14 Self-serving piety is called *trampling the Sabbath*. Those who honor Sabbaths and holy days do what pleases God on those days.

59:1-8 The hardships the community faces, and the gulf

50:17 1Ki 14:9;
Neh 9:26;
Prv 5:12

50:18 Ro 1:32;
1Ti 5:22

50:19 Ps 10:7;
Ps 36:3, Ps 52:2

50:20 Jer 9:4;
Mt 10:21

50:21 Ecc 8:11;
Is 57:11

50:22 Job 8:13;
Ps 7:2, Ps 9:17;
Is 17:10; Mi 5:8

50:23 Ps 50:14,
Ps 91:16

51:1 2Sa 12:1,
2Sa 24:10;
Ac 3:19

51:2 Ps 51:7;
Ac 22:16;
Heb 9:14;
1Jn 1:7, 1Jn 1:9

51:3 Ps 32:5;
Prv 28:13;
Is 59:12

51:4 Gn 20:6,
Gn 39:9;
2Sa 12:13;
Lk 15:21; Ro 3:4

51:5 Job 14:4,
Job 15:14;
Ps 58:3; Eph 2:3

51:6 Job 38:36;
Prv 2:6; Ecc 2:26

17 You hate discipline, and you toss my words behind your back.

18 You make friends with thieves whenever you see one;
you spend your time with adulterers.

19 You set your mouth free to do evil,
then harness your tongue to tell lies.

20 You sit around, talking about your own siblings;
you find fault with the children of your very own mother.

21 You've done these things and I've kept quiet.

You thought I was just like you!

But now I'm punishing you;

I'm laying it all out, right in front of your face.

22 So consider this carefully, all you who forget God,
or I'll rip you to pieces with no one to deliver you:

23 The one who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving is the one who honors me.

And it is to the one who charts the correct path
that I will show divine salvation."

Psalm 51

For the music leader. A psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him just after he had been with Bathsheba.

1 Have mercy on me, God, according to your faithful love!

Wipe away my wrongdoings according to your great compassion!

2 Wash me completely clean of my guilt;

purify me from my sin!

3 Because I know my wrongdoings,
my sin is always right in front of me.

4 I've sinned against you—you alone.

I've committed evil in your sight.

That's why you are justified when you render your verdict,
completely correct when you issue your judgment.

5 Yes, I was born in guilt, in sin,
from the moment my mother conceived me.

6 And yes, you want truth in the most hidden places;
you teach me wisdom in the most secret space.*

*Heb uncertain

misunderstanding and abuse of the sacrificial system, "my people" (Ps 50:7) have become *the wicked* (50:16). Verse 16 assumes an audience that knows God's *laws* and is in covenant relationship with God. Insofar as worship and ethics can be separated, verses 7-15 focus on worship, and verses 16-22 focus on ethics.

50:18 The references here are to the Ten Commandments (see Exod 20:14-16).

50:21-23 Although divine punishment is mentioned (50:21) and described (50:22), verse 23 shows that God's real purpose is to set things right and have the people live as God intends.

50:23 *sacrifice of thanksgiving*: See Psalm 50:14. It isn't clear whether the psalmist meant to say that animal sacrifices were neither necessary nor legitimate. Clearly, however, they aren't sufficient. God wills thankfulness expressed in obedience, as the prophets often proclaim (see Isa 1:10-20; 58:1-14; Jer 7:1-15; Hos 6:6; Amos 5:21-24.) *divine salvation*: This means life as God intends it (see Ps 13:5).

51:1-19 Like other prayers for help, Psalm 51 includes complaint (51:3-5), petition (51:1-2, 6-12, 14a, 15a), and expressions of trust and praise (51:14b, 15b-17). Because the complaint involves the psalmist's own sin, Psalm 51 is the fourth of the church's Penitential Psalms (see Ps 6).

The title invites the reading of Psalm 51 in conversation with 2 Samuel 11:1-12:14 (see Ps 3), the story of David and Bathsheba, in which David broke at least half of the Ten Commandments. In this way, the story makes an appropriate context for hearing Psalm 51, even if the psalm didn't originate in this historical context.

51:1 The opening petitions invite more attention to God's character than to the psalmist's sin. *Have mercy*: See Psalm 4:1. *faithful love*: See Psalm 5:7. *compassion*: See Psalm 25:6. All three of these basic qualities of God occur in God's self-revelation to Moses in Exodus 34:6, which comes at the conclusion of the gold calf incident that involved grievous sin on Israel's part. The firm belief about God's merciful character is apparently what enables the psalmist to confess sin so honestly and openly.

51:2-4 Similar to Psalm 32:1-5, Israel's basic words for sin occur here: *guilt* (51:2; see Ps 51:5), *sin[ned]* (51:2-4; see Ps 51:5), *wrongdoings* (51:3), and *evil* (51:4). The word translated *wrongdoings* suggests purposeful rebellion.

51:5 This verse has often been interpreted to mean that sexuality transmits "original sin," but it is better understood as a poetic expression of the widespread and unavoidable sin in the human situation.

- 7 Purify me with hyssop and I will be clean;
wash me and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8 Let me hear joy and celebration again;
let the bones you crushed rejoice once more.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins;
wipe away all my guilty deeds!
- 10 Create a clean heart for me, God;
put a new, faithful spirit deep inside me!
- 11 Please don't throw me out of your presence;
please don't take your holy spirit away from me.
- 12 Return the joy of your salvation to me
and sustain me with a willing spirit.
- 13 Then I will teach wrongdoers your ways,
and sinners will come back to you.
- 14 Deliver me from violence, God, God of my salvation,
so that my tongue can sing of your righteousness.
- 15 Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will proclaim your praise.
- 16 You don't want sacrifices.
If I gave an entirely burned offering, you wouldn't be pleased.
- 17 A broken spirit is my sacrifice, God.^a
You won't despise a heart, God, that is broken and crushed.
- 18 Do good things for Zion by your favor.
Rebuild Jerusalem's walls.
- 19 Then you will again want sacrifices of righteousness—
entirely burned offerings and complete offerings.
Then bulls will again be sacrificed on your altar.

Psalm 52

For the music leader. A maskil^b of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, "David has gone to Ahimelech's house."

- 1 Hey, powerful person!
Why do you brag about evil?
God's faithful love lasts all day long.

^aCorrection ^bPerhaps *instruction*; it also appears in Pss 42, 44–45, 52–55, 74, 78, 88–89, 142; cf 47:7; the root is used in Ps 32:8.

51:7 *Purify... hyssop*: See Leviticus 14:49, 52; Numbers 19:18, where hyssop is used in cleansing rituals.

51:10-12 *Create... God*: God has the ability to create and re-create, activities associated elsewhere with God's spirit (see Gen 1:2). The threefold repetition of *spirit* suggests that new life is possible for the forgiven sinner. *holy spirit*: Isaiah 63:10-11 is the only other occurrence of this formulation in the OT. It seems here to designate the living and life-giving presence of God.

51:13-15 The forgiven sinner becomes a grateful witness to God's merciful character (see Ps 32:8-11). Every organ of speech is involved: *tongue* (51:14), *lips* (51:15), and *mouth* (51:15). *Deliver me from violence*: In the Psalms, those who pray are often victims of violence, often precisely because they are attempting to represent God's ways (see Ps 4:2-5; see sidebar, "The Enemies" at Ps 3). *my salvation*: See Psalm 13:5. *your righteousness*: See Psalm 5:8. In this context, God uses forgiveness to set things right.

51:16-17 Humble thankfulness and obedient praise are what God desires, as the previous psalm has also suggested (see Ps 50:14, 23; see also Ps 40:6; Rom 12:1-2).

51:18-19 These verses were possibly added to the psalm by someone who wanted to suggest that Psalm 51:16-17 (and perhaps 50:23) shouldn't be understood as a prohibition of sacrificial offerings when made in the proper spirit.

52:1-9 Like Psalm 49, Psalm 52 addresses other people, until the concluding verse 9. So it has a teaching tone; and like Psalm 49, the lesson involves the temptation to trust wealth (52:7). The title suggests that Psalm 52 be read in light of 1 Samuel 21–22, in which case the *powerful person* (52:1) would be Doeg, whose message to Saul is quoted in the title (see 1 Sam 22:9; see Ps 3). After the words to the "powerful person" (52:1-5), the focus shifts to the *righteous* (52:6), who are quoted in 52:7. Verse 8 is the speaker's profession of faith, which continues in verse 9 in promises directed to God.

52:1 *powerful person!*: The person addressed here and then characterized in Psalm 52:2-4 sounds very much like the typical enemy, whose behavior is always deceitful, violent, and destructive (see sidebar, "The Enemies" at Ps 3). *evil*: The word occurs again in Psalm 52:3, and verses 2-4 describe "evil" in detail. *faithful love*: Psalm 52:1 already suggests that God's faithful love will prevail over

51:7 Ex 12:22; Nm 19:18; Ps 51:2; Is 1:18; Heb 9:19

51:8 Is 35:10

51:9 Ps 51:1; Jer 16:17

51:10 Eze 11:19;

Eze 18:31;

Eze 36:26;

Mt 5:8; Ac 15:9

51:11 2Ki 13:23;

Is 63:10;

Eph 4:30

51:12 Ps 85:6

51:13 Ps 37:38;

Is 2:3; Lk 22:32;

Ac 9:21

51:14 2Sa 12:9;

Ps 35:28;

Ps 71:15

51:15 Ex 4:15;

Ps 35:28; Ps 63:3;

Ps 119:164;

Ps 119:175

51:16 1Sa 15:22;

Ps 40:6

51:17 Ps 34:18

51:18 Ps 69:35;

Ps 102:16;

Ps 122:6;

Ps 147:2

51:19 Dt 33:19;

Ps 4:5; Ps 66:13;

Ps 66:15; Mal 3:3

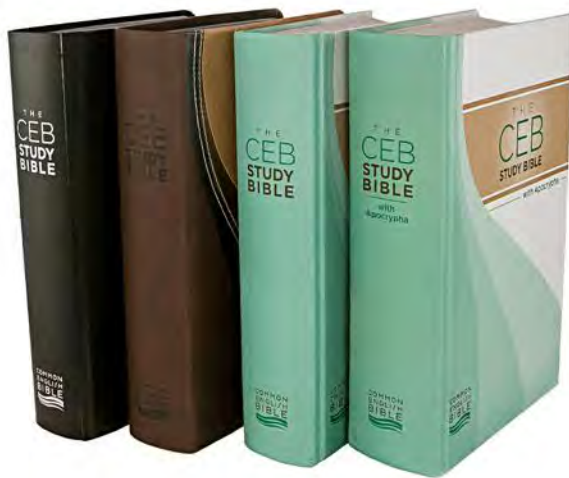
52:1 1Sa 21:7;

1Sa 22:9; Ps 10:3;

Ps 94:4



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16:33 Ex 16:4;
Ex 16:34;
Heb 9:4;
Rev 2:17

16:34 Ex 25:16,
Ex 25:21,
Ex 27:21;
Nm 17:10

16:35 Josh 5:12;
Neh 9:21

16:36 Ex 16:16;
Lv 5:11, Lv 6:20

17:1 Ex 16:1,
Ex 17:8, Ex 19:2;
Nm 33:12,
Nm 33:14

17:4 Nm 14:10;
1Sa 30:6; Jn 8:59

17:6 Ex 3:1;
Nm 20:11;
Dt 8:15;
Ps 78:15;
1Co 10:4

17:8 Gn 36:12;
Ex 17:1;
Nm 24:20;
Dt 25:17;
1Sa 15:2

17:9 Ex 4:20,
Ex 24:13,
Ex 32:17,
Ex 33:11;
Nm 11:28

17:10 Ex 17:9,
Ex 17:12,
Ex 24:14

17:11 1Ti 2:8

17:12 Ex 4:14,
Ex 5:20, Ex 6:20,
Ex 17:10,
Ex 24:14

17:13 Ex 17:8

³³Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put one full omer of manna in it. Then set it in the LORD's presence, where it should be kept safe for future generations." ³⁴Aaron did as the LORD commanded Moses, and he put it in front of the covenant document for safekeeping. ³⁵The Israelites ate manna for forty years, until they came to a livable land. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. (³⁶An omer^c is one-tenth of an ephah.)

Water from a rock

17The whole Israelite community broke camp and set out from the Sin desert to continue their journey, as the LORD commanded. They set up their camp at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people argued with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink."

Moses said to them, "Why are you arguing with me? Why are you testing the LORD?"

³But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

⁴So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What should I do with this people? They are getting ready to stone me."

⁵The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of Israel's elders with you. Take in your hand the shepherd's rod that you used to strike the Nile River, and go. ⁶I'll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Hit the rock. Water will come out of it, and the people will be able to drink." Moses did so while Israel's elders watched. ⁷He called the place Massah^d and Meribah,^e because the Israelites argued with and tested the LORD, asking, "Is the LORD really with us or not?"

Israel defeats Amalek

⁸Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men for us and go fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I'll stand on top of the hill with the shepherd's rod of God in my hand." ¹⁰So Joshua did as Moses told him. He fought with Amalek while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel would start winning the battle. Whenever Moses lowered his hand, Amalek would start winning. ¹²But Moses' hands grew tired. So they took a stone and put it under Moses so he could sit down on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side of him so that his hands remained steady until sunset. ¹³So Joshua defeated Amalek and his army with the sword.

^cTwo quarts ^dOr *test* ^eOr *argument*

desert. Looking forward, the manna jar is to be placed in the LORD's presence (16:33) and in front of the covenant document (16:34). This refers to God's wilderness dwelling, which will be built only later in Exodus 35–40.

16:35 This comment looks ahead 40 years to a time when Israel will enter and eat the food of the land of Canaan. Only then will the manna stop (Josh 5:6, 11–12).

17:1–7 The two previous stories portrayed God as the one who tested Israel when they had no water or food (Exod 15:25; 16:4). Here at a desert location called *Rephidim*, the Israelites were the ones who tested the LORD (17:1, 7). Once again, the issue is a lack of water. And again, God meets their need.

17:3 The Israelites complain to Moses about the lack of water in words similar to their earlier complaint in the manna story (Exod 16:3).

17:5 *take . . . elders with you*: God reminds Moses not to go alone but to take other leaders with him. This reminder points forward to the story about the need for Moses to share the burden of leadership with others in the community (Exod 18:1–27; see also Num 11:10–29). God tells Moses to pick up the same *shepherd's rod* that Moses had earlier used to turn the Nile River into blood, thus robbing the Egyptians of water (Exod 7:20). This time Moses' rod will be used not to take away water but rather to provide life-giving nourishment to the Israelites. Moses will hit the

rock and water will flow from it (Exod 17:6). For a similar story, see Numbers 20:1–13.

17:6 God had first met Moses at the mountain of God called *Horeb*, which is also called Sinai (Exod 3:1; cf. Exod 19:11). God had promised that Moses would return to Horeb after leading the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod 3:12). Now God has fulfilled the promise.

17:7 *Massah and Meribah*: The two place names mean "test" and "argument" in Hebrew. God had responded positively to the Israelites' complaint, but at the same time their complaint seemed to be testing God. The people continue to wonder, "Is the LORD really with us or not?"

17:8–16 The first incident at *Rephidim* involved a natural threat to Israel's future: the lack of water (Exod 17:1). The second incident at *Rephidim* involves a human threat from the outside: an attack by Amalek and his army (17:8). The Israelites were runaway slaves. They were vulnerable and had few resources, which is why Amalek's attack was so morally shameful. Moses sends his assistant Joshua to lead the Israelites in fighting against Amalek's army (17:9). That won't be enough, however. Moses will also need God's and others' assistance. In the next story (Exod 18:1–27), Moses will also use help from others.

17:10–12 *Hur*: an elder and leader from the tribe of Judah (Exod 24:14; 31:2).

3:8 Ac 26:20;
Phi 1:11

3:9 Lk 3:8;
Jn 8:33, Jn 8:39;
Ac 13:26; Ro 4:1

3:10 Mt 7:19;
Lk 3:9, Lk 13:6;
Jn 15:2, Jn 15:6

3:11 Is 4:4;
Mk 1:4, Mk 1:8;
Jn 1:33; Ac 1:5

3:12 Job 21:18;
Ps 1:4; Is 30:24;
Mt 13:30;
Mk 9:43

3:13 Mk 1:9;
Lk 3:21

3:14 Jn 13:6;
Ac 1:5

3:15 Jn 4:34

3:16 Is 11:2,
Is 42:1; Jn 1:32;
Ac 7:56,
Ac 10:38

3:17 Ps 2:7;
Is 42:1; Mt 12:18,
Mt 17:5;
Jn 12:28

4:1 Mk 1:12,
Mk 1:13; Lk 4:1;
Heb 4:15

4:2 Ex 34:28;
1Ki 19:8;
Mt 21:18;
Mk 11:12

4:3 Mt 14:33;
Mk 3:11;
Lk 1:35; Jn 1:34;
1Th 3:5

you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon? ⁸Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. ⁹And don't even think about saying to yourselves, Abraham is our father. I tell you that God is able to raise up Abraham's children from these stones. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire. ¹¹I baptize with water those of you who have changed your hearts and lives. The one who is coming after me is stronger than I am. I'm not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he will burn the husks with a fire that can't be put out."

Baptism of Jesus

¹³At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River so that John would baptize him. ¹⁴John tried to stop him and said, "I need to be baptized by you, yet you come to me?"

¹⁵Jesus answered, "Allow me to be baptized now. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness."

So John agreed to baptize Jesus. ¹⁶When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on him. ¹⁷A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son whom I dearly love; I find happiness in him."

Temptation of Jesus

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus up into the wilderness so that the devil might tempt him. ²After Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was starving. ³The tempter came to him and said, "Since you are God's Son, command these stones to become bread."

The Kingdom of Heaven Unlike the Gospels of Mark and Luke, Matthew rarely refers to "God's kingdom." Instead, Matthew prefers the phrase "kingdom of heaven." "Heaven" is an indirect way of referring to God, following Jewish misgivings about pronouncing God's name. The phrase doesn't imply that the kingdom is located in heaven, though it does make clear that God rules from heaven and that the nature of the kingdom proclaimed by John and Jesus is determined by God's will. Proclamation of the kingdom of heaven by John and Jesus stands as a challenge to Rome's way of ruling.

3:9 Many Jews believed that descent from Abraham offered membership within Israel's covenant community, providing the basis for salvation. But John warns the religious leaders that physical descent from Abraham doesn't guarantee salvation. People needed to share in Abraham's commitments and behavior. The image of stones emphasizes this point, though without suggesting that Jews will be replaced as God's people by Gentiles.

3:11 *The one who is coming:* a Christ figure—clearly, Jesus. The word for *Spirit*, both in Greek and Hebrew, also refers to "wind." Together with *fire*, wind is frequently used as an image for judgment in the OT (e.g., Isa 4:4).

3:12 *shovel:* a tool used to separate the good seed from the husks (of chaff) and then to gather each into piles—the seed for storage, the husks for burning. John uses an image from the harvest to portray the end-time judgment, separating those who have changed their hearts and lives from those who haven't.

3:13-17 Jesus' baptism by John marks the beginning of his public ministry.

3:14 John's baptism looked forward to the baptism of "The one who is coming" (Matt 3:11). Jesus is that "one," so John recognizes that he is in need of the baptism Jesus brings, a baptism "with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matt 3:11).

3:15 *righteousness:* refers to life lived in a restored relationship with God, which both John and Jesus preach. As the people show their commitment to God's ways in baptism, so Jesus' baptism would mark his allegiance to God's righteousness (or "justice").

3:16 *Heaven was opened:* In Ezekiel 1:1-3, the opening of heaven enables the prophet Ezekiel to see visions of God and hear the Lord's words (see John 1:51; Rev 19:11). In the same manner, Jesus sees God's Spirit coming down to him.

3:17 *A voice from heaven:* Not just for Jesus but for all to hear that Jesus is God's beloved Son. God speaks of Jesus, borrowing language from Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1; and possibly Exodus 4:22-23. *I find happiness in him:* or "He is my favorite." The reference is both to God's approval and to God's delight. This clarifies Jesus' identity as God's Son and marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

4:1 *Then the Spirit led:* The Spirit's coming upon Jesus in his baptism (Matt 3:13-17) prepares for the Spirit's role as leader in Jesus' ministry here and throughout the Gospel. *the devil might tempt him:* The devil is introduced without fanfare in the role by which he will be named in Matthew 4:3: "The tempter" tempts. See Matthew 13:39; 25:41. In Matthew 4:10; 12:26; 16:23, the devil (a Greek term) is known by his Hebrew name, "Satan."

4:2 *forty days and forty nights:* Moses also fasted 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai (Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9). In addition, God led the people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years to test whether they would keep the commandments (Deut 8:2).

4:3-4 *Since you are God's Son:* Some translations read "If you are God's Son," but the Greek text leaves no doubt. The devil knows that Jesus is God's Son, so the question is how he will fulfill his role as God's Son. Will he use his status to work a miracle or will he depend on God?

⁴Jesus replied, "It's written, *People won't live only by bread, but by every word spoken by God.*"^f

⁵After that the devil brought him into the holy city and stood him at the highest point of the temple. He said to him, ⁶"Since you are God's Son, throw yourself down; for it is written, *I will command my angels concerning you, and they will take you up in their hands so that you won't hit your foot on a stone.*"^g

⁷Jesus replied, "Again it's written, *Don't test the Lord your God.*"^h

⁸Then the devil brought him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹He said, "I'll give you all these if you bow down and worship me."

¹⁰Jesus responded, "Go away, Satan, because it's written, *You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.*"ⁱ ¹¹The devil left him, and angels came and took care of him.

Move to Galilee

¹²Now when Jesus heard that John was arrested, he went to Galilee. ¹³He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, which lies alongside the sea in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali.

¹⁴This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:

¹⁵*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
alongside the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,
the people who lived in the dark have seen a great light,
and a light has come upon those who lived in the region
and in shadow of death.*^j

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to announce, "Change your hearts and lives! Here comes the kingdom of heaven!"

Calling of the first disciples

¹⁸As Jesus walked alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹"Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." ²⁰Right away, they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Continuing on, he saw another set of brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father repairing their nets. Jesus called them and ²²immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

^fDeut 8:3 ^gPs 91:11-12 ^hDeut 6:16 ⁱDeut 6:13 ^jIsa 9:1-2

4:18 Mt 10:2; Mk 1:16; Lk 5:2; Jn 1:40, Jn 6:1 **4:19** Mt 8:22; Mt 9:9; Mk 1:17; Lk 5:10; Jn 1:43 **4:20** Mt 9:9 **4:21** Mt 10:2, Mt 17:1, Mt 20:20, Mt 26:37; Mk 1:19 **4:22** Mk 1:20

4:4 Dt 8:3; Mt 4:7, Mt 4:10; Eph 6:17
4:5 Neh 11:1; Neh 11:18; Is 48:2; Mt 27:53; Lk 4:9
4:6 Ps 91:11; Ps 91:12; Mt 4:3
4:7 Dt 6:16; Mt 4:4, Mt 4:10
4:8 Mt 16:26; Lk 4:5; 1Jn 2:15; 1Jn 2:16
4:9 1Co 10:20; 1Co 10:21
4:10 Dt 6:13; Dt 10:20; Isa 7:3; 1Ch 21:1; Job 1:6
4:11 Mt 26:53; Lk 22:43; Heb 1:14
4:12 Mt 14:3; Mk 1:14; Lk 3:20, Lk 4:14
4:13 Mt 11:23; Mk 1:21; Lk 4:31; Jn 2:12
4:14 Mt 1:22; Mt 8:17; Mt 12:17
4:15 Is 9:1, Is 9:2
4:16 Is 9:2; Lk 1:79, Lk 2:32
4:17 Mt 3:2; Mt 10:7; Mk 1:14; Mk 1:15

Quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus demonstrates his obedience to God; unlike Israel, who failed a similar test in the wilderness.

4:5-7 *Since you are God's Son:* See note on Matthew 4:3-4. Will Jesus test God to see if God will prove that Jesus is God's Son by protecting him from injury? Jesus refuses, quoting Deuteronomy 6:16, a reference to Israel's testing of God in the wilderness. Unlike Israel, Jesus doesn't test God, proving again that he is God's faithful Son.

4:8-10 The devil invites Jesus to transfer his loyalty from God to the devil. Jesus refuses by quoting Deuteronomy 6:13, which commands Israel to worship and serve God alone. Jesus again proves to be God's faithful Son.

4:12-16 Matthew has demonstrated in chapters 2-3 that John and Jesus are parallel figures. For this reason, when we read that John is arrested we can anticipate that Jesus will experience the same fate. For now, Jesus goes to Galilee to begin his ministry.

4:13-16 *the area of Zebulun and Naphtali:* According to the book of Joshua, after the conquest of the promised land, the lower land of Galilee west of the Lake of Galilee, which includes Nazareth, belonged to the tribes of Zebulun (Josh 19:10-16); and the area to the northwest of the Lake of Galilee belonged to the tribes of Naphtali (Josh 19:32-39). Matthew lumps them together as the primary location of Jesus' ministry. *This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:* See Isaiah 9:1-2. When Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, invaded Israel in 732 BCE, he captured Gilead and Galilee,

including all the land of Naphtali (2 Kgs 15:29). As a result, this region became the Assyrian province of Galilee with Megiddo as its capital. That is probably why this region is called "Galilee of the nations [or Gentiles]" in Isaiah (Isa 9:1-2). Matthew will later develop the significance of this phrase when he reports Jesus' words that salvation is to include "all nations" (Matt 28:16-20) or "the Gentiles" (Matt 12:16-21). The prophecy from Isaiah referred to the birth of a Davidic heir as a promise for the restoration of the occupied Assyrian provinces. For Matthew, this message is fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus.

4:17-25 A summary of Jesus' entire ministry and message (Matt 4:17) leads to two stories in which Jesus calls disciples (4:18-22) and to a summary of Jesus' itinerant ministry (4:23-25). These stories demonstrate what it means to *Change your hearts and lives* and for the *kingdom of heaven* to draw near. See sidebar, "The Kingdom of Heaven" at Matthew 3.

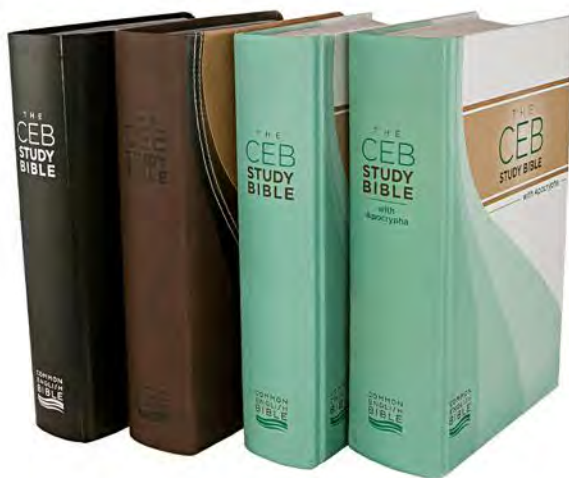
4:18-22 In the ancient world, fisherfolk were peasants. Matthew's two accounts portray different kinds of fishing—Peter and Andrew have only nets, which they throw into the lake; whereas James and John are part of a family business with a boat.

4:19, 22 *fish for people:* From the very beginning, the calling of disciples suggests missionary activity. *they left:* Both in 4:19 and 4:22, the response is immediate and complete. They left their ways of life, even family. This wholesale following after Jesus summarizes the nature of discipleship.



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20:32 Mt 15:28,
Mt 20:21

20:33 Ps 119:18

20:34 Mt 8:3,
Mt 9:36

21:1 Mt 24:3,
Mt 26:30;
Mk 11:1;
Lk 19:29; Jn 8:1

21:2 Gn 22:3;
Mk 11:2

21:4 Mt 1:22,
Mt 26:56;
Jn 12:12

21:5 Ps 2:6;
Is 62:11;
Zec 9:9;
Mt 11:29;
2Co 10:1

21:6 Mt 26:19

21:7 Mt 21:5

21:8 2Ki 9:13

21:9 Ps 118:25,
Ps 118:26;
Mt 9:27,
Mt 23:39;
Lk 2:14

21:10 Lk 5:21;
Ac 9:5

21:11 Lk 7:16,
Lk 24:19; Jn 4:19,
Jn 6:14, Jn 7:40

21:12 Lv 1:14;
Mk 11:15;
Lk 19:45; Jn 2:13

21:13 Is 56:7;
Jer 7:11

21:14 Mt 4:23,
Mt 11:5,
Mt 15:31

21:15 Mt 9:27,
Mt 21:9

21:16 Ps 8:2;
Mt 11:25

³²Jesus stopped in his tracks and called to them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

³³“Lord, we want to see,” they replied.

³⁴Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they were able to see, and they followed him.

Entry into Jerusalem

21 When they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus gave two disciples a task. ²He said to them, “Go into the village over there. As soon as you enter, you will find a donkey tied up and a colt with it. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anybody says anything to you, say that the Lord needs it.” He sent them off right away. ⁴Now this happened to fulfill what the prophet said, ⁵*Say to Daughter Zion, “Look, your king is coming to you, humble and riding on a donkey, and on a colt the donkey’s offspring.”*^k ⁶The disciples went and did just as Jesus had ordered them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their clothes on them. Then he sat on them.

⁸Now a large crowd spread their clothes on the road. Others cut palm branches off the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds in front of him and behind him shouted, “*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna to the highest!*” ¹⁰And when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. “Who is this?” they asked. ¹¹The crowds answered, “It’s the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Cleansing the temple

¹²Then Jesus went into the temple and threw out all those who were selling and buying there. He pushed over the tables used for currency exchange and the chairs of those who sold doves. ¹³He said to them, “It’s written, *My house will be called a house of prayer.*^m But you’ve made it a hideout for crooks.”

¹⁴People who were blind and lame came to Jesus in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and legal experts saw the amazing things he was doing and the children shouting in the temple, “*Hosanna to the Son of David!*” they were angry. ¹⁶They said to Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?”

^kIsa 62:11; Zech 9:9 ^lPs. 118:26 ^mIsa 56:7; Jer 7:11

20:34 *Jesus had compassion on them:* See Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32. For the restoration of sight as a sign of Jesus’ identity as the Christ, see Matthew 11:5 (cf. Isa 35:5-6).

21:1 *Bethphage on the Mount of Olives:* a small town located about two miles east of Jerusalem. Jesus draws ever closer to his destination, and thus to his impending death (Matt 20:17-18, 29).

21:2-7 Matthew tells the story of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem as a strict fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 (see 1 Kgs 1:33). In doing so, however, Matthew seems to have imagined that Zechariah referred to two animals, a *donkey* and a *colt*, rather than his referring to one animal in two different ways. As a result, he portrays Jesus riding on both a donkey and a colt at the same time.

21:5 *your king:* See Matthew 2:2; 27:11, 29, 37, 42. *humble:* See Matthew 11:29.

21:8 *spread their clothes on the road:* See 2 Kings 9:13.

21:9 *Hosanna:* a shout of praise, from an Aramaic term that means “Save, please!” *Son of David:* See 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Matthew 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31. *Blessings on the one:* The quotation is from Psalm 118:25-26.

21:10-11 *the whole city was stirred up:* See Matthew 2:3. *prophet:* See Matthew 13:57; 16:14.

21:12-14 Jewish literature at the time of Jesus speaks of the coming of a king into a city, then entering the temple either to offer sacrifices or to expel people engaged in idolatry. Clearly, the scene Matthew portrays represents a prophetic judgment against the temple system. But

this is not simply because of the presence of people buying, selling, and exchanging currency. After all, this was required for people who had traveled a long way, carrying foreign money, and needing to obtain animals for the purpose of offering sacrifice. As the quotation from Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11 (Matt 21:13) makes clear, the problem isn’t the temple itself or even the sacrificial system, but the temple leadership. Rather than using the temple for its intended purpose, as a *house of prayer*, they use their relationship to the temple to hide their unjust behavior.

21:14 *he healed them:* a strong reference to the character of Jesus’ mission as the Davidic king. First, according to Isaiah 35:5-6, the blind and lame will be restored to health when the age of salvation arrives (see Matt 9:27-30; 11:4-5; 12:22; 20:30-34). Second, Matthew notes that the blind and lame sought Jesus out *in the temple*, in spite of evidence that such persons were excluded from the temple (see the proverbial statement in 2 Sam 5:8, “That is why people say, ‘The blind and the lame will not enter the temple’”; cf. Lev 21:18-19).

21:15-16: *chief priests and legal experts:* the temple leadership. This pairing was previously mentioned in Matthew 2:4. There, they were able to identify “where the Christ was to be born,” but here they are unable to recognize who the Christ is. *From the mouths of babies and infants:* a quotation from Psalm 8:3 in the LXX (see Ps 8:2). Children recognize what the leadership doesn’t (see Matt 11:25).

26:12 Mk 16:1;
Lk 23:56;
Jn 19:40

26:13 Mk 14:9

26:14 Mt 10:4,
Mt 26:47,
Mt 27:3;
Mk 14:10;
Lk 22:3

26:15 Ex 21:32;
Zec 11:12;
Mt 26:14,
Mt 27:3; Jn 12:6

26:16 Mt 26:15;
Mk 14:11;
Jn 12:6

26:17 Ex 12:18;
Mk 14:12;
Lk 22:7

26:18 Jn 7:6,
Jn 7:30, Jn 13:1,
Jn 17:1

26:19 Mt 21:6

26:20 Mk 14:17;
Lk 22:14

26:21 Lk 22:21;
Jn 13:21

26:22 Mk 14:19

26:23 Ps 41:9;
Lk 22:21;
Jn 13:18

26:24 Mt 18:7,
Mt 26:54,
Mt 26:56;
Mk 9:12;
Lk 24:25

26:25 Mt 26:49,
Mt 26:64

26:26 Mt 14:19;
Mk 14:22;
1Co 10:16,
1Co 11:23

26:27 Ps 116:13;
Is 55:1; Mt 11:25,
Mt 15:36;
Mk 14:23

always have me. ¹²By pouring this perfume over my body she's prepared me to be buried. ¹³I tell you the truth that wherever in the whole world this good news is announced, what she's done will also be told in memory of her."

Judas betrays Jesus

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, "What will you give me if I turn Jesus over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶From that time on he was looking for an opportunity to turn him in.

Passover with the disciples

¹⁷On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?"

¹⁸He replied, "Go into the city, to a certain man, and say, 'The teacher says, "My time is near. I'm going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house."'"¹⁹The disciples did just as Jesus instructed them. They prepared the Passover.

²⁰That evening he took his place at the table with the twelve disciples. ²¹As they were eating he said, "I assure you that one of you will betray me."

²²Deeply saddened, each one said to him, "I'm not the one, am I, Lord?"

²³He replied, "The one who will betray me is the one who dips his hand with me into this bowl. ²⁴The Human One^h goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!ⁱ It would have been better for him if he had never been born."

²⁵Now Judas, who would betray him, replied, "It's not me, is it, Rabbi?"
Jesus answered, "You said it."

Last supper

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take and eat. This is my body." ²⁷He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from this, all of you. ²⁸This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many so that their sins may be forgiven. ²⁹I tell you, I won't drink wine again until that day when I drink it in a new way with you in my Father's kingdom." ³⁰Then, after singing songs of praise, they went to the Mount of Olives.

^hOr *Son of Man* ⁱOr *Son of Man*

26:28 Ex 24:8; Zec 9:11; Mt 20:28; Col 1:14; Heb 9:22 **26:29** Mt 13:43 **26:30** Mt 21:1; Mk 14:26; Lk 21:37; Lk 22:39; Jn 18:1

the motivation for treating the poor with generosity. Here they illustrate that everyday responsibilities, like caring for the poor, are not as important as serving Jesus in his last hours. Preparing people for burial was an important religious responsibility.

26:14 *one of the Twelve*: See Matthew 10:1-4; 20:17. That Judas is a member of the inner circle emphasizes the travesty of the betrayal about to be recounted. *Iscariot*: a reference to his hometown, Kerioth, in southern Judea.

26:15 *thirty pieces of silver*: Each silver piece was worth the equivalent of about four days' work for a laborer, so they pay Judas the rough equivalent of 120 days' labor.

26:17-20 *Festival of Unleavened Bread*: a seven-day festival (see Exod 12:17-20; Lev 23:4-8). *the Passover meal*: unleavened bread, lamb, and bitter herbs (Num 9:11). Celebrating the Passover feast is a family affair, so it is important that Jesus will celebrate Passover with *the twelve disciples*. This reflects the redefinition of "family" in Matthew 12:46-50.

26:21-23 Eating together signified close bonds of friendship, so it is all the more distressing that one of Jesus' table companions would betray Jesus.

26:24 *The Human One goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!*: Setting these two sentences side by side indicates how scripture can hold together God's actions

and human responsibility. Jesus' crucifixion may serve God's purpose, but this doesn't excuse Judas from his act of betrayal. There are no OT texts that require or predict that the Human One must die. The point isn't to find this or that text in order to prove something. Rather, Jesus' statement means that the OT as a whole must be read and reread from the perspective of his crucifixion.

26:25 In Matthew 26:22, each of the disciples asks Jesus a question and expects a negative answer. Judas does the same. However, when Judas asks the question, he isn't "deeply saddened," and he addresses Jesus as "Rabbi" rather than as "Lord." In Matthew's Gospel disciples and would-be disciples call Jesus "Lord," while other titles, like "teacher" and "Rabbi," are generally used by people who don't follow or who even oppose Jesus (see Matt 12:38; 19:16; 22:16, 24, 36; 26:49). Matthew clearly identifies Judas as the betrayer (cf. Matt 10:4). "*You said it*": Jesus' answer is indirect, but, in this context, clearly affirmative.

26:26-29 *While they were eating*: Jesus and the disciples celebrate the Passover meal, which Jesus now reinterprets with reference to his own death (see Matt 20:28). *blood of the covenant*: See Exodus 24:8; Zechariah 9:11. *so that their sins may be forgiven*: See Matthew 1:21. This last supper becomes the basis for the church's celebration of the Lord's Supper.

26:30 *Mount of Olives*: See the note on Matthew 24:3.

26:54 Mt 1:22, Mt 26:24

26:55 Mt 4:23, Mt 21:23; Mk 12:35; Jn 7:14, Jn 18:20

26:56 Mt 26:31

26:57 Mt 26:3; Mk 14:53; Jn 18:12

26:58 Mt 26:69; Jn 18:15

26:59 Mt 5:22; Ac 6:11

26:60 Dt 19:15; Ps 35:11

26:61 Mt 27:40; Jn 2:19; Ac 6:14

26:62 Mt 27:12

26:63 Lv 5:1; Mt 4:3; Mt 16:16; Mt 27:12; Mk 5:7

26:64 Ps 110:1;

Dn 7:13; Mt 16:27; Mt 27:11; Mk 14:62

26:65 Nm 14:6; Mt 9:3; Jn 10:33; Jn 10:36; Ac 14:14

26:66 Lv 24:16; Jn 19:7

26:67 Is 50:6; Mt 27:30; Lk 22:63; Jn 18:22

26:68 Mk 14:65

26:69 Mt 26:58; Mk 14:66; Lk 22:55; Jn 18:16; Jn 18:25

26:70 Prv 29:25; Mt 26:34

he will send to me more than twelve battle groups¹ of angels right away? ⁵⁴But if I did that, how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say this must happen?" ⁵⁵Then Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me, like a thief? Day after day, I sat in the temple teaching, but you didn't arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has happened so that what the prophets said in the scriptures might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away.

Jesus before the council

⁵⁷Those who arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest. The legal experts and the elders had gathered there. ⁵⁸Peter followed him from a distance until he came to the high priest's courtyard. He entered that area and sat outside with the officers to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰They didn't find anything they could use from the many false witnesses who were willing to come forward. But finally they found two ⁶¹who said, "This man said, 'I can destroy God's temple and rebuild it in three days.'"

⁶²Then the high priest stood and said to Jesus, "Aren't you going to respond to the testimony these people have brought against you?"

⁶³But Jesus was silent.

The high priest said, "By the living God, I demand that you tell us whether you are the Christ, God's Son."

⁶⁴"You said it," Jesus replied. "But I say to you that from now on you'll see *the Human One^m sitting on the right side of the Almightyⁿ and coming on the heavenly clouds.*"^o

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He's insulting God! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, you've heard his insult against God. ⁶⁶What do you think?"

And they answered, "He deserves to die!" ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and beat him. They hit him ⁶⁸and said, "Prophecy for us, Christ! Who hit you?"

Peter's denial

⁶⁹Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant woman came and said to him, "You were also with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of all of them, saying, "I don't know what you are talking about."

⁷¹When he went over to the gate, another woman saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth."

¹Or *legions* (of the Roman army, about five thousand soldiers each) ^mOr *Son of Man* ⁿOr *the Power* ^oDan 7:13

group included about 6,000 soldiers, so Jesus refers to more than 72,000 angels. (For angelic assistance, see Matt 4:6 [Ps 91:11-12]. For the idea of fighting angels, see 2 Kgs 6:17; Dan 10:13-21.)

26:55 *Have you come with swords and clubs:* The "chief priests and elders" sent a mob (Matt 26:47), as though Jesus were a violent revolutionary. This is consistent with the unfolding picture that Jesus will be executed as a pretender to the throne (cf. Matt 27:37), but it contrasts sharply with the nature of Jesus' healing and teaching activity in the temple (Matt 21:14; 21:23-23:39).

26:56 *all the disciples left Jesus and ran away:* See Matthew 26:31.

26:57-71 The stories of Peter and Jesus are intertwined, emphasizing Jesus' courage when questioned by the high priest in contrast to Peter's failure under questioning by two women and some unnamed bystanders.

26:57, 59 The cast of characters includes *Caiaphas* (see the note on Matt 26:3-4), the *legal experts*, *elders*, and the *chief priests*. Together, they make up the *whole council*, also known as the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55; 15:1). This is the supreme ruling and judicial body, over which the high priest presided. *false testimony:* From the outset, Matthew presents the proceedings against Jesus as a travesty of justice.

26:60 *they found two:* See Deuteronomy 17:6, which

requires "two or three witnesses" in cases of capital punishment.

26:61 *This man said:* Matthew records no such statement, though he does report that Jesus predicted the temple's destruction (Matt 24:2; cf. Matt 23:38).

26:64 *You said it . . . But I say to you:* Jesus' answer is indirect, but affirmative. He turns immediately to explain the nature of his status as Christ and God's Son, using language from Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 110:1.

26:65 *tore his clothes:* The high priest is deeply troubled by Jesus' response. *He's insulting God:* See Matthew 9:3; 12:31. The basis for the insult may be Jesus' claim that, as the Human One, he will sit at God's right side; or it may be that the high priest thought he was trying to make himself like God in order to deceive God's people.

26:66 See Matthew 26:4.

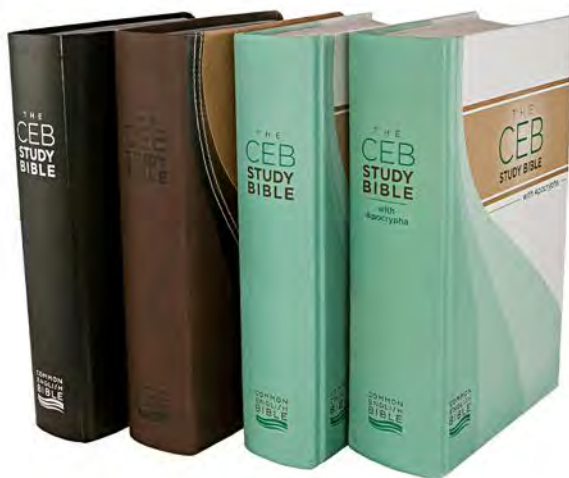
26:67-68 See Isaiah 50:6.

26:69-74 While Jesus was on trial in the high priest's house, Peter sat outside in the high priest's courtyard (see Matt 26:57-58). Peter is on trial, too, though his questioners don't seem like people to be feared—a *servant woman*, *another woman*, and *those standing there*. From the first to the third denial Peter's responses grow stronger. A simple denial becomes a solemn pledge, and the third denial includes cursing and swearing (see Matt 5:33-37; 23:16-22).



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10:28 Ex 10:11

11:1 Ex 6:1,
Ex 12:31

11:2 Ex 3:22,
Ex 12:35,
Ex 12:36

11:4 Ex 12:29;
Job 34:20

11:5 Ex 4:23,
Ex 12:12,
Ex 12:29,
Ex 13:15;
Mt 24:41

11:7 Ex 8:22,
Ex 9:4

12:1 Ex 4:14,
Ex 5:20, Ex 6:20,
Ex 7:1, Ex 7:7

12:2 Ex 13:4,
Ex 23:15,
Ex 34:18;
Dt 16:1

12:3 Ex 12:6;
1Co 5:7

²⁷But the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn so that he wasn't willing to let them go. ²⁸Pharaoh said to him, "Get out of here! Make sure you never see my face again, because the next time you see my face you will die."

²⁹Moses said, "You've said it! I'll never see your face again!"

God announces the final disaster

11 The LORD said to Moses, "I'll bring one more disaster on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he'll let you go from here. In fact, when he lets you go, he'll eagerly chase you out of here. ²Tell every man to ask his neighbor and every woman to ask her neighbor for all their silver and gold jewelry." ³The LORD made sure that the Egyptians were kind to the Hebrew people. In addition, Pharaoh's officials and the Egyptian people even came to honor Moses as a great and important man in the land.

⁴Moses said, "This is what the LORD says: At midnight I'll go throughout Egypt. ⁵Every oldest child in the land of Egypt will die, from the oldest child of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the oldest child of the servant woman by the millstones, and all the first offspring of the animals. ⁶Then a terrible cry of agony will echo through the whole land of Egypt unlike any heard before or that ever will be again. ⁷But as for the Israelites, not even a dog will growl at them, at the people, or at their animals. By this, you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. ⁸Then all your officials will come down to me, bow to me, and say, 'Get out, you and all your followers!' After that I'll leave." Then Moses, furious, left Pharaoh.

⁹The LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh won't listen to you so that I can perform even more amazing acts in the land of Egypt." ¹⁰Now Moses and Aaron did all these amazing acts in front of Pharaoh, but the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn so that he didn't let the Israelites go from his land.

First Passover

12 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ²"This month will be the first month; it will be the first month of the year for you." ³Tell the whole Israelite

²March–April; cf Exod 13:4

10:27 See note on Exodus 9:12.

10:28–29 *never see my face again*: Pharaoh predicts his own death without realizing it. Moses agrees that he will never see Pharaoh's face again. Pharaoh and his army will soon be destroyed by the Lord (Exod 14:26–28). This is a sign that the last and greatest disaster against Egypt is coming in the near future.

11:1–10 Moses warns Pharaoh about the tenth and final disaster to come upon Egypt. God had announced this final plague in Exodus 4:22–23.

11:1–2 God promises Moses that this last disaster will be so severe that the Egyptians will gladly give the Israelites silver and gold as a way to encourage them to leave Egypt. God originally made this prediction in Exodus 3:22. It will come true in Exodus 12:35–36. This gold and silver will be used later on two occasions at Mount Sinai. The Israelites will provide the metal to make the gold calf, which they worship as an idol (Exod 32:2–5). Later the Israelites will offer materials of silver, gold, and fine cloth to build the special dwelling or tent for God and all its equipment (Exod 25:1–9; 35:20–29; 36–37).

11:2 *neighbor*. Although previous texts depicted the Israelites living separate from the Egyptians (e.g., Exod 8:22), this verse suggests that at least some Israelites and Egyptians lived near each other (see also Exod 12:23). This is an example of how different ancient traditions have been woven together into the present book of Exodus.

11:5 The final disaster will involve the death of *Every oldest child* in every Egyptian family, from Pharaoh's family on down. In Exodus 4:22–23, God had said that Pharaoh's oldest son would die. Those words are expanded here to include all Egyptian families and even animals. Israel's

God is the creator of all beings. Therefore, God claims the right to take back every oldest male whom God chooses, whether human or animal (Exod 13:1–2; Gen 22:15–18; Num 3:11–13).

11:7 *the LORD makes a distinction*: God has kept Israel separate and safe from the previous disasters that struck the Egyptians (Exod 8:22–23; 9:4, 6–7, 26; 10:23). The Israelites will be kept safe from this last and greatest disaster as well. When the Egyptians see how Israel is protected, the Egyptians finally *will know* the power of Israel's God. God is deeply interested in what the Egyptians think about God (Exod 7:5; 8:10, 22–23; 9:14, 29; 14:4, 18; 32:11–14).

11:8 *Moses, furious*: As God's messenger, Moses not only speaks God's words but also feels God's emotion of anger (Exod 11:18; see Exod 32:11, 19).

11:10 *the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn*: See note on Exodus 9:12.

12:1–32 The Lord gives instructions about how Israelites should observe the annual festivals of *Passover* and *Unleavened Bread*. The Passover meal with the roasted lamb and its blood smeared on the doorposts plays an immediate role in the story of the exodus (12:7, 21–23). In addition, Passover is presented as an annual festival to be celebrated in the spring of every year by all future generations (12:14, 24–27). The full seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread occurs alongside the Passover. It is intended for a later time after the Israelites have arrived in the land of Canaan (12:17–20; Exod 13:3–8). The Israelites leave Egypt the very next day after the night of Passover (12:29–32).

12:2 *the first month of the year*: Israel's religious calendar begins in the spring of the year (sometime in April–May

community: On the tenth day of this month they must take a lamb for each household, a lamb per house. ⁴If a household is too small for a lamb, it should share one with a neighbor nearby. You should divide the lamb in proportion to the number of people who will be eating it. ⁵Your lamb should be a flawless year-old male. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You should keep close watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month. At twilight on that day, the whole assembled Israelite community should slaughter their lambs. ⁷They should take some of the blood and smear it on the two doorposts and on the beam over the door of the houses in which they are eating. ⁸That same night they should eat the meat roasted over the fire. They should eat it along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Don't eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over fire with its head, legs, and internal organs. ¹⁰Don't let any of it remain until morning, and burn any of it left over in the morning. ¹¹This is how you should eat it. You should be dressed, with your sandals on your feet and your walking stick in your hand. You should eat the meal in a hurry. It is the Passover of the LORD. ¹²I'll pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I'll strike down every oldest child in the land of Egypt, both humans and animals. I'll impose judgments on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. ¹³The blood will be your sign on the houses where you live. Whenever I see the blood, I'll pass over^a you. No plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴"This day will be a day of remembering for you. You will observe it as a festival to the LORD. You will observe it in every generation as a regulation for all time. ¹⁵You will eat unleavened bread for seven days. On the first day you must remove yeast from your houses because anyone who eats leavened bread anytime during those seven days will be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶The first day and the seventh day will be a holy occasion for you. No work at all should be done on those days, except for preparing the food that everyone is going to eat. That is the only work you may do. ¹⁷You should observe the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because on this precise day I brought you out of the land of Egypt in military formation. You should observe this day in every generation as a regulation for all time. ¹⁸In the first month, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day, you should eat unleavened bread. ¹⁹For seven days no yeast should be found in your houses because whoever eats leavened bread will be cut off from the Israelite community, whether

12:5 Heb 9:14; 1Pt 1:19
12:6 Ex 16:12; Lv 23:5
12:7 Ex 12:22; Heb 11:28
12:8 Ex 13:3; Ex 34:25; Nm 9:11; Dt 16:3; 1Co 5:8
12:9 Dt 16:7
12:10 Ex 23:18; Ex 29:34; Ex 34:25; Dt 16:4
12:11 Ex 12:27; Lk 12:35; 1Co 5:7
12:12 Ex 6:2; Ex 11:4; Ex 11:5; Nm 33:4; Is 19:1
12:13 Gn 17:11; Ex 12:23; Heb 11:28
12:14 Ex 12:17; Ex 12:24; Ex 13:9-10
12:15 Gn 17:14; Ex 12:19; Ex 13:6; Ex 23:15; Dt 16:3
12:16 Lv 23:7-8; Nm 28:18; Nm 28:25
12:17 Ex 12:14; Ex 12:41; Ex 13:3
12:18 Ex 12:2; Lv 23:5; Nm 28:16
12:19 Ex 12:15

^aHeb verb of the noun *Passover*

of our modern calendar). The biblical name for this first month in some traditions is Abib (Exod 13:4; 23:15; 34:18; Deut 16:1). In some later biblical traditions, the same month is called Nisan (Neh 2:1; Esth 3:7). Other biblical traditions use an entirely different calendar based on farming cycles of planting and harvesting. This alternate agricultural calendar sets the first month of the year in autumn after the fall harvest of grain (Exod 23:16; 34:22).

12:5 *flawless*: Animal sacrifices offered to the Lord are typically required to be healthy and in good form (Exod 29:1; Lev 3:1; 22:21; Num 28:3).

12:7 *take some of the blood and smear it*: so that the plague of the death of the oldest sons will pass over the Israelite homes and attack only the Egyptian homes (Exod 12:12-13, 21-23).

12:8 *unleavened bread and bitter herbs*: These elements in the Passover meal came to have symbolic meaning. The *unleavened bread* recalls the speed with which Israel suddenly had to leave Egypt. The Israelites didn't have time to wait for bread with yeast to rise as part of the baking process (Exod 12:11, 33-34). The *bitter herbs* recall the bitterness of the suffering and slavery of the Israelites in Egypt (Exod 2:23).

12:9 The meat of the lamb was to be *roasted* so that its blood would be drained and not eaten. Blood was considered to bear the essence of a creature's life. Thus the blood of any meat that was eaten had to be poured back to the ground after slaughter and allowed to return back to God,

its creator (Gen 9:4; Lev 17:3-6, 11, 14; Deut 12:16). A second version of the Passover instruction in Deuteronomy 16:7 commands that the Israelites "cook" (that is, boil) the lamb meat rather than roast it. The text of 2 Chronicles 35:13 appears to harmonize the two traditions of roasting and boiling the Passover lamb.

12:11 *Passover*: The name of this festival comes from the Hebrew verb that we translate as "to pass over." The name recalls how the Lord's destroyer passed over Israelite homes so that no Israelites died during the plague, only Egyptians (see Exod 12:23, 27).

12:12 *the gods of Egypt*: It's assumed that other gods exist as gods of other nations. These other gods, however, are powerless before the Lord (Exod 15:11; see Exod 9:11, 14).

12:15 *cut off from Israel*: The phrase may not necessarily mean capital punishment imposed by the community. Rather, God is frequently the one who will *cut off* the person, meaning an early death without children left behind (Lev 17:10; 20:1-6; 23:29-30). The harsh punishment covers a range of ritual or sexual misconduct, (Exod 30:33, 38; 31:14; Gen 17:14; Lev 7:20, 21, 25, 27; 17:4, 9, 14; 18:29; 19:8; 20:17-18; 22:3; 23:29; Num 9:13; 19:13, 20). The violations are often done "deliberately" (or "with a high hand") (cf. Num 15:30-31) and in secret, making them difficult to detect. In those cases, God imposes the penalty. In other instances, the community can play a role in the punishment (e.g., Exod 31:14; cf. Num 15:32-36; see also Lev 20:2-6).

12:39 Jn 5:44**12:40** Is 6:10,
Is 29:10;
Mt 13:14-15**12:41** Is 6:1**12:42** Jn 7:13,
Jn 7:48, Jn 9:22,
Jn 12:11**12:43** Jn 5:41,
Jn 5:44**12:44** Mt 10:40;
Jn 5:24, Jn 7:28,
Jn 13:20**12:45** Jn 10:30,
Jn 10:38, Jn 14:7,
Jn 14:9**12:46** Jn 1:4,
Jn 8:12, Jn 12:36**12:47** Lk 19:10;
Jn 3:17**12:48** Lk 10:16**12:49** Jn 8:26,
Jn 14:10,
Jn 14:24, Jn 17:8**12:50** Mt 25:46;
Jn 3:34, Jn 6:68,
Jn 8:28, Jn 14:24**13:1** Jn 12:23,
Jn 13:3, Jn 13:34,
Jn 16:28, Jn 17:1**13:2** Lk 22:3;
Jn 6:71, Jn 13:27;
Ac 5:3**13:3** Mt 28:18;
Jn 3:35, Jn 8:42,
Jn 16:28**13:4** Lk 12:37,
Lk 22:27; Jn 13:5**13:5** Gn 18:4,
Gn 19:2; Lk 7:44**13:6** Mt 4:18,
Mt 16:16,
Mt 16:22,
Mt 17:24,
Mt 18:21**13:7** Mt 8:13,
Mt 9:22,
Mt 14:27;
Jn 12:16,
Jn 13:12**13:8** Mt 16:22;
1Co 6:11;
Heb 10:22**13:9** Ps 51:2,
Ps 51:7;
Mt 26:75;
Jn 21:15**13:10** Jn 15:3³⁹Isaiah explains why they couldn't believe:

⁴⁰*He made their eyes blind
and closed their minds
so that they might not see with their eyes,
understand with their minds,
and turn their lives around—
and I would heal them.**

⁴¹Isaiah said these things because he saw Jesus' glory; he spoke about Jesus. ⁴²Even so, many leaders believed in him, but they wouldn't acknowledge their faith because they feared that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue. ⁴³They believed, but they loved human praise more than God's glory.

Summary of Jesus' teaching

⁴⁴Jesus shouted, "Whoever believes in me doesn't believe in me but in the one who sent me. ⁴⁵Whoever sees me sees the one who sent me. ⁴⁶I have come as a light into the world so that everyone who believes in me won't live in darkness. ⁴⁷If people hear my words and don't keep them, I don't judge them. I didn't come to judge the world but to save it. ⁴⁸Whoever rejects me and doesn't receive my words will be judged at the last day by the word I have spoken. ⁴⁹I don't speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me regarding what I should speak and say. ⁵⁰I know that his commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I say is just as the Father has said to me."

Foot washing

13 Before the Festival of Passover, Jesus knew that his time had come to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them fully.

²Jesus and his disciples were sharing the evening meal. The devil had already provoked Judas, Simon Iscariot's son, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew the Father had given everything into his hands and that he had come from God and was returning to God. ⁴So he got up from the table and took off his robes. Picking up a linen towel, he tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he was wearing. ⁶When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷Jesus replied, "You don't understand what I'm doing now, but you will understand later."

⁸"No!" Peter said. "You will never wash my feet!"

Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't have a place with me."

⁹Simon Peter said, "Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head!"

¹⁰Jesus responded, "Those who have bathed need only to have their feet washed, because

12:40 *He made their eyes blind:* Compare with John 9:39-41.

12:41-42 *Isaiah said . . . Jesus' glory:* See Isaiah 6:1-4, where "God's glory" (Isa 6:3) is understood as *Jesus' glory*. See sidebar, "Expelled from the Synagogue" at John 9.

12:43 *human praise . . . God's glory:* or "the glory of humans rather than the glory of God" (cf. John 5:44). *God's glory* is invested solely in Jesus.

12:44-50 Because Jesus "went away and hid from them" (John 12:36), he isn't saying these things to anyone in particular. Instead, they summarize his whole mission and message to the world.

12:44 *shouted:* as in John 7:28, 37 (cf. John 1:15). *Whoever believes in me doesn't believe in me:* The paradoxical language underscores Jesus' repeated claim that he speaks and acts only on the initiative of *the one who sent me* (cf. John 12:49).

12:46 *I have come as a light into the world:* This is the last mention in John of Jesus as the light (cf. John 1:5, 7-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35).

12:50 *whatever I say:* from now on, in the chapters to follow. Like all he has said thus far, it will be just what the Father has said to him.

13:1-20 At an evening meal together, Jesus unexpectedly washes his disciples' feet. He tells them they, too, must wash each other's feet and warns them ahead of time to expect betrayers in their midst.

13:1, 3 *Jesus knew:* He knows all that will happen to him from here on out (cf. John 6:64; 18:4).

13:1 *loved them fully:* or "to the end." Indeed, the end is near, for *his time had come to leave this world and go to the Father*.

13:2 *the evening meal:* not the Passover meal, as in the other Gospels (see Matt 26:19; Mark 14:18; Luke 22:13). That is still in the future (see John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14).

13:7 *you will understand later:* Understanding will come in stages (see John 13:12, 17; 15:15; 17:8). Some things won't be understood until his resurrection (cf. John 2:22; 12:16).

13:8 *Unless . . . place with me:* To refuse Jesus' love offered in the washing of feet would prove Peter isn't one of "his own" (John 13:1).

13:10 *Those who have bathed:* After washing in a public bath and walking home, one would need to have only *one's feet washed*. But Jesus may also have baptism in

*Isa 6:10

they are completely clean. You disciples are clean, but not every one of you.”¹¹ He knew who would betray him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you is clean.”

¹²After he washed the disciples’ feet, he put on his robes and returned to his place at the table. He said to them, “Do you know what I’ve done for you?”¹³ You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you speak correctly, because I am. ¹⁴If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet. ¹⁵I have given you an example: Just as I have done, you also must do. ¹⁶I assure you, servants aren’t greater than their master, nor are those who are sent greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷Since you know these things, you will be happy if you do them. ¹⁸I’m not speaking about all of you. I know those whom I’ve chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture, *The one who eats my bread has turned against me.*⁸

¹⁹“I’m telling you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I Am. ²⁰I assure you that whoever receives someone I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

Announcement of the betrayal

²¹After he said these things, Jesus was deeply disturbed and testified, “I assure you, one of you will betray me.”

²²His disciples looked at each other, confused about which of them he was talking about.

²³One of the disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was at Jesus’ side. ²⁴Simon Peter nodded at him to get him to ask Jesus who he was talking about. ²⁵Leaning back toward Jesus, this disciple asked, “Lord, who is it?”

²⁶Jesus answered, “It’s the one to whom I will give this piece of bread once I have dipped into the bowl.” Then he dipped the piece of bread and gave it to Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son. ²⁷After Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.”²⁸ No one sitting at the table understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹Some thought that, since Judas kept the money bag, Jesus told him, “Go, buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰So when Judas took the bread, he left immediately. And it was night.

The Disciple Jesus Loved The disciple “whom Jesus loved” is first introduced in connection with the identification of Judas as Jesus’ betrayer (John 13:23). This loved disciple is identified at the end of the Gospel as “the disciple who testifies concerning these things and who wrote them down” and whose “testimony is true” (John 21:24). In between he is seen at the cross, taking Jesus’ mother into his care (John 19:26-27); running with Peter to Jesus’ tomb (John 20:2-5); entering the tomb and believing (John 20:8); and recognizing the risen Jesus at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:7). Some interpreters think he’s the unnamed first disciple who appears alongside Andrew (John 1:40); the disciple who brings Peter into the high priest’s courtyard (John 18:15-16); or the eyewitness who testifies to the reality of Jesus’ crucifixion (John 19:35), but there’s no evidence for any of this. Nor is he likely to be identified with any of the disciples named within the Gospel. The nearest clue we have to knowing his identity is that Jesus’ mother was, or became, his mother (John 19:27), making him either Jesus’ brother or a kind of honorary brother (see Acts 1:14). As the Gospel’s author, he has chosen to remain anonymous.

⁸Ps 41:9

mind. If the disciples baptize (John 4:2), they themselves are likely to have been baptized, whether by John or by Jesus. In that sense they are *clean*.

13:14 *wash each other’s feet*: It’s likely this was practiced in congregations known to the Gospel’s author, or the author wanted it introduced (cf. John 13:17). Mutual forgiveness may well be implied.

13:18 *turned against me*: or “raised his heel against me.” In ancient Hebrew culture this was an obscene gesture, as if to trample someone underfoot.

13:19-20 *now, before it happens*: not just moments before—as if Judas’ betrayal were all he was talking about—but years before and in connection with betrayals among Christian believers (see Matt 10:21; Mark 13:12; cf. John 14:29; 16:4).

13:21-30 Jesus now explicitly predicts that one of those

present at the table will betray him, but he reveals that person’s identity only to the disciple right beside him, *the one whom Jesus loved* (13:23). He does this with a signal, giving a piece of bread to Judas and telling him, “*What you are about to do, do quickly.*” When Judas leaves, none of the other disciples understand that he is the betrayer.

13:23 *at Jesus’ side*: just as the Son is “at the Father’s side” (John 1:18). See sidebar, “The Disciple Jesus Loved.”

13:27 *Satan entered into him*: This isn’t something anyone could see but something that can be inferred from the fact that he *took the bread* (cf. John 13:2, 18).

13:28 *No one . . . understood*: other than Jesus and the disciple whom he loved. This is that disciple’s own observation.

13:30 *it was night*: or “Night is coming” (John 9:4) and is drawing ever nearer (John 11:9-10).

13:11 Jn 2:25, Jn 6:64, Jn 13:2

13:12 Jn 13:4, Jn 13:7

13:13 Jn 11:28; 1Co 12:3; Phi 2:11

13:14 1Pt 5:5

13:15 Mt 11:29; 1Ti 4:12; 1Pt 2:21

13:16 Mt 10:24; Lk 6:40; Jn 15:20

13:17 Mt 7:24; Lk 11:28; Jas 1:22, Jas 1:25

13:18 Ps 41:9; Mt 26:23; Jn 6:70, Jn 15:19, Jn 17:12

13:19 Jn 8:24, Jn 14:29, Jn 16:4

13:20 Mt 10:40; Jn 12:44

13:21 Mt 26:21; Mk 14:18; Jn 11:33, Jn 12:27, Jn 13:18

13:22 Lk 22:23

13:23 Jn 11:5, Jn 19:26, Jn 20:2, Jn 21:7, Jn 21:20

13:25 Jn 21:20

13:26 Jn 6:71, Jn 12:4

13:27 Lk 22:3; Jn 13:2

13:29 Jn 12:5-6, Jn 13:1

13:30 Lk 22:53

13:31 Mt 8:20;
Jn 7:39, Jn 12:23,
Jn 14:13;
1Pt 4:11

13:32 Jn 17:1

13:33
Jn 7:33-34,
Jn 8:21, Jn 16:16;
1Jn 2:1

13:34 Lv 19:18;
Jn 15:12;
Eph 5:2; 1Th 4:9;
1Jn 3:23

13:35 1Jn 3:14,
1Jn 4:20

13:36 Jn 13:33,
Jn 14:2,
Jn 21:18-19;
2Pt 1:14

13:37 Mt 26:33;
Mk 14:29;
Lk 22:33-34

13:38 Mk 14:30;
Jn 18:27

14:1 Ps 42:5;
Jn 12:44,
Jn 14:27,
Jn 16:22

14:2 Jn 13:33,
Jn 13:36; 2Co 5:1

14:3 Jn 12:26,
Jn 14:18,
Jn 14:28;
1Th 4:17

14:5 Jn 11:16

14:6 Jn 1:14,
Jn 10:9, Jn 11:25;
Eph 2:18;
Heb 10:20

14:7 Jn 8:19

14:8 Jn 1:43,
Jn 6:5, Jn 12:21

14:9 Jn 12:45;
Col 1:15; Heb 1:3

14:10 Jn 5:19,
Jn 10:38,
Jn 12:49,
Jn 14:20,
Jn 14:24

14:11 Jn 5:36,
Jn 10:38

Love commandment

³¹When Judas was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Human One[†] has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify the Human One[‡] in himself and will glorify him immediately. ³³Little children, I’m with you for a little while longer. You will look for me—but, just as I told the Jewish leaders, I also tell you now—‘Where I’m going, you can’t come.’

³⁴“I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. ³⁵This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.”

Announcement of Peter’s denial

³⁶Simon Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, where are you going?”

Jesus answered, “Where I am going, you can’t follow me now, but you will follow later.”

³⁷Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I’ll give up my life for you.”

³⁸Jesus replied, “Will you give up your life for me? I assure you that you will deny me three times before the rooster crows.”

The way, the truth, and the life

14 “Don’t be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. ²My Father’s house has room to spare. If that weren’t the case, would I have told you that I’m going to prepare a place for you? ³When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too. ⁴You know the way to the place I’m going.”

⁵Thomas asked, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going. How can we know the way?”

⁶Jesus answered, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you have really known me, you will also know the Father. From now on you know him and have seen him.”

⁸Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us.”

⁹Jesus replied, “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ ¹⁰Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don’t speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. ¹²I assure you that whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. They will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you

[†]Or *Son of Man* [‡]Or *Son of Man*

14:12 Mt 21:21; Jn 14:28 **14:13** Mt 7:7; Jn 13:31, Jn 15:16, Jn 16:23-24

13:31-35 Jesus formally announces his glorification (13:31-32) and impending departure (13:33), and he commands his disciples to *love each other* (13:34-35).

13:31-32 *God has been glorified . . . God will also glorify:* The present and future glorification echoes the voice from heaven in answer to Jesus’ prayer (John 12:28).

13:33 *just as I told the Jewish leaders:* Compare with John 7:33-34; 8:21.

13:34 *new commandment:* It is *new* in that the disciples’ love for each other is based specifically on Jesus’ love for them (John 13:1), just as their obligation to wash each other’s feet is based on Jesus’ washing their feet (John 13:14).

13:36-14:31 Jesus replies to four questions from four disciples about his departure from the world and where he is going: Peter first, then Thomas, Philip, and a Judas other than Judas Iscariot. He tells them he’s going to the Father and promises them that the Holy Spirit, or the *Spirit of Truth*, will be their *Companion* in his absence (14:17). Finally, instead of leaving them he summons them to leave with him (14:31).

13:36 *you will follow later:* Compare with John 21:18-19.

13:37 *I’ll give up my life for you:* as the shepherd gives up his life for his sheep (John 10:11, 15, 18).

14:2 *My Father’s house:* not the temple, as in John 2:16, but heaven. *would I have told you . . . place for you:* He hasn’t told them this in so many words. It can also be read as a statement, “I would have told you that I am going,” the point being that he hasn’t told them before but is telling them now.

14:3 *I will return and take you to be with me:* at the last day (cf. John 6:40, 44, 54; Mark 13:27; 1 Thess 4:15-17). *where I am you will be too:* Compare with John 12:26; 17:24.

14:6 *No one comes to the Father except through me:* the sequel to John 6:44, “No one can come to me unless they are drawn to me by the Father.”

14:9 *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father:* Compare with John 1:18; 12:45.

14:12 *greater works: greater* because the Father is greater (John 14:18); *greater* in scope (e.g., reaching “other sheep,” John 10:16), perhaps because Jesus’ time on earth is limited (see John 9:4).

26:12 Mk 16:1;
Lk 23:56;
Jn 19:40

26:13 Mk 14:9

26:14 Mt 10:4,
Mt 26:47,
Mt 27:3;
Mk 14:10;
Lk 22:3

26:15 Ex 21:32;
Zec 11:12;
Mt 26:14,
Mt 27:3; Jn 12:6

26:16 Mt 26:15;
Mk 14:11;
Jn 12:6

26:17 Ex 12:18;
Mk 14:12;
Lk 22:7

26:18 Jn 7:6,
Jn 7:30, Jn 13:1,
Jn 17:1

26:19 Mt 21:6

26:20 Mk 14:17;
Lk 22:14

26:21 Lk 22:21;
Jn 13:21

26:22 Mk 14:19

26:23 Ps 41:9;
Lk 22:21;
Jn 13:18

26:24 Mt 18:7,
Mt 26:54,
Mt 26:56;
Mk 9:12;
Lk 24:25

26:25 Mt 26:49,
Mt 26:64

26:26 Mt 14:19;
Mk 14:22;
1Co 10:16,
1Co 11:23

26:27 Ps 116:13;
Is 55:1; Mt 11:25,
Mt 15:36;
Mk 14:23

always have me. ¹²By pouring this perfume over my body she's prepared me to be buried. ¹³I tell you the truth that wherever in the whole world this good news is announced, what she's done will also be told in memory of her."

Judas betrays Jesus

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, "What will you give me if I turn Jesus over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶From that time on he was looking for an opportunity to turn him in.

Passover with the disciples

¹⁷On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?"

¹⁸He replied, "Go into the city, to a certain man, and say, 'The teacher says, 'My time is near. I'm going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.''" ¹⁹The disciples did just as Jesus instructed them. They prepared the Passover.

²⁰That evening he took his place at the table with the twelve disciples. ²¹As they were eating he said, "I assure you that one of you will betray me."

²²Deeply saddened, each one said to him, "I'm not the one, am I, Lord?"

²³He replied, "The one who will betray me is the one who dips his hand with me into this bowl. ²⁴The Human One^h goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!ⁱ It would have been better for him if he had never been born."

²⁵Now Judas, who would betray him, replied, "It's not me, is it, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "You said it."

Last supper

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take and eat. This is my body." ²⁷He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from this, all of you. ²⁸This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many so that their sins may be forgiven. ²⁹I tell you, I won't drink wine again until that day when I drink it in a new way with you in my Father's kingdom." ³⁰Then, after singing songs of praise, they went to the Mount of Olives.

^hOr *Son of Man* ⁱOr *Son of Man*

26:28 Ex 24:8; Zec 9:11; Mt 20:28; Col 1:14; Heb 9:22 **26:29** Mt 13:43 **26:30** Mt 21:1; Mk 14:26; Lk 21:37; Lk 22:39; Jn 18:1

the motivation for treating the poor with generosity. Here they illustrate that everyday responsibilities, like caring for the poor, are not as important as serving Jesus in his last hours. Preparing people for burial was an important religious responsibility.

26:14 *one of the Twelve*: See Matthew 10:1-4; 20:17. That Judas is a member of the inner circle emphasizes the travesty of the betrayal about to be recounted. *Iscariot*: a reference to his hometown, Kerioth, in southern Judea.

26:15 *thirty pieces of silver*: Each silver piece was worth the equivalent of about four days' work for a laborer, so they pay Judas the rough equivalent of 120 days' labor.

26:17-20 *Festival of Unleavened Bread*: a seven-day festival (see Exod 12:17-20; Lev 23:4-8). *the Passover meal*: unleavened bread, lamb, and bitter herbs (Num 9:11). Celebrating the Passover feast is a family affair, so it is important that Jesus will celebrate Passover with *the twelve disciples*. This reflects the redefinition of "family" in Matthew 12:46-50.

26:21-23 Eating together signified close bonds of friendship, so it is all the more distressing that one of Jesus' table companions would betray Jesus.

26:24 *The Human One goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One!*: Setting these two sentences side by side indicates how scripture can hold together God's actions

and human responsibility. Jesus' crucifixion may serve God's purpose, but this doesn't excuse Judas from his act of betrayal. There are no OT texts that require or predict that the Human One must die. The point isn't to find this or that text in order to prove something. Rather, Jesus' statement means that the OT as a whole must be read and reread from the perspective of his crucifixion.

26:25 In Matthew 26:22, each of the disciples asks Jesus a question and expects a negative answer. Judas does the same. However, when Judas asks the question, he isn't "deeply saddened," and he addresses Jesus as "Rabbi" rather than as "Lord." In Matthew's Gospel disciples and would-be disciples call Jesus "Lord," while other titles, like "teacher" and "Rabbi," are generally used by people who don't follow or who even oppose Jesus (see Matt 12:38; 19:16; 22:16, 24, 36; 26:49). Matthew clearly identifies Judas as the betrayer (cf. Matt 10:4). "*You said it*": Jesus' answer is indirect, but, in this context, clearly affirmative.

26:26-29 *While they were eating*: Jesus and the disciples celebrate the Passover meal, which Jesus now reinterprets with reference to his own death (see Matt 20:28). *blood of the covenant*: See Exodus 24:8; Zechariah 9:11. *so that their sins may be forgiven*: See Matthew 1:21. This last supper becomes the basis for the church's celebration of the Lord's Supper.

26:30 *Mount of Olives*: See the note on Matthew 24:3.

Predictions about disciples leaving Jesus

³¹Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Tonight you will all fall away because of me. This is because it is written, *I will hit the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will go off in all directions.*”
³²But after I’m raised up, I’ll go before you to Galilee.”

³³Peter replied, “If everyone else stumbles because of you, I’ll never stumble.”

³⁴Jesus said to him, “I assure you that, before the rooster crows tonight, you will deny me three times.”

³⁵Peter said, “Even if I must die alongside you, I won’t deny you.” All the disciples said the same thing.

Jesus in prayer

³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. He said to the disciples, “Stay here while I go and pray over there.” ³⁷When he took Peter and Zebedee’s two sons, he began to feel sad and anxious. ³⁸Then he said to them, “I’m very sad. It’s as if I’m dying. Stay here and keep alert with me.” ³⁹Then he went a short distance farther and fell on his face and prayed, “My Father, if it’s possible, take this cup of suffering away from me. However—not what I want but what you want.”

⁴⁰He came back to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you stay alert one hour with me? ⁴¹Stay alert and pray so that you won’t give in to temptation. The spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak.” ⁴²A second time he went away and prayed, “My Father, if it’s not possible that this cup be taken away unless I drink it, then let it be what you want.”

⁴³Again he came and found them sleeping. Their eyes were heavy with sleep. ⁴⁴But he left them and again went and prayed the same words for the third time. ⁴⁵Then he came to his disciples and said to them, “Will you sleep and rest all night? Look, the time has come for the Human One^k to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up. Let’s go. Look, here comes my betrayer.”

Arrest

⁴⁷While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came. With him was a large crowd carrying swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸His betrayer had given them a sign: “Arrest the man I kiss.” ⁴⁹Just then he came to Jesus and said, “Hello, Rabbi.” Then he kissed him.

⁵⁰But Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you came to do.” Then they came and grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

⁵¹One of those with Jesus reached for his sword. Striking the high priest’s slave, he cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, “Put the sword back into its place. All those who use the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Or do you think that I’m not able to ask my Father and

26:31 Zec 13:7; Mt 26:56; Mk 14:27; Jn 16:32
26:32 Mt 16:21; Mt 28:7; Mt 28:10; Mt 28:16; Mk 16:7
26:33 Prv 28:26; Mk 14:29; Lk 22:33; Jn 13:36
26:34 Mt 26:69; Mt 26:74; Mt 26:75; Mk 14:30; Jn 13:38
26:35 Jn 13:37
26:36 Mk 14:32; Lk 22:39; Jn 18:1
26:37 Mt 4:21; Mt 17:1; Mk 5:37
26:38 Ps 42:5; Mt 26:40; Jn 12:27
26:39 Mt 6:10; Mt 20:22; Mt 26:42; Jn 6:38; Jn 18:11
26:40 Mt 26:38; Lk 9:32
26:41 Mt 6:13; Lk 22:40; 1Pt 5:8
26:42 Mt 6:10; Mt 26:39
26:43 Lk 9:32
26:44 2Co 12:8
26:45 Mt 17:22; Mt 26:18; Jn 12:23; Jn 12:27; Jn 13:1
26:47 Mt 26:14; Mk 14:43; Lk 22:47; Jn 18:3; Ac 1:16
26:48 2Sa 20:9; 2Sa 20:10; Mt 26:49
26:49 Mt 26:25
26:50 Mt 20:13; Mt 22:12

^jZech 13:7 ^kOr Son of Man

26:51 Mk 14:47; Lk 22:38; Jn 18:10 **26:52** Gn 9:6; Rev 13:10 **26:53** 2Ki 6:17; Mt 4:11

26:31 *Tonight you will all fall away because of me:* Jesus anticipates that his disciples will abandon him (Matt 26:56). The quotation is from Zechariah 13:7, understood here in terms of Jesus’ suffering and death (*hit the shepherd*) and the disciples’ departure (*the flock will go off in all directions*).
26:32 Death and abandonment aren’t the last words. Jesus anticipates his resurrection and the regathering of his followers (see Matt 28:10, 16-20).
26:33-35 Peter again has the role of representative disciple (see Matt 14:28; 15:15; 16:16). *deny me three times:* See Matthew 26:69-75.
26:36 *Gethsemane:* a Hebrew term meaning “oil press.” It refers to the site of an oil press in an olive grove on the slope of the Mount of Olives.
26:37 *Peter and Zebedee’s two sons:* See Matthew 17:1. The three who were given a vision of Jesus’ glory are now with him during this time of despair.
26:38-42 *keep alert... stay alert:* See Matthew 24:42-25:13. *cup of suffering:* signifying suffering destined by

God (e.g., Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17, 22; Jer 25:15-28; Ezek 23:31-34). *not what I want but what you want:* Jesus uses words that recall the prayer he taught his disciples (Matt 6:10). *pray... temptation:* an echo of the prayer Jesus taught his disciples (Matt 6:13).
26:46-50 The identification of Judas as the betrayer is both clear and tragic. It is clear from the two references to Jesus’ betrayer in 26:46-47, 48, and in Judas’ address to Jesus as *Rabbi* (see the note on Matt 26:25). It is tragic because he is *one of the Twelve* (26:47; cf. Matt 10:2-4; 26:14) and because his act of betrayal is committed with a *sign* of affection (*kiss*, 26:48-49). The need for a *sign* suggests that the mob that had come to take Jesus couldn’t recognize him.
26:52 *Put the sword back into its place:* See Matthew 5:38-42. *All those who use the sword:* Jesus quotes a proverbial statement, the meaning of which is that one act of violence leads to another.
26:53 *more than twelve battle groups:* A Roman battle

26:54 Mt 1:22, Mt 26:24

26:55 Mt 4:23, Mt 21:23; Mk 12:35; Jn 7:14, Jn 18:20

26:56 Mt 26:31

26:57 Mt 26:3; Mk 14:53; Jn 18:12

26:58 Mt 26:69; Jn 18:15

26:59 Mt 5:22; Ac 6:11

26:60 Dt 19:15; Ps 35:11

26:61 Mt 27:40; Jn 2:19; Ac 6:14

26:62 Mt 27:12

26:63 Lv 5:1; Mt 4:3; Mt 16:16; Mt 27:12; Mk 5:7

26:64 Ps 110:1; Dn 7:13; Mt 16:27; Mt 27:11; Mk 14:62

26:65 Nm 14:6; Mt 9:3; Jn 10:33; Jn 10:36; Ac 14:14

26:66 Lv 24:16; Jn 19:7

26:67 Is 50:6; Mt 27:30; Lk 22:63; Jn 18:22

26:68 Mk 14:65

26:69 Mt 26:58; Mk 14:66; Lk 22:55; Jn 18:16; Jn 18:25

26:70 Prv 29:25; Mt 26:34

he will send to me more than twelve battle groups¹ of angels right away? ⁵⁴But if I did that, how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say this must happen?" ⁵⁵Then Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me, like a thief? Day after day, I sat in the temple teaching, but you didn't arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has happened so that what the prophets said in the scriptures might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away.

Jesus before the council

⁵⁷Those who arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest. The legal experts and the elders had gathered there. ⁵⁸Peter followed him from a distance until he came to the high priest's courtyard. He entered that area and sat outside with the officers to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰They didn't find anything they could use from the many false witnesses who were willing to come forward. But finally they found two ⁶¹who said, "This man said, 'I can destroy God's temple and rebuild it in three days.'"

⁶²Then the high priest stood and said to Jesus, "Aren't you going to respond to the testimony these people have brought against you?"

⁶³But Jesus was silent.

The high priest said, "By the living God, I demand that you tell us whether you are the Christ, God's Son."

⁶⁴"You said it," Jesus replied. "But I say to you that from now on you'll see *the Human One^m sitting on the right side of the Almightyⁿ and coming on the heavenly clouds.*"^o

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He's insulting God! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, you've heard his insult against God. ⁶⁶What do you think?"

And they answered, "He deserves to die!" ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and beat him. They hit him ⁶⁸and said, "Prophecy for us, Christ! Who hit you?"

Peter's denial

⁶⁹Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant woman came and said to him, "You were also with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of all of them, saying, "I don't know what you are talking about."

⁷¹When he went over to the gate, another woman saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth."

¹Or *legions* (of the Roman army, about five thousand soldiers each) ^mOr *Son of Man* ⁿOr *the Power* ^oDan 7:13

group included about 6,000 soldiers, so Jesus refers to more than 72,000 angels. (For angelic assistance, see Matt 4:6 [Ps 91:11-12]. For the idea of fighting angels, see 2 Kgs 6:17; Dan 10:13-21.)

26:55 *Have you come with swords and clubs:* The "chief priests and elders" sent a mob (Matt 26:47), as though Jesus were a violent revolutionary. This is consistent with the unfolding picture that Jesus will be executed as a pretender to the throne (cf. Matt 27:37), but it contrasts sharply with the nature of Jesus' healing and teaching activity in the temple (Matt 21:14; 21:23-23:39).

26:56 *all the disciples left Jesus and ran away:* See Matthew 26:31.

26:57-71 The stories of Peter and Jesus are intertwined, emphasizing Jesus' courage when questioned by the high priest in contrast to Peter's failure under questioning by two women and some unnamed bystanders.

26:57, 59 The cast of characters includes *Caiaphas* (see the note on Matt 26:3-4), the *legal experts, elders,* and the *chief priests.* Together, they make up the *whole council,* also known as the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55; 15:1). This is the supreme ruling and judicial body, over which the high priest presided. *false testimony:* From the outset, Matthew presents the proceedings against Jesus as a travesty of justice.

26:60 *they found two:* See Deuteronomy 17:6, which

requires "two or three witnesses" in cases of capital punishment.

26:61 *This man said:* Matthew records no such statement, though he does report that Jesus predicted the temple's destruction (Matt 24:2; cf. Matt 23:38).

26:64 *You said it . . . But I say to you:* Jesus' answer is indirect, but affirmative. He turns immediately to explain the nature of his status as Christ and God's Son, using language from Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 110:1.

26:65 *tore his clothes:* The high priest is deeply troubled by Jesus' response. *He's insulting God:* See Matthew 9:3; 12:31. The basis for the insult may be Jesus' claim that, as the Human One, he will sit at God's right side; or it may be that the high priest thought he was trying to make himself like God in order to deceive God's people.

26:66 See Matthew 26:4.

26:67-68 See Isaiah 50:6.

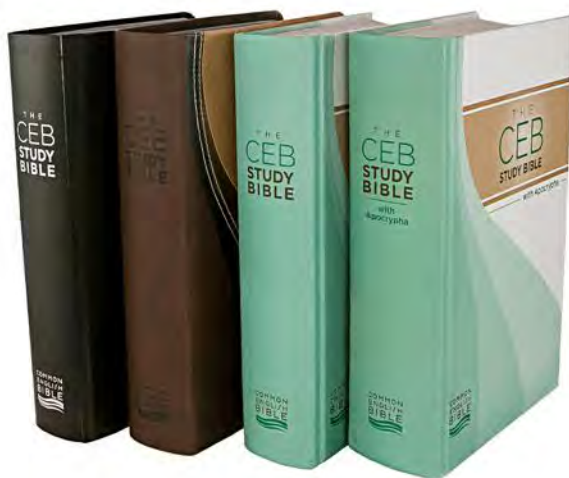
26:69-74 While Jesus was on trial in the high priest's house, Peter sat outside in the high priest's courtyard (see Matt 26:57-58). Peter is on trial, too, though his questioners don't seem like people to be feared—a *servant woman, another woman, and those standing there.* From the first to the third denial Peter's responses grow stronger. A simple denial becomes a solemn pledge, and the third denial includes cursing and swearing (see Matt 5:33-37; 23:16-22).

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52:10 Is 45:22,
Is 51:9, Is 66:18;
Lk 3:6

52:11 Is 48:20;
2Co 6:17

52:13 Is 42:1;
Phi 2:9

52:14 Is 53:2,
Is 53:3

52:15 Is 49:7;
Ro 15:21

53:1 Is 51:9;
Jn 12:38;
Ro 10:16

53:2 Is 11:1,
Is 11:10,
Is 52:14

53:3 Ps 22:6;
Is 49:7, Is 53:4;
Jn 1:10, Jn 1:11

who brings good news,
who proclaims salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God rules!”

8 Listen! Your lookouts lift their voice;
they sing out together!
Right before their eyes they see the LORD returning to Zion.

9 Break into song together, you ruins of Jerusalem!
The LORD has comforted his people and has redeemed Jerusalem.

10 The LORD has bared his holy arm in view of all the nations;
all the ends of the earth have seen our God’s victory.

11 Depart! Depart! Go out from there!
Unclean! Don’t touch!
Get out of that place; purify yourselves,
carriers of the LORD’s equipment!

12 You won’t go out in a rush,
nor will you run away,
because the one going before you is the LORD;
your rear guard is the God of Israel.

Suffering servant

13 Look, my servant will succeed.
He will be exalted and lifted very high.

14 Just as many were appalled by you,
he too appeared disfigured, inhuman,
his appearance unlike that of mortals.

15 But he will astonish^w many nations.
Kings will be silenced because of him,
because they will see what they haven’t seen before;
what they haven’t heard before, they will ponder.

53 Who can believe what we have heard,
and for whose sake has the LORD’s arm^x been revealed?

2 He grew up like a young plant before us,^y
like a root from dry ground.

He possessed no splendid form for us to see,
no desirable appearance.

3 He was despised and avoided by others;
a man who suffered, who knew sickness well.

^wOr *sprinkle* ^xOr *power* ^yOr *him*

announcement of liberation from Babylon. God’s reign is openly proclaimed (cf. Pss 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; Isa 41:21; 43:15; 44:6).

52:8 *Your lookouts lift their voice:* Compare with Lamentations 4:17; Numbers 14:14.

52:9 *Break into song:* The first part of this verse echoes Psalm 98, which appears more fully in Isaiah 52:10; see note on Isaiah 42:10–12. The second part echoes again God’s comfort of Zion; see notes on Isaiah 40:1; 51:12.

52:10 See Psalm 98:1–4, 8. In the Hebrew, the final phrase of this verse precisely repeats Psalm 98:3. The claim that the entire world will see what God does for Israel began at Isaiah 42:10 and reaches its climax here.

52:11 *Depart! Depart! Go out from there!:* As in Isaiah 48:20, the invitation to leave Babylon is made explicit. Here it is described as separation from the Gentile city. This reverses Lamentations 4:15, where the Israelites are rejected as unclean (cf. Isa 52:1). According to instruction in

the Pentateuch, the shout *unclean!* was used to warn the healthy against those with skin disease (Lev 13:45).

52:12 *You won’t go out in a rush:* In contrast to the hasty flight from Egypt (Deut 16:3), those leaving Babylon will join a stately procession, because God is going before them (as in Num 14:14) and behind them.

52:13–53:12 *Look, my servant will succeed:* For a third time in Isaiah 49–52, the servant reappears. As in Isaiah 50:4–11, the servant’s suffering at the hand of others is reviewed. Unlike that poem and Isaiah 49:1–6, this one doesn’t offer the servant’s own words—in fact, his silence is noted (Isa 53:17). He is discussed by surprised foreign rulers (see 52:15). Their speech is preceded in 52:13–15 and followed in 53:11–12 by the divine voice.

53:1 *Who can believe what we have heard:* This verse is quoted, in different contexts, in John 12:38 and Romans 10:16.

53:2–3 *possessed no splendid form for us to see:* God’s

Like someone from whom people hid their faces,
he was despised, and we didn't think about him.

⁴It was certainly our sickness that he carried,
and our sufferings that he bore,
but we thought him afflicted,
struck down by God and tormented.

⁵He was pierced because of our rebellions
and crushed because of our crimes.
He bore the punishment that made us whole;
by his wounds we are healed.

⁶Like sheep we had all wandered away,
each going its own way,
but the LORD let fall on him all our crimes.

⁷He was oppressed and tormented,
but didn't open his mouth.
Like a lamb being brought to slaughter,
like a ewe silent before her shearers,
he didn't open his mouth.

⁸Due to an unjust ruling he was taken away,
and his fate—who will think about it?
He was eliminated from the land of the living,
struck dead because of my people's rebellion.

⁹His grave was among the wicked,
his tomb with evildoers,^z
though he had done no violence,
and had spoken nothing false.

¹⁰But the LORD wanted to crush him
and to make him suffer.
If his life is offered^a as restitution,
he will see his offspring; he will enjoy long life.
The LORD's plans will come to fruition through him.

¹¹After his deep anguish he will see light,^b and he will be satisfied.
Through his knowledge, the righteous one, my servant,
will make many righteous, and will bear their guilt.

^zCf Tg; MT *and with a rich one in his deaths* ^aOr *if you place his life* ^bDSS (1QIsa^a); MT lacks *light*.

53:4 Mt 8:17
53:5 Ro 4:25;
1Pt 2:24
53:6 Is 56:11;
1Pt 2:25
53:7 Mk 14:61;
Jn 1:29, Jn 19:9;
Ac 8:32;
1Pt 2:23
53:8 Is 53:12;
Dn 9:26
53:9 Mt 27:57;
Heb 4:15;
1Pt 2:22; 1Jn 3:5
53:10 Lv 5:15;
Ps 22:30;
Is 53:6;
Zec 13:7;
Heb 9:26
53:11 Is 45:25

servant isn't attractive by human standards. He may have been ill (Isa 53:3) or disfigured (Isa 52:14). He is discounted and rejected; see similarly Lamentations 3:63.

53:4 *It was certainly our sickness that he carried:* This verse is quoted in Matthew 8:17 to describe Jesus' healing of the sick. *we thought him afflicted:* The onlookers understood the servant to bear punishment from God. They didn't realize he was carrying their sufferings. See similarly Lamentations 3:33-34.

53:5-6 *He bore the punishment that made us whole:* Like a sacrificial lamb, the servant suffers not only because of others but on their behalf, for their redemption. *by his wounds we are healed:* This phrase, as well as part of 53:6, is quoted in 1 Peter 2:24-25 to portray Jesus as a role model for those patiently enduring undeserved suffering.

53:7 *Like a lamb being brought to slaughter:* See Jeremiah's self-description in Jeremiah 11:19. When Philip interprets

scripture to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:27-39, the eunuch is reading Isaiah 53:7-8. The eunuch, a mutilated man himself, may be drawn to a figure who likewise suffers deformity and ostracism. *he didn't open his mouth:* As in Isaiah 50:4-11, the servant resembles the suffering speaker in Lamentations 3. As Lamentations 3:28 prescribes, he doesn't speak. Others speak for him.

53:8-10 The servant suffers unjust and undeserved afflictions. But according to this writer, undeserved suffering can result in redemption for others. This allows divine justice to coexist with innocent suffering. Since not all the suffering caused by Jerusalem's destruction and Israel's exile was deserved, the concept of innocent suffering on behalf of others opens the possibility for meaning in pain. While the poem is most likely modeled on the experiences of exemplary individuals, the suggestion is that Israel suffered on behalf of the sins of surrounding nations.

53:12 Is 53:6,
Is 53:11;
Lk 22:37;
Phi 2:9;
Heb 9:28

54:1 1Sa 2:5;
Is 49:20, Is 62:4,
Is 66:7; Ga 4:27

54:2 Ex 35:18,
Ex 39:40;
Is 49:19,
Is 49:20;
Jer 10:20

54:3 Is 49:19

54:4 Is 45:17

54:5 Is 62:5;
Jer 3:14;
Hos 2:19

54:6 Is 49:14,
Is 50:1, Is 62:4

54:7 Ps 30:5;
Is 26:20, Is 43:5

54:8 Is 55:3,
Is 60:10

54:9 Gn 8:21,
Gn 9:11; Is 12:1

12Therefore, I will give him a share with the great,
and he will divide the spoil with the strong,
in return for exposing his life to death and being numbered with rebels,
though he carried the sin of many
and pleaded on behalf of those who rebelled.

Sing, barren woman

54Sing, barren woman who has borne no child;
break forth into singing and cry out, you who were never in labor,
for the children of the wife who has been deserted
will be more numerous than the children of the married,
says the LORD.

2Enlarge the site of your tent,
and stretch out the drapes of your dwellings;
don't hold back.
Lengthen your tent ropes and strengthen your stakes.

3To the right and to the left you will burst out,
and your children will possess the nations' land
and settle their desolate cities.

4Don't fear, because you won't be ashamed;
don't be dismayed, because you won't be disgraced.
You will forget the shame of your youth;
you'll no longer remember the disgrace of your widowhood.

5The one marrying you is the one who made you—
the LORD of heavenly forces is his name.
The one redeeming you is the holy one of Israel,
the one called the God of all the earth.

6As an abandoned and dejected woman the LORD has summoned you;
as a young wife when she is rejected, says your God.

7For a brief moment I abandoned you,
but with great mercy I will bring you back.

8In an outburst of rage, I hid my face from you for a moment,
but with everlasting love I have consoled you, says your redeemer, the LORD.

9These are like the days^c of Noah for me,
when I promised that Noah's waters would never again cover the earth.
Likewise I promise not to rage against you or rebuke you.

10The mountains may shift,
and the hills may be shaken,
but my faithful love won't shift from you,
and my covenant of peace won't be shaken,
says the LORD, the one who pities you.

^cOr for the waters

53:12 *being numbered with rebels*: Compare with Luke 22:37; Hebrews 9:28.

54:1 *Sing, barren woman who has borne no child*: Like mountains, hills, forests, and trees in Isaiah 44:23; 49:13; 55:12; and Jerusalem's ruins in Isaiah 52:9, Zion herself is invited to burst into song. In Isaiah 51:18-20 she has lost children, but here she never had them. This paves the way for Zion to accept the returning exiles as her children (cf. Isa 54:2-3).

54:2 *Enlarge the site of your tent*: This reverses Jeremiah 4:20; 10:20, in which Jerusalem's tent was proclaimed destroyed. The complaint in Lamentations 1:1, 4 is of an empty city, but here as well as in Isaiah 49:19-20, the happy problem is overcrowding.

54:7 *For a brief moment I abandoned you*: In Isaiah 49:14

Zion was heard complaining that God had abandoned and forgotten her, and in the next verse God denied forgetting her. Here God admits to brief abandonment, but claims that it was slight and momentary compared with the current reconciliation.

54:9 *like the days of Noah*: God briefly abandoned the earth, but afterward promised never to do so again. God promises not to punish Zion again.

54:10 *The mountains may shift, and the hills may be shaken*: Compare with Psalm 46:3-4, a psalm of reassurance of divine protection. Assurances that the city is once again a secure place serve not only to renew trust in God's protection and goodwill, but also to address the practical question of physical safety in a city that had been breached and burned.

27:18 Gn 37:11;
Mk 15:10;
Ac 13:45

27:19 Mt 1:20,
Mt 27:24

27:20 Mk 15:11;
Lk 23:18;
Ac 3:14

27:22 Mt 1:16

27:24 Dt 21:6;
Ps 26:6, Ps 73:13;
Mt 27:4

27:25 Josh 2:19;
Mt 23:35;
Ac 5:28

27:26 Mk 15:15;
Lk 23:16; Jn 19:1

27:27 Mk 15:16;
Jn 18:28,
Jn 18:33, Jn 19:9

27:28 Mk 15:17;
Lk 23:11; Jn 19:2

27:29 Is 53:3;
Mt 20:19,
Mt 27:11;
Lk 23:36; Jn 19:3

27:30 Mt 26:67;
Mk 15:19

27:31 Is 53:7

27:32 Mk 15:21;
Lk 23:26;
Ac 2:10,
Ac 11:20,
Ac 13:1

27:33 Mk 15:22;
Jn 19:17

27:34 Ps 69:21;
Mt 27:48;
Mk 15:23

27:35 Ps 22:18;
Jn 19:23

27:36 Mt 27:54

27:37 Mk 15:26;
Lk 23:38;
Jn 19:19

like me to release to you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸He knew that the leaders of the people had handed him over because of jealousy.

¹⁹While he was serving as judge, his wife sent this message to him, "Leave that righteous man alone. I've suffered much today in a dream because of him."

²⁰But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and kill Jesus. ²¹The governor said, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

"Barabbas," they replied.

²²Pilate said, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said, "Crucify him!"

²³But he said, "Why? What wrong has he done?"

They shouted even louder, "Crucify him!"

²⁴Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was starting. So he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I'm innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It's your problem."

²⁵All the people replied, "Let his blood be on us and on our children." ²⁶Then he released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus whipped, then handed him over to be crucified.

Soldiers mocking Jesus

²⁷The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's house, and they gathered the whole company⁴ of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a red military coat on him. ²⁹They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they bowed down in front of him and mocked him, saying, "Hey! King of the Jews!" ³⁰After they spit on him, they took the stick and struck his head again and again. ³¹When they finished mocking him, they stripped him of the military coat and put his own clothes back on him. They led him away to crucify him.

Crucifixion

³²As they were going out, they found Simon, a man from Cyrene. They forced him to carry his cross. ³³When they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Skull Place, ³⁴they gave Jesus wine mixed with vinegar to drink. But after tasting it, he didn't want to drink it. ³⁵After they crucified him, they divided up his clothes among them by drawing lots. ³⁶They sat there, guarding him. ³⁷They placed above his head the charge against him. It read, "This

⁴Or *cohort* (approximately six hundred soldiers)

27:18 *because of jealousy:* In the ancient world, status was often measured in terms of influence over the people. Jealous of Jesus' success, the leaders of the people want him out of the picture.

27:19 *suffered much today in a dream:* Dreams were taken seriously in antiquity, often as instruments of divine revelation (cf. Matt 1:20; 2:12, 13, 19, 22). Suffering in a dream suggests a nightmare, the result of which is this woman's counsel to her husband that he remove himself from any involvement with Jesus. Her message doesn't call for Pilate to release Jesus, but does uphold Jesus' innocence.

27:24 *a riot was starting:* Pilate seems intent on releasing Jesus, against the efforts of "the chief priests and the elders," who stir up the crowd to demand Jesus' execution (Matt 27:20). This forces Pilate's hand, since one of his main responsibilities was keeping the peace. *washed his hands:* an external act meant to communicate moral innocence. *this man's blood:* See the note on Matthew 23:35.

27:25 *Let his blood be on us:* Roused by "the chief priests and the elders," the people have been led to accept the decision of the Jerusalem Council: "He deserves to die!" (Matt 26:66; cf. Matt 27:1). They therefore declare their willingness to take responsibility for the decision, even though their leaders are the ones actually responsible for this turn of events.

27:27-31 *the whole company:* about 600 soldiers. This is the second time Jesus is mocked. It was typical to ridicule

the condemned by reflecting back on them the charges brought against them. In Matthew 26:67-68, he is mocked as the Christ. Here he is mocked as a king, with a royal robe (*a red military coat*); a crown (*of thorns*); and a scepter (*a stick in his right hand*). See Isaiah 50:6.

27:32 *Cyrene:* a Roman town in northeast Africa, present-day Libya.

27:33: *Golgotha:* the Aramaic term for "skull." Archaeologists debate the actual location of Jesus' crucifixion. "Skull" may simply refer to the place where executions took place, or it may refer to a prominent feature of that place, such as a skull-shaped hill.

27:34 *wine mixed with vinegar:* Although wine might be used as a painkiller, it would have been spoiled by the addition of vinegar. Offering this mixture to Jesus isn't a sign of compassion but the act of an enemy (Ps 69:21).

27:35-37 We have few records from the Roman world regarding the act of crucifixion, but Matthew's account includes some standard features. The condemned is whipped (Matt 27:26). He is made to carry the horizontal piece of the cross to the place of execution, which Jesus was unable to do (Matt 27:32). A plaque stating the charges is placed above his head (27:37). Matthew gives no details regarding the act of crucifixion itself, though we can imagine that Jesus was stripped of his clothes (27:35) and fixed to the cross with either ropes or nails. He would thus hang, publicly humiliated, as a warning against

you have given me comes from you. ⁸This is because I gave them the words that you gave me, and they received them. They truly understood that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

⁹I'm praying for them. I'm not praying for the world but for those you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰Everything that is mine is yours and everything that is yours is mine; I have been glorified in them. ¹¹I'm no longer in the world, but they are in the world, even as I'm coming to you. Holy Father, watch over them in your name, the name you gave me, that they will be one just as we are one. ¹²When I was with them, I watched over them in your name, the name you gave to me, and I kept them safe. None of them were lost, except the one who was destined for destruction, so that scripture would be fulfilled. ¹³Now I'm coming to you and I say these things while I'm in the world so that they can share completely in my joy. ¹⁴I gave your word to them and the world hated them, because they don't belong to this world, just as I don't belong to this world. ¹⁵I'm not asking that you take them out of this world but that you keep them safe from the evil one. ¹⁶They don't belong to this world, just as I don't belong to this world. ¹⁷Make them holy in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹I made myself holy on their behalf so that they also would be made holy in the truth.

²⁰"I'm not praying only for them but also for those who believe in me because of their word. ²¹I pray they will be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. I pray that they also will be in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me. ²²I've given them the glory that you gave me so that they can be one just as we are one. ²³I'm in them and you are in me so that they will be made perfectly one. Then the world will know that you sent me and that you have loved them just as you loved me.

²⁴"Father, I want those you gave me to be with me where I am. Then they can see my glory, which you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

²⁵"Righteous Father, even the world didn't know you, but I've known you, and these believers know that you sent me. ²⁶I've made your name known to them and will continue to make it known so that your love for me will be in them, and I myself will be in them."

Arrest in the garden

18 After he said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples and crossed over to the other side of the Kidron Valley. He and his disciples entered a garden there. ²Judas, his betrayer, also knew the place because Jesus often gathered there with his disciples.

17:24 Mt 25:34; Jn 1:14, Jn 12:26, Jn 17:5 **17:25** Jn 7:29, Jn 8:55, Jn 10:15, Jn 15:21, Jn 16:27 **17:26** Jn 15:9, Jn 17:6 **18:1** 2Sa 15:23; 1Ki 15:13; Mt 26:36; Mk 14:32; Lk 22:39 **18:2** Lk 21:37; Lk 22:39

17:8 Jn 8:42, Jn 12:49, Jn 16:27, Jn 17:14, Jn 17:25

17:9 Lk 22:32; Jn 17:2, Jn 17:6

17:10 Jn 10:30, Jn 16:15

17:11 Jn 10:30, Jn 13:1, Jn 17:21-22

17:12 Jn 6:39, Jn 6:70, Jn 13:18, Jn 18:9; 2Th 2:3

17:13 Jn 3:29, Jn 15:11

17:14 Jn 8:23, Jn 15:19, Jn 17:16

17:15 1Ch 4:10; Mt 5:37, Mt 6:13; Lk 11:4, Lk 22:31

17:16 Jn 17:14

17:17 Jn 15:3; Eph 5:26

17:18 Mt 10:5; Jn 4:38, Jn 17:3, Jn 17:21, Jn 20:21

17:19 Jn 17:17; 1Co 1:2; Heb 2:11

17:20 Jn 17:21; Ac 4:4; Ro 10:14, Ro 10:17, Ro 16:26

17:21 Jn 17:8, Jn 17:11, Jn 17:23

17:22 Jn 1:14, Jn 14:20, Jn 17:24

17:23 Jn 16:27, Ro 8:10

17:8 *understood that I came from you:* on the basis of John 16:30, "we believe you have come from God"

17:9 *not praying for the world:* not directly but indirectly. All his plans for the world are channeled through the disciples (John 17:18, 21-23).

17:11 *I'm no longer in the world:* Jesus' departure from the world has already begun but isn't complete (cf. John 20:17). *the name you gave me:* either the divine name "I Am" (John 8:58) or simply the divine "authority" that is his (John 17:2).

17:12 *one who was destined for destruction:* or "the son of destruction" (i.e., Judas Iscariot). *scripture would be fulfilled:* Psalm 41:9 in particular (quoted in John 13:18) or *scripture* in general. The point is that Judas' fate is unavoidable.

17:15 *keep them safe from the evil one:* Compare with Matthew 6:13.

17:17 *Make them holy:* as Jesus was "made holy" for his mission (John 10:36).

17:19 *made myself holy:* or "I make myself holy," using the present tense. Jesus now sets himself apart as a sacrifice so that they also would be made holy. This is why the church has often called this his high priestly prayer (cf. Heb 2:11; 10:14).

17:20 *those who believe in me because of their word:*

future generations of believers, including the readers of this Gospel.

17:21 *just as you are in me and I am in you:* Compare with John 10:38; 14:11, 20.

17:22 *I've given them the glory that you gave me:* just now, in setting them apart for their mission.

17:23 *that you have loved them:* Compare with John 14:21, 23; 16:27.

17:24 *I want:* Compare with John 15:7; contrast with Mark 14:36. *before the creation of the world:* Compare with John 1:1-3; 17:4.

17:26 *make it known:* Compare with John 16:12.

18:1-14 Jesus and his disciples go out to a garden across the Kidron Valley where they're met by a company of Roman soldiers and servants of the Jewish priests and Pharisees who've been led there by Judas Iscariot. Literally bowled over by Jesus' presence, they're powerless to arrest him until he commands them to let his disciples go. When Peter cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus rebukes him and heals the ear. Then Jesus is taken into custody.

18:2 *because Jesus often gathered there:* John's Gospel tells us nothing else of these gatherings (but see Luke 21:37; 22:39).

18:3 Mt 26:47; Mk 14:43; Lk 22:47; Jn 18:12; Ac 1:16

18:4 Jn 6:64, Jn 13:1, Jn 13:11, Jn 18:7

18:5 Mt 21:11, Mt 26:47; Mk 1:24, Mk 14:43, Mk 14:67

18:6 Rev 1:17

18:7 Jn 18:4

18:8 Mt 8:3,

Mt 14:14, Mt 15:32, Mt 18:2; Jn 13:1

18:9 Jn 6:39, Jn 17:12

18:10 Mt 26:51; Mk 14:47; Jn 18:26

18:11 Mt 20:22, Mt 26:39; Mk 14:36

18:12 Mt 26:57; Jn 18:3

18:13 Mt 26:3, Mt 26:57; Lk 3:2; Jn 18:24; Ac 4:6

18:14 Mt 26:3; Jn 11:49, Jn 11:50

18:15 Mt 26:58; Mk 14:54; Lk 22:54

18:16 Mt 26:69; Mk 14:66; Lk 22:55

18:17 Mt 26:69; Mk 14:66; Lk 22:54; Jn 18:25; Ac 12:13

18:18 Mk 14:54, Mk 14:67; Lk 22:55; Jn 18:25

18:19 Mt 26:59; Mk 14:55; Lk 22:63

³Judas brought a company of soldiers^a and some guards from the chief priests and Pharisees. They came there carrying lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴Jesus knew everything that was to happen to him, so he went out and asked, “Who are you looking for?”

⁵They answered, “Jesus the Nazarene.”

He said to them, “I Am.”^b (Judas, his betrayer, was standing with them.) ⁶When he said, “I Am,” they shrank back and fell to the ground. ⁷He asked them again, “Who are you looking for?”

They said, “Jesus the Nazarene.”

⁸Jesus answered, “I told you, ‘I Am.’^c If you are looking for me, then let these people go.”

⁹This was so that the word he had spoken might be fulfilled: “I didn’t lose anyone of those whom you gave me.”

¹⁰Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) ¹¹Jesus told Peter, “Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?” ¹²Then the company of soldiers, the commander, and the guards from the Jewish leaders took Jesus into custody. They bound him ¹³and led him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. (¹⁴Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was better for one person to die for the people.)

Peter denies Jesus

¹⁵Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Because this other disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard. ¹⁶However, Peter stood outside near the gate. Then the other disciple (the one known to the high priest) came out and spoke to the woman stationed at the gate, and she brought Peter in. ¹⁷The servant woman stationed at the gate asked Peter, “Aren’t you one of this man’s disciples?”

“I’m not,” he replied. ¹⁸The servants and the guards had made a fire because it was cold. They were standing around it, warming themselves. Peter joined them there, standing by the fire and warming himself.

Jesus testifies

¹⁹Meanwhile, the chief priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. ²⁰Jesus answered, “I’ve spoken openly to the world. I’ve always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews gather. I’ve said nothing in private. ²¹Why ask me? Ask those who heard what I told them. They know what I said.”

²²After Jesus spoke, one of the guards standing there slapped Jesus in the face. “Is that how you would answer the high priest?” he asked.

²³Jesus replied, “If I speak wrongly, testify about what was wrong. But if I speak correctly, why do you strike me?” ²⁴Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

^aOr *cohort* (approximately six hundred soldiers) ^bOr *It is I* ^cOr *It is I*

18:20 Mt 4:23, Mt 26:55; Jn 7:14, Jn 7:26 **18:22** Mt 26:67; Ac 23:2 **18:23** Mt 5:39, Mt 20:22, Mt 26:4; Jn 18:22; Ac 23:2 **18:24** Mt 26:3, Mt 26:57; Jn 18:13

18:4 *Jesus knew everything that was to happen:* Compare with John 6:6, 64; 13:1, 3; 16:30.

18:5-6 *Judas, his betrayer, was standing with them:* a reminder that Judas is no longer with Jesus’ disciples, who are about to be set free (John 18:8-9). *shrank back and fell to the ground:* The power of the divine “I Am” (cf. John 8:58) is strikingly evident.

18:8 *let these people go:* Jesus’ disciples are “scattered” (John 16:32), but on Jesus’ own initiative as he voluntarily gives up his life for his “sheep” (John 10:15).

18:9 *the word he had spoken:* Not just scripture, but Jesus’ own words are fulfilled (see John 17:12; 6:39). Judas has already been introduced as the exception (John 18:5).

18:11 *Am I not to drink the cup:* In contrast to Mark 14:36, Jesus accepts the *cup* (i.e., death on the cross) without question in John (cf. John 12:27).

18:13 *first to Annas:* implying he’ll be sent on to someone else, presumably Caiaphas (see John 18:24).

18:15-27 The scene in the high priest’s courtyard

alternates between Peter and his three denials of Jesus and the high priest’s interrogation of Jesus.

18:15 *this other disciple:* an anonymous disciple, probably Judean rather than Galilean. He’s in the story only to explain how Peter has gotten into the high priest’s courtyard and possibly to be an eyewitness to Peter’s three denials.

18:19 *his disciples and his teaching:* not two separate questionings. The main interest is in Jesus’ disciples so they can be rounded up and questioned about his teaching.

18:20 *I’ve spoken openly:* His teaching is a matter of public record, so there’s no need to question his disciples. Anyone who has heard him can testify to what he has said (John 18:21). Again, as in John 18:8, Jesus is protecting his disciples. *synagogues and in the temple:* See John 6:59; 8:20, respectively.

18:23 *wrongly:* or “badly”; this is a reference to Exodus 22:28, where “don’t curse” can also be translated as “don’t speak badly” (cf. Paul in Acts 23:5).

18:24 *Then Annas sent him:* This implies that Annas (John

posted on the cross. It read “Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews.” ²⁰Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. ²¹Therefore, the Jewish chief priests complained to Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘The king of the Jews’ but ‘This man said, ‘I am the king of the Jews.’”

²²Pilate answered, “What I’ve written, I’ve written.”

²³When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and his sandals, and divided them into four shares, one for each soldier. His shirt was seamless, woven as one piece from the top to the bottom. ²⁴They said to each other, “Let’s not tear it. Let’s cast lots to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill the scripture,

*They divided my clothes among themselves,
and they cast lots for my clothing.^e*

That’s what the soldiers did.

²⁵Jesus’ mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene stood near the cross. ²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” ²⁷Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

²⁸After this, knowing that everything was already completed, in order to fulfill the scripture, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹A jar full of sour wine was nearby, so the soldiers soaked a sponge in it, placed it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. ³⁰When he had received the sour wine, Jesus said, “It is completed.” Bowing his head, he gave up his life.

Witness at the cross

³¹It was the Preparation Day and the Jewish leaders didn’t want the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath, especially since that Sabbath was an important day. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of those crucified broken and the bodies taken down. ³²Therefore, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men who were crucified with Jesus. ³³When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead so they didn’t break his legs. ³⁴However, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵The one who saw this has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that he speaks the truth, and he has testified so that you also can believe. ³⁶These things happened to fulfill the scripture, *They won’t break any of his bones.^f* ³⁷And another scripture says, *They will look at him whom they have pierced.^g*

^ePs 22:18 ^fExod 12:46 ^gZech 12:10

19:20 Jn 5:2, Jn 19:13; Ac 21:40, Ac 22:2, Ac 26:14
19:21 Jn 19:14, Jn 19:19
19:22 Gn 43:14; Est 4:16; Mt 27:2, Mt 27:13, Mt 27:24
19:23 Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lk 23:34
19:24 Ps 22:18; Jn 19:28
19:25 Mt 12:46; Mt 27:55-56; Mk 15:40; Lk 8:2
19:26 Jn 2:4, Jn 13:23
19:27 Jn 16:32
19:28 Ps 69:21; Jn 13:1, Jn 19:24, Jn 19:30
19:29 Ps 69:21; Mt 27:48; Mk 15:36; Lk 23:36
19:30 Mt 27:50; Lk 23:46; Jn 4:34, Jn 17:4, Jn 19:28
19:31 Dt 21:23; Josh 8:29; Mt 27:62; Jn 19:14, Jn 19:42
19:32 Jn 19:18
19:34 1Jn 5:6
19:35 Jn 15:27, Jn 20:31, Jn 21:24; 1Jn 1:1
19:36 Ex 12:46; Nm 9:12; Ps 34:20; Jn 19:24, Jn 19:28
19:37 Zec 12:10; Rev 1:7

the soldiers or the Jewish authorities. *The soldiers* aren’t explicitly mentioned in the Greek until John 19:23.

19:24 *fulfill the scripture*: a literal fulfillment. The first half of the quotation from Psalm 22:18 (dividing up the clothes) is fulfilled in John 19:23, the latter half (casting lots) in 19:24.

19:25 *and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas*: These are two different women, making four in all. It’s unlikely that two sisters would both be named Mary.

19:26 *the disciple whom he loved*: This person appears quite abruptly. In the verse before, only the four women are identified as being present. See sidebar, “The Disciple Jesus Loved” at John 13.

19:27 *into his home*: as in John 16:32, where Jesus tells all the disciples “you will be scattered to your own homes.”

19:28 *fulfill the scripture*: probably, as in John 17:12, no particular scripture but rather scripture in general, whether referring to thirst for water (Ps 22:15) or a thirst for God (Pss 42:1-2; 63:1). “*I am thirsty*”: He who promised to quench all thirst forever (John 4:13-14) is himself thirsty again, as in John 4:7.

19:29 *hyssop branch*: Because a hyssop branch couldn’t have borne the weight of a wet sponge, some translators have emended the text to read “a javelin,” a word that’s similar to “hyssop” in Greek. Other Gospels speak of a “pole” (Matt 27:48; Mark 15:36).

19:30 *Bowing his head*: Jesus finally finds his place of rest on the cross (cf. Matt 8:50; Luke 9:58).

19:31 *It was the Preparation Day*: Friday, the day before the Sabbath (cf. John 19:42). But it also happens to be “the Preparation Day for the Passover” (John 19:14). So it’s a particularly important Sabbath day.

19:34 *blood and water*: Normally, a dead body doesn’t bleed, but the event is confirmed by an eyewitness (John 19:35). Blood signals Jesus’ death, while water refers to the new life that results from his death. He who was “thirsty” (John 19:28) is the source of water that quenches all thirst forever (John 4:13-14). Compare with 1 John 5:6, where the emphasis is on the blood.

19:35 *The one who saw this*: The eyewitness isn’t identified, though it’s possibly one of the Roman soldiers (see John 19:37; Mark 15:39). The disciple whom Jesus loved has already left the scene (John 19:27). *you also*: meaning you who read this Gospel (cf. John 20:31).

19:36 *They won’t break any of his bones*: referring either to the Passover lamb (Exod 12:46; Num 9:12) or to those who are righteous according to Psalm 34:20.

19:37 *They will look at him whom they have pierced*: If the one who “pierced” (John 19:34) and “The one who saw” (John 19:35) are the same person (i.e., a Roman soldier), the scripture (Zech 12:10) is literally fulfilled.

19:38 Mt 27:57;
Mk 15:42-43;
Lk 23:50; Jn 7:13

19:39 Ps 45:8;
Song 4:14;
Jn 1:1, Jn 7:50,
Jn 19:40

19:40
2Ch 16:14;
Lk 24:12;
Jn 11:44,
Jn 19:39, Jn 20:5

19:41 2Ki 21:18,
2Ki 21:26;
Lk 23:53

19:42 Jn 19:14,
Jn 19:20,
Jn 19:31,
Jn 19:41

20:1 Mt 27:60,
Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:1;
Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1

20:2 Jn 13:23,
Jn 20:13

20:3 Lk 24:12

20:5 Jn 19:40

20:6 Mt 16:16;
Lk 22:31;
Jn 18:17,
Jn 18:25, Jn 21:7

20:7 Jn 11:44

20:8 Jn 20:4

20:9 Mt 22:29

20:11 Mt 27:56,
Mt 27:61,
Mt 28:1;
Mk 15:40,
Mk 16:1

20:12 Mt 28:2;
Mk 16:5; Lk 24:4

20:13 Jn 20:2,
Jn 20:15

20:14 Mt 28:9;
Mk 16:9;
Lk 24:16; Jn 21:4

20:15 Jer 29:5;
Jn 1:38, Jn 18:4,
Jn 18:7, Jn 20:13

20:16 Jn 1:38

Jesus' body is buried

³⁸After this Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one because he feared the Jewish authorities. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and took the body away. ³⁹Nicodemus, the one who at first had come to Jesus at night, was there too. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloe, nearly seventy-five pounds in all. ⁴⁰Following Jewish burial customs, they took Jesus' body and wrapped it, with the spices, in linen cloths. ⁴¹There was a garden in the place where Jesus was crucified, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴²Because it was the Jewish Preparation Day and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus in it.

Empty tomb

20Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him." ³Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. ⁴They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. ⁵Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. ⁶Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. ⁸Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Jesus appears to Mary

¹¹Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. ¹²She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. ¹³The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him."

¹⁴As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus.

¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means *Teacher*).

^bOr *one hundred litra*; that is, one hundred Roman pounds

19:38 *a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one*: This is a step toward true discipleship for both Joseph and Nicodemus (John 19:39; cf. John 12:42-43).

19:39 *seventy-five pounds*: The enormous amount of spices for burial matches in its own way Mary's "three-quarters of a pound of very expensive perfume" in preparation for his burial (see John 12:3, 7).

19:41 *garden*: The story of Jesus' suffering and death begins and ends in a garden (cf. John 18:1).

20:1-18 Mary Magdalene comes early to the tomb and finds the stone in front of it rolled away. Thinking the body has been removed, she runs to Simon Peter and the disciple *whom Jesus loved* and summons them to the tomb. Peter enters and finds it empty, with the linen cloths and the face cloth lying separately. The disciple *whom Jesus loved* then enters the tomb, sees, and believes. He and Peter leave together. Mary finally looks into the tomb and sees two angels standing where Jesus' body should have been lying. Still thinking the body stolen, she turns and sees Jesus himself but mistakes him for *the gardener*. He reveals himself to her by speaking her name and sends her to tell the disciples he's on his way to the Father. (See sidebar, "The Disciple Jesus Loved" at John 13.)

20:1 *Mary Magdalene*: one of the four women at the cross (John 19:25; Luke 8:2).

20:2 *we don't know*: The "we" here doesn't necessarily imply that other women are accompanying Mary (as there were in the other Gospels; see Matt 27:61; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10). She simply speaks for Jesus' disciples, implying an indefinite "they" who might have taken the body.

20:6 *linen cloths lying there*: The body hasn't been stolen. Who would bother to unwrap a corpse when taking it away for reburial?

20:8 *He saw and believed*: He's seen either what Peter had just a moment before (John 20:6-7) or what Mary will see shortly afterward (John 20:12). He believes Jesus has gone to the Father (see John 14:29).

20:9 *They didn't yet understand the scripture*: scripture as a whole, as in Luke 24:45-47, not a particular text. The other disciple's belief is based on Jesus' words and what he's just seen, not on scripture.

20:10 *the place where they were staying*: either their "homes" (John 16:32; 19:27) or temporary quarters in Jerusalem.

20:12 *one at the head and one at the foot*: dramatizing that the body is gone.

20:16 *"Mary"*: instead of "Woman" (John 20:15), identifying

is Jesus, the king of the Jews.”³⁸They crucified with him two outlaws, one on his right side and one on his left.

³⁹Those who were walking by insulted Jesus, shaking their heads⁴⁰and saying, “So you were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, were you? Save yourself! If you are God’s Son, come down from the cross.”

⁴¹In the same way, the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders, were making fun of him, saying,⁴²“He saved others, but he can’t save himself. He’s the king of Israel, so let him come down from the cross now. Then we’ll believe in him.”⁴³He trusts in God, so let God deliver him now if he wants to. He said, ‘I’m God’s Son.’”⁴⁴The outlaws who were crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

Death

⁴⁵From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark.⁴⁶At about three Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?”^r

⁴⁷After hearing him, some standing there said, “He’s calling Elijah.”⁴⁸One of them ran over, took a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a pole. He offered it to Jesus to drink.

⁴⁹But the rest of them said, “Let’s see if Elijah will come and save him.”

⁵⁰Again Jesus cried out with a loud shout. Then he died.

⁵¹Look, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split,⁵²and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised.⁵³After Jesus’ resurrection they came out of their graves and went into the holy city where they appeared to many people.⁵⁴When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what had just happened, they were filled with awe and said, “This was certainly God’s Son.”

⁵⁵Many women were watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to serve him.⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Burial

⁵⁷That evening a man named Joseph came. He was a rich man from Arimathea who had become a disciple of Jesus.⁵⁸He came to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate gave him

^rPs 22:1

27:55 Lk 8:2, Lk 8:3 **27:56** Mt 20:20, Mt 28:1; Mk 15:40, Mk 15:47; Lk 8:2 **27:57** Mk 15:42, Mk 15:43; Lk 23:50; Jn 19:38 **27:58** Lk 23:52

27:38 Is 53:12
27:39 Ps 22:7,
 Ps 109:25;
 Lam 2:15;
 Mk 15:29
27:40 Mt 4:3,
 Mt 4:6, Mt 26:61;
 Jn 2:19
27:42 Mt 27:37;
 Jn 1:49, Jn 12:13
27:43 Ps 22:8
27:44 Lk 23:39
27:45 Am 8:9;
 Mk 15:33;
 Lk 23:44;
 Rev 8:12
27:46 Ps 22:1;
 Lk 23:46;
 Jn 19:28
27:47 Mt 11:14;
 Mk 15:35,
 Mk 15:36
27:48 Ps 69:21;
 Mt 27:34;
 Lk 23:36;
 Jn 19:29
27:50 Mt 27:46;
 Mk 15:37;
 Lk 23:46;
 Jn 19:30
27:51 Ex 26:31;
 2Ch 3:14;
 Mt 27:54;
 Mk 15:38;
 Lk 23:45
27:52 Is 25:8,
 Is 26:19;
 Dn 12:2;
 Hos 13:14;
 Jn 5:25
27:53 Mt 4:5
27:54 Mt 4:3,
 Mt 8:5, Mt 27:43;
 Mk 15:39;
 Lk 23:47

others who might threaten Roman peace. *they divided up his clothes*: See Psalm 22:18. *king of the Jews*: an indication that Jesus was crucified as a pretender to the throne, a threat to Roman peace. Among the Romans, death by crucifixion was reserved for people like this.

27:38 outlaws: The Greek term *lestēs* refers to political outlaws, revolutionaries.

27:39-44 Jesus is mocked by three groups—passersby; people representing the Jewish council (*the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders*); and the outlaws. Their insults recall the words of the devil, who tested Jesus (Matt 4:1-11); and of Peter, who scolded Jesus (Matt 16:22). Like them, these mockers have preconceived ideas about what it must mean for Jesus to be God’s Son, and those ideas make no room for self-sacrifice on behalf of others. Jesus’ mission, however, was to serve and to give his life to liberate others (Matt 20:28). *God’s Son*: Compare the words of the righteous person’s enemies in Wisdom 2:12-21.

27:45 dark: an image of evil (outside God’s illumination) and judgment (see Matt 4:16; 6:23; 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

27:46 “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani”: Jesus’ final words are a mixture of Hebrew (*Eli, Eli, lama*) and Aramaic (*sabachthani*), taken from Psalm 22:1. Psalm 22 speaks of temporary abandonment and ultimate rescue.

27:47-49 Elijah: Bystanders think Jesus refers to *Elijah*

when he shouts, “Eli!” Popular religion thought of Elijah as a helper in times of need.

27:51a curtain of the sanctuary: probably the one covering the doorway that separates the outer room of the sanctuary, the holy space, from the inner room of the sanctuary, the holiest space (Exod 26:31-35). Noting that the curtain was torn in two from top to bottom suggests that God has torn the curtain. This is a sign anticipating the total destruction of the temple that Jesus predicted in Matthew 24:2. Since this curtain separated the world of human beings from God’s holiness, we should also find here a reference to access to God for all, whether Jew or Gentile.

27:51b-54 The earth shook: These signs emphasize the role of Jesus’ death in God’s transformation of creation. *came out of their graves*: a symbolic anticipation of the resurrection of God’s holy people. See Ezekiel 37:13. *centurion*: a commander of 100 soldiers in the Roman military system. Compare with the impressive faith of the centurion in Matthew 8:5-10. A Roman centurion and his guards, but not the Jewish leaders, recognize Jesus as *God’s Son*. The aftermath of Jesus’ death is for them a moment of revelation (see Matt 11:27; 16:17).

27:55-56 Many women: Compare Jesus’ disciples, who betrayed (Matt 26:48-49); abandoned (Matt 26:56); or denied (Matt 26:69-75) him.

27:57-60 Joseph: Though *he was a rich man*, Joseph was

27:60 Is 53:9;
Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:2;
Mk 16:4
27:61 Mt 27:56,
Mt 28:1

27:62 Mk 15:42;
Lk 23:54;
Jn 19:14,
Jn 19:31,
Jn 19:42

27:63 Mt 16:21,
Mt 17:23,
Mt 20:19;
Mk 8:31,
Mk 10:34

27:64 Mt 28:13

27:65 Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:11

27:66 Dn 6:17;
Mt 27:60

28:1 Mt 27:56,
Mt 27:61;
Mk 16:1;
Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1

28:2 Mt 1:20,
Mt 17:51;
Jn 20:12;
Ac 16:26;
Rev 11:19

28:3 Dn 7:9,
Dn 10:6;
Mt 17:2; Mk 9:3;
Jn 20:12

28:4 Rev 1:17

28:5 Mt 14:27,
Mt 28:10

28:6 Mt 16:21,
Mt 27:63

28:7 Mt 26:32,
Mt 28:10,
Mt 28:16;
Mk 16:7

28:8 Ps 2:11

28:9 Mt 28:17;
Lk 24:52;
Jn 20:14

28:10 Mt 14:27,
Mt 28:5;
Jn 20:17;
Ro 8:29;
Heb 2:11

28:11 Mt 27:65,
Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:4

28:12 Mk 14:11

28:13 Mt 27:64

28:14 Mt 27:2

permission to take it. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had carved out of the rock. After he rolled a large stone at the door of the tomb, he went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting in front of the tomb.

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⁶⁵Pilate replied, “You have soldiers for guard duty. Go and make it as secure as you know how.” ⁶⁶Then they went and secured the tomb by sealing the stone and posting the guard.

Resurrection

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⁸With great fear and excitement, they hurried away from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹But Jesus met them and greeted them. They came and grabbed his feet and worshipped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Go and tell my brothers that I am going into Galilee. They will see me there.”

Guards’ report

¹¹Now as the women were on their way, some of the guards came into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹²They met with the elders and decided to give a large sum of money to the soldiers. ¹³They told them, “Say that Jesus’ disciples came at night and stole his body while you were sleeping. ¹⁴And if the governor hears about this, we will take care of it with him so you will have nothing to worry about.” ¹⁵So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. And this report has spread throughout all Judea to this very day.

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¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸Jesus came near and

also a *disciple of Jesus* (see Matt 19:23-26). Compare with Matthew 14:12. *asked for Jesus’ body*: Victims of crucifixion typically hung on the cross after death as food for scavenging animals. This served as a warning to the populace not to oppose Rome. This is why Joseph had to request the body. **27:62a** *Preparation Day*: the day before the Sabbath.

27:62b-66 *chief priests and the Pharisees*: Although the chief priests were active in the process that led to Jesus’ crucifixion, the Pharisees had nothing to do with Jesus’ trial and death. They reappear now in this clear attempt to prove that Jesus was wrong to expect that God would raise him from the dead. This scene sets the stage for Matthew 28:4, 11-15.

28:1 *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary*: See Matthew 27:56, 61.

28:3 See Daniel 7:9 (cf. Matt 17:2).

28:4 *guards*: See Matthew 27:65-66.

28:6 *just as he said*: See Matthew 16:21; 17:9, 23; 20:19; 26:32 (cf. Matt 27:63-64).

28:7 See Matthew 26:32.

28:9 *Jesus met them*: The two Marys witness the empty

tomb (Matt 28:6) and become the first to encounter the resurrected Jesus. *grabbed his feet and worshipped him*: They recognize that he is no mere human being, but one worthy of their allegiance and devotion.

28:10 *brothers*: Jesus’ disciples (cf. Matt 12:50). *Galilee*: See Matthew 26:32.

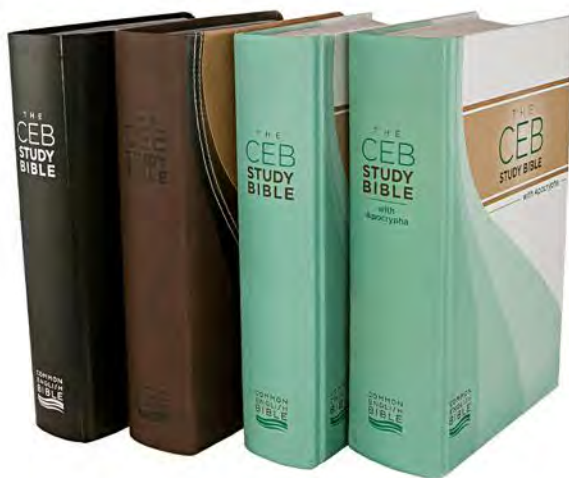
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28:17 *they worshipped him*: See the note on Matthew 28:9. *some doubted*: The other two occurrences of the word “doubt” are associated with the disciples’ weak faith (Matt 14:31; 21:21). The presence of doubt and worship at the same time speaks to the shift in thinking required of Jesus’



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3:6 Ps 88:5,
Ps 143:3

3:7 Job 3:23,
Job 19:8; Hos 2:6

3:8 Dt 1:45;
Job 30:20;
Ps 22:2

3:12 Job 6:4;
Ps 7:12, Ps 38:2;
Lam 2:4

3:14 Job 30:9;
Ps 22:6; Jer 20:7

3:16 Ps 3:7,
Ps 58:6;
Pv 20:17;
Jer 6:26

3:19 Dt 29:18;
Jer 9:15;
Lam 1:7,
Lam 3:5,
Lam 3:15

3:24 Ps 16:5,
Ps 33:18,
Ps 73:26,
Ps 119:57;
Lam 3:21

An individual's complaint

3 I am someone^m who saw the suffering caused by God'sⁿ angry rod.
2 He drove me away, forced me to walk in darkness, not light.

3 He turned his hand even against me, over and over again, all day long.

4 He wore out my flesh and my skin; he broke my bones.

5 He besieged me, surrounding me with bitterness and weariness.

6 He made me live in dark places like those who've been dead a long time.

7 He walled me in so I couldn't escape; he made my chains heavy.

8 Even though I call out and cry for help, he silences my prayer.

9 He walled in my paths with stonework; he made my routes crooked.

10 He is a bear lurking for me, a lion in hiding.

11 He took me from my path^o and tore me apart; he made me desolate.

12 He drew back his bow, made me a shooting target for arrows.

13 He shot the arrows of his quiver into my inside parts.

14 I have become a joke to all my people,
the object of their song of ridicule all day long.

15 He saturated me with grief, made me choke on bitterness.

16 He crushed my teeth into the gravel; he pressed me down into the ashes.

17 I've^p rejected peace; I've forgotten what is good.

18 I thought: My future is gone, as well as my hope from the LORD.

19 The memory of my suffering and homelessness is bitterness and poison.

20 I^q can't help but remember and am depressed.

21 I call all this to mind—therefore, I will wait.

22 Certainly the faithful love of the LORD hasn't ended;^r
certainly God's compassion isn't through!

23 They are renewed every morning. Great is your faithfulness.

24 I think:^s The LORD is my portion! Therefore, I'll wait for him.

^mOr *the man*; also in 3:27, 35, 39 ⁿOr *his* ^oHeb uncertain ^pOr *my spirit*; also in 3:20, 24, 25, 51, 58 ^qOr *My spirit can't help but remember and is depressed* ^rTg, Syr, and other ancient sources; MT *we aren't finished*. ^sOr *My spirit thinks*

3:1-66 The third poem introduces a new voice, an individual survivor. He describes the situation from his experience. This poem includes the only expression of hopefulness in the book.

3:1 *I am someone*: or, "I am the strong man." This figure, who is also identified by the same term in Lamentations 3:27, 35, 39, may be a soldier. He's an anonymous character, an "everyman." The strong man gives a male perspective throughout Lamentations 3, balancing the female perspective of Daughter Zion in Lamentations 1–2. *saw the suffering*: He answers Daughter Zion's pleas that someone would see her distress (see Lam 1:12, 18). *angry rod*: He also testifies that the destruction that fell on Jerusalem was because of God's wrath.

3:2-16 The images throughout this section are violent. Most of the verbs are strong and are often used to describe physical attacks.

3:3-4 *He turned his hand even against me... He wore out my flesh and my skin; he broke my bones*: God's hand against humans often causes them to be physically ill (e.g., 1 Sam 5:6-12; Job 19:20-21).

3:5-9 *surrounding me... walled me in... walled in my paths... made my routes crooked*: God has trapped the

strong man, like in a prison, and made it impossible to escape.

3:6 *dark places* represent the netherworld, a form of death. **3:10-13** God is the hunter, and the speaker is the prey. *bear and lion*: Enemies are often imagined as animals (e.g., Pss 7:2; 17:8-12). *inside parts* (kidneys) are the location of a person's emotions (see also Lam 1:20; 2:11; 5:17).

3:17-20 The speaker turns to reflective thoughts, which taste like *bitterness and poison*. His memories make him feel discouraged and hopeless.

3:21-42 These verses sound more like an intellectual essay about God than reflection on personal experience. The speaker faces a theological dilemma: What do you do when your experience doesn't match what you have been taught about God? He chooses to embrace hope in God's goodness, a hope arrived at through internal struggle. In situations of tragedy, people can often feel despair and hope at the same time.

3:21 Though they may seem abrupt, such sudden transitions in attitude from despair to hope are common in lament psalms.

3:22-23 *faithful love... compassion... faithfulness*: characteristics frequently used to describe God (e.g., Exod 34:6-7).

is Jesus, the king of the Jews.”³⁸ They crucified with him two outlaws, one on his right side and one on his left.

³⁹Those who were walking by insulted Jesus, shaking their heads⁴⁰ and saying, “So you were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, were you? Save yourself! If you are God’s Son, come down from the cross.”

⁴¹In the same way, the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders, were making fun of him, saying,⁴² “He saved others, but he can’t save himself. He’s the king of Israel, so let him come down from the cross now. Then we’ll believe in him.”⁴³ He trusts in God, so let God deliver him now if he wants to. He said, ‘I’m God’s Son.’”⁴⁴ The outlaws who were crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

Death

⁴⁵From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark.⁴⁶ At about three Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?”^r

⁴⁷After hearing him, some standing there said, “He’s calling Elijah.”⁴⁸ One of them ran over, took a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a pole. He offered it to Jesus to drink.

⁴⁹But the rest of them said, “Let’s see if Elijah will come and save him.”

⁵⁰Again Jesus cried out with a loud shout. Then he died.

⁵¹Look, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split,⁵² and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised.⁵³ After Jesus’ resurrection they came out of their graves and went into the holy city where they appeared to many people.⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what had just happened, they were filled with awe and said, “This was certainly God’s Son.”

⁵⁵Many women were watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to serve him.⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Burial

⁵⁷That evening a man named Joseph came. He was a rich man from Arimathea who had become a disciple of Jesus.⁵⁸ He came to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate gave him

^rPs 22:1

27:55 Lk 8:2, Lk 8:3 **27:56** Mt 20:20, Mt 28:1; Mk 15:40, Mk 15:47; Lk 8:2 **27:57** Mk 15:42, Mk 15:43; Lk 23:50; Jn 19:38 **27:58** Lk 23:52

27:38 Is 53:12
27:39 Ps 22:7,
 Ps 109:25;
 Lam 2:15;
 Mk 15:29
27:40 Mt 4:3,
 Mt 4:6, Mt 26:61;
 Jn 2:19
27:42 Mt 27:37;
 Jn 1:49, Jn 12:13
27:43 Ps 22:8
27:44 Lk 23:39
27:45 Am 8:9;
 Mk 15:33;
 Lk 23:44;
 Rev 8:12
27:46 Ps 22:1;
 Lk 23:46;
 Jn 19:28
27:47 Mt 11:14;
 Mk 15:35,
 Mk 15:36
27:48 Ps 69:21;
 Mt 27:34;
 Lk 23:36;
 Jn 19:29
27:50 Mt 27:46;
 Mk 15:37;
 Lk 23:46;
 Jn 19:30
27:51 Ex 26:31;
 2Ch 3:14;
 Mt 27:54;
 Mk 15:38;
 Lk 23:45
27:52 Is 25:8,
 Is 26:19;
 Dn 12:2;
 Hos 13:14;
 Jn 5:25
27:53 Mt 4:5
27:54 Mt 4:3,
 Mt 8:5, Mt 27:43;
 Mk 15:39;
 Lk 23:47

others who might threaten Roman peace. *they divided up his clothes*: See Psalm 22:18. *king of the Jews*: an indication that Jesus was crucified as a pretender to the throne, a threat to Roman peace. Among the Romans, death by crucifixion was reserved for people like this.

27:38 *outlaws*: The Greek term *lestēs* refers to political outlaws, revolutionaries.

27:39-44 Jesus is mocked by three groups—passersby; people representing the Jewish council (*the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders*); and the outlaws. Their insults recall the words of the devil, who tested Jesus (Matt 4:1-11); and of Peter, who scolded Jesus (Matt 16:22). Like them, these mockers have preconceived ideas about what it must mean for Jesus to be God’s Son, and those ideas make no room for self-sacrifice on behalf of others. Jesus’ mission, however, was to serve and to give his life to liberate others (Matt 20:28). *God’s Son*: Compare the words of the righteous person’s enemies in Wisdom 2:12-21.

27:45 *dark*: an image of evil (outside God’s illumination) and judgment (see Matt 4:16; 6:23; 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

27:46 “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*”: Jesus’ final words are a mixture of Hebrew (*Eli, Eli, lama*) and Aramaic (*sabachthani*), taken from Psalm 22:1. Psalm 22 speaks of temporary abandonment and ultimate rescue.

27:47-49 *Elijah*: Bystanders think Jesus refers to *Elijah*

when he shouts, “*Eli!*” Popular religion thought of Elijah as a helper in times of need.

27:51a *curtain of the sanctuary*: probably the one covering the doorway that separates the outer room of the sanctuary, the holy space, from the inner room of the sanctuary, the holiest space (Exod 26:31-35). Noting that the curtain was torn in two from top to bottom suggests that God has torn the curtain. This is a sign anticipating the total destruction of the temple that Jesus predicted in Matthew 24:2. Since this curtain separated the world of human beings from God’s holiness, we should also find here a reference to access to God for all, whether Jew or Gentile.

27:51b-54 *The earth shook*: These signs emphasize the role of Jesus’ death in God’s transformation of creation. *came out of their graves*: a symbolic anticipation of the resurrection of God’s holy people. See Ezekiel 37:13. *centurion*: a commander of 100 soldiers in the Roman military system. Compare with the impressive faith of the centurion in Matthew 8:5-10. A Roman centurion and his guards, but not the Jewish leaders, recognize Jesus as *God’s Son*. The aftermath of Jesus’ death is for them a moment of revelation (see Matt 11:27; 16:17).

27:55-56 *Many women*: Compare Jesus’ disciples, who betrayed (Matt 26:48-49); abandoned (Matt 26:56); or denied (Matt 26:69-75) him.

27:57-60 *Joseph*: Though *he was a rich man*, Joseph was

27:60 Is 53:9;
Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:2;
Mk 16:4
27:61 Mt 27:56,
Mt 28:1

27:62 Mk 15:42;
Lk 23:54;
Jn 19:14,
Jn 19:31,
Jn 19:42

27:63 Mt 16:21,
Mt 17:23,
Mt 20:19;
Mk 8:31,
Mk 10:34

27:64 Mt 28:13

27:65 Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:11

27:66 Dn 6:17;
Mt 27:60

28:1 Mt 27:56,
Mt 27:61;
Mk 16:1;
Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1

28:2 Mt 1:20,
Mt 17:51;
Jn 20:12;
Ac 16:26;
Rev 11:19

28:3 Dn 7:9,
Dn 10:6;
Mt 17:2; Mk 9:3;
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28:5 Mt 14:27,
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28:6 Mt 16:21,
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28:7 Mt 26:32,
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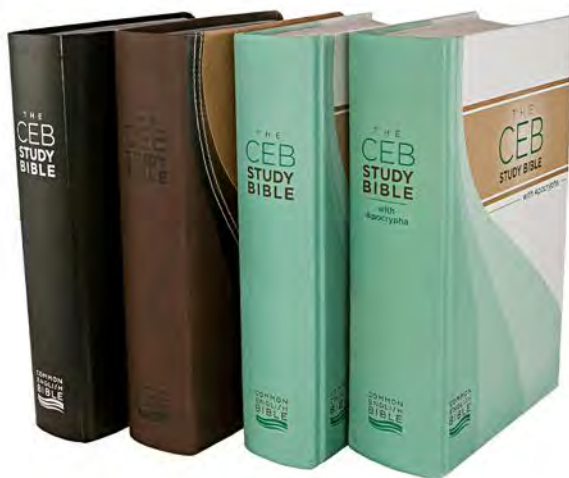
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19:38 Mt 27:57;
Mk 15:42-43;
Lk 23:50; Jn 7:13

19:39 Ps 45:8;
Song 4:14;
Jn 1:1, Jn 7:50,
Jn 19:40

19:40
2Ch 16:14;
Lk 24:12;
Jn 11:44,
Jn 19:39, Jn 20:5

19:41 2Ki 21:18,
2Ki 21:26;
Lk 23:53

19:42 Jn 19:14,
Jn 19:20,
Jn 19:31,
Jn 19:41

20:1 Mt 27:60,
Mt 27:66,
Mt 28:1;
Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1

20:2 Jn 13:23,
Jn 20:13

20:3 Lk 24:12

20:5 Jn 19:40

20:6 Mt 16:16;
Lk 22:31;
Jn 18:17,
Jn 18:25, Jn 21:7

20:7 Jn 11:44

20:8 Jn 20:4

20:9 Mt 22:29

20:11 Mt 27:56,
Mt 27:61,
Mt 28:1;
Mk 15:40,
Mk 16:1

20:12 Mt 28:2;
Mk 16:5; Lk 24:4

20:13 Jn 20:2,
Jn 20:15

20:14 Mt 28:9;
Mk 16:9;
Lk 24:16; Jn 21:4

20:15 Jer 29:5;
Jn 1:38, Jn 18:4,
Jn 18:7, Jn 20:13

20:16 Jn 1:38

Jesus' body is buried

³⁸After this Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one because he feared the Jewish authorities. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and took the body away. ³⁹Nicodemus, the one who at first had come to Jesus at night, was there too. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloe, nearly seventy-five pounds in all. ⁴⁰Following Jewish burial customs, they took Jesus' body and wrapped it, with the spices, in linen cloths. ⁴¹There was a garden in the place where Jesus was crucified, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴²Because it was the Jewish Preparation Day and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus in it.

Empty tomb

20Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him." ³Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb. ⁴They were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. ⁵Bending down to take a look, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he didn't go in. ⁶Following him, Simon Peter entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷He also saw the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't with the other clothes but was folded up in its own place. ⁸Then the other disciple, the one who arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹They didn't yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Jesus appears to Mary

¹¹Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb. ¹²She saw two angels dressed in white, seated where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and one at the foot. ¹³The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him."

¹⁴As soon as she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know it was Jesus.

¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she replied, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him and I will get him."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabbouni" (which means *Teacher*).

^bOr *one hundred litra*; that is, one hundred Roman pounds

19:38 *a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one*: This is a step toward true discipleship for both Joseph and Nicodemus (John 19:39; cf. John 12:42-43).

19:39 *seventy-five pounds*: The enormous amount of spices for burial matches in its own way Mary's "three-quarters of a pound of very expensive perfume" in preparation for his burial (see John 12:3, 7).

19:41 *garden*: The story of Jesus' suffering and death begins and ends in a garden (cf. John 18:1).

20:1-18 Mary Magdalene comes early to the tomb and finds the stone in front of it rolled away. Thinking the body has been removed, she runs to Simon Peter and the disciple *whom Jesus loved* and summons them to the tomb. Peter enters and finds it empty, with the linen cloths and the face cloth lying separately. The disciple *whom Jesus loved* then enters the tomb, sees, and believes. He and Peter leave together. Mary finally looks into the tomb and sees two angels standing where Jesus' body should have been lying. Still thinking the body stolen, she turns and sees Jesus himself but mistakes him for *the gardener*. He reveals himself to her by speaking her name and sends her to tell the disciples he's on his way to the Father. (See sidebar, "The Disciple Jesus Loved" at John 13.)

20:1 *Mary Magdalene*: one of the four women at the cross (John 19:25; Luke 8:2).

20:2 *we don't know*: The "we" here doesn't necessarily imply that other women are accompanying Mary (as there were in the other Gospels; see Matt 27:61; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10). She simply speaks for Jesus' disciples, implying an indefinite "they" who might have taken the body.

20:6 *linen cloths lying there*: The body hasn't been stolen. Who would bother to unwrap a corpse when taking it away for reburial?

20:8 *He saw and believed*: He's seen either what Peter had just a moment before (John 20:6-7) or what Mary will see shortly afterward (John 20:12). He believes Jesus has gone to the Father (see John 14:29).

20:9 *They didn't yet understand the scripture*: scripture as a whole, as in Luke 24:45-47, not a particular text. The other disciple's belief is based on Jesus' words and what he's just seen, not on scripture.

20:10 *the place where they were staying*: either their "homes" (John 16:32; 19:27) or temporary quarters in Jerusalem.

20:12 *one at the head and one at the foot*: dramatizing that the body is gone.

20:16 *"Mary"*: instead of "Woman" (John 20:15), identifying

¹⁷Jesus said to her, “Don’t hold on to me, for I haven’t yet gone up to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and tell them, ‘I’m going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

¹⁸Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, “I’ve seen the Lord.” Then she told them what he said to her.

Jesus appears to the disciples

¹⁹It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.” ²²Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you don’t forgive them, they aren’t forgiven.”

Jesus appears to Thomas and the disciples

²⁴Thomas, the one called Didymus,ⁱ one of the Twelve, wasn’t with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵The other disciples told him, “We’ve seen the Lord!”

But he replied, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger in the wounds left by the nails, and put my hand into his side, I won’t believe.”

²⁶After eight days his disciples were again in a house and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus entered and stood among them. He said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand into my side. No more disbelief. Believe!”

²⁸Thomas responded to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹Jesus replied, “Do you believe because you see me? Happy are those who don’t see and yet believe.”

³⁰Then Jesus did many other miraculous signs in his disciples’ presence, signs that aren’t recorded in this scroll. ³¹But these things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God’s Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name.

ⁱOr *the twin*

her as one of “his own sheep” (John 10:3). “*Rabbouni*”: She recognizes him not by sight but by his speaking of her name (cf. John 10:4). “*Rabbouni*” and “*Rabbi*” (John 1:38) both mean the same thing.

20:17 *Don’t hold on to me*: Compare with Matthew 28:9. *Go to my brothers and sisters*: or “Go to my brothers,” which would refer to the male disciples gathered in John 20:19–29. Jesus expresses urgency that she go quickly and tell his disciples. *I’m going up to my Father and your Father*: explaining why Jesus calls them his siblings: They share the same Father.

20:18 *“I’ve seen the Lord”*: Mary is the first to see the Lord (cf. John 20:25; 21:7). *Then she told them what he said to her*: reminding them that “my Father and your Father” was said to her first, so that if these men are Jesus’ “brothers,” she is one of his “sisters” (John 20:17).

20:19–31 That same evening Jesus appears to his disciples, who have gathered *behind closed doors*. He gives them a greeting of peace, shows them his wounds, and breathes on them, conferring on them the Holy Spirit before sending them on their mission. A week later he appears to them again, this time with Thomas present. Thomas asks to see his wounds, and, when Jesus agrees, he professes his belief in Jesus as Lord and God. Jesus pronounces a blessing on all who have not seen and yet believe, and the Gospel’s author makes an appeal to the reader to believe.

20:19 *closed doors*: or “locked” doors, as in John 20:26. *because . . . authorities*: They aren’t expecting Jesus, because Mary told them he was going away (John 20:18; cf. John 12:42; 19:38). *“Peace be with you”*: a routine greeting

(Luke 10:5; cf. John 20:21, 26), but one that fulfills Jesus’ promises (cf. John 14:27; 16:33).

20:20 *his hands and his side*: They must have known of his wounds, possibly through Joseph and Nicodemus, even though they hadn’t seen them.

20:21 *As the Father sent me, so I am sending you*: Compare with John 17:18.

20:22 *breathed on them*: proving that he’s alive once more (cf. John 14:19, “Because I live, you will live too”). *Receive the Holy Spirit*: Compare with John 1:33, designating Jesus as “the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.”

20:23 *If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven*: Compare with Matthew 16:19; 18:18. *if you don’t forgive them, they aren’t forgiven*: or “If you hold them, they are held.” Even Jesus sometimes withholds forgiveness (John 8:21, 24; 9:41; 15:22; 19:11).

20:25 *“We’ve seen the Lord”*: echoing what Mary said to them (John 20:18).

20:27 *No more disbelief. Believe!*: Compare with Matthew 28:17; Mark 9:24.

20:28 *“My Lord and my God!”*: Compare with John 1:1.

20:29 *don’t see and yet believe*: like the royal official at Capernaum (John 4:50), but above all like the readers of this Gospel (see John 20:31).

20:30 *many other miraculous signs*: This could refer to the miraculous signs done throughout his ministry, as in John 12:37, but they are just as likely to be the signs done right here in the course of his resurrection appearances (cf. Acts 1:3).

20:31 *written so that you will believe*: so that readers might

20:17 Mt 28:10; Mk 16:19; Jn 7:33; Eph 1:17
20:18 Mk 16:9; Mk 16:10; Lk 24:10; Lk 24:23; Jn 20:1
20:19 Lk 24:36; Jn 7:13; Jn 14:27; Jn 20:21; Jn 20:26

20:20 Lk 24:39–40; Jn 16:20; Jn 16:22; Jn 19:34

20:21 Lk 24:36; Jn 17:18; Jn 20:19
20:22 Jn 7:39; Ac 2:38; Ga 3:2

20:23 Mt 16:19; Mt 18:18; 1Co 5:4

20:24 Jn 6:67; Jn 11:16; Jn 20:19; Jn 21:2

20:25 Mk 16:11; Jn 20:20

20:26 Jn 20:19; Jn 20:21

20:27 Mt 17:17; Lk 24:39; Jn 20:20; Jn 20:25; 1Jn 1:1

20:28 Ps 45:6; Ps 102:24; Is 7:14; Is 40:9; Jn 21:2

20:29 1Pt 1:8

20:30 Jn 21:11; Jn 21:25

10:24 Ac 8:40,
Ac 10:1

10:25 Dn 2:46;
Mt 8:2

10:26 Ac 14:15;
Rev 19:10,
Rev 22:8,
Rev 22:9

10:27 Ac 10:24

10:28 Jn 4:9,
Jn 18:28;
Ac 10:15,
Ac 11:3, Ac 15:9

10:30 Ac 10:3,
Ac 10:7,
Ac 10:24

10:31 Ac 10:4

10:32 Ac 9:43,
Ac 10:5, Ac 10:6,
Ac 10:17

10:33 Ac 10:2

10:34 Dt 10:17;
2Ch 19:7;
Ro 2:11; Ga 2:6;
Eph 6:9

10:35 Prv 1:7;
Ac 10:2,
Ac 10:34,
Ac 15:9; Eph 1:6

10:36 Mt 28:18;
Lk 2:14; Ac 2:36;
Ro 5:1; Eph 2:17

10:37 Mt 4:12,
Mt 21:25;
Mk 1:4, Mk 1:14;
Lk 7:29

10:38 Mt 3:16,
Mt 4:23; Lk 4:18;
Jn 3:2; Ac 2:22

10:39 Lk 24:48;
Ac 1:22, Ac 3:15,
Ac 5:30,
Ac 10:41

10:40 Ac 2:24

10:41 Lk 24:43;
Jn 14:22

10:42 Jn 5:22;
Ac 17:31;
Ro 14:10;
2Ti 4:1; 1Pt 4:5

10:43 Jn 20:31;
Ac 2:38, Ac 15:9

The next day he got up and went with them, together with some of the believers from Joppa. ²⁴They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Anticipating their arrival, Cornelius had gathered his relatives and close friends. ²⁵As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in order to honor him. ²⁶But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Get up! Like you, I'm just a human." ²⁷As they continued to talk, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. ²⁸He said to them, "You all realize that it is forbidden for a Jew to associate or visit with outsiders. However, God has shown me that I should never call a person impure or unclean. ²⁹For this reason, when you sent for me, I came without objection. I want to know, then, why you sent for me."

³⁰Cornelius answered, "Four days ago at this same time, three o'clock in the afternoon, I was praying at home. Suddenly a man in radiant clothing stood before me. ³¹He said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayers, and your compassionate acts are like a memorial offering to him. ³²Therefore, send someone to Joppa and summon Simon, who is known as Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, located near the seacoast.' ³³I sent for you right away, and you were kind enough to come. Now, here we are, gathered in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has directed you to say."

³⁴Peter said, "I really am learning that God doesn't show partiality to one group of people over another. ³⁵Rather, in every nation, whoever worships him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶This is the message of peace he sent to the Israelites by proclaiming the good news through Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all! ³⁷You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism John preached. ³⁸You know about Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and endowed with power. Jesus traveled around doing good and healing everyone oppressed by the devil because God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses of everything he did, both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰but God raised him up on the third day and allowed him to be seen, ⁴¹not by everyone but by us. We are witnesses whom God chose beforehand, who ate and drank with him after God raised him from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell on everyone who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶They heard them speaking in other languages and praising God. Peter asked, ⁴⁷"These people have received the Holy Spirit just as we have. Surely no one can stop them from being baptized with water, can they?"

10:44 Ac 11:15, Ac 15:8, Ac 19:6 **10:45** Ac 2:33, Ac 2:38, Ac 10:23, Ac 11:2, Ac 15:7 **10:46** Mk 16:17; Ac 2:4, Ac 19:6 **10:47** Ac 8:12, Ac 8:36, Ac 11:17, Ac 15:8

surprising events that occur in Cornelius' house (Acts 10:45-46; 11:12).

10:25 *Cornelius... fell at his feet*: an extraordinary act of submission to an ordinary Jew (Peter) by a Roman officer accustomed to giving orders and exerting authority (cf. Luke 7:6-8).

10:28 *forbidden for a Jew to associate... with outsiders*: a narrow policy of social relations not shared by all Jews. Outside Israel, Jews routinely associated with Gentiles in their daily lives. Gentiles were welcome in Jewish synagogues, and the Jerusalem temple provided space (the Court of the Gentiles) where Jews and Gentiles mingled. Perhaps Peter's extreme statement here reflects his particular aversion to visiting the home of a Roman officer. *never call a person impure or unclean*: The real point of Peter's vision wasn't to change his diet and view of animals but to change his attitude toward people. In God's eyes, all people are clean and worthy of respect.

10:30-33 Cornelius retells his vision and response to it (cf. Acts 10:3-8).

10:33 *gathered in the presence of God*: Cornelius affirms his and Peter's common faith in and fellowship with God.

10:34-43 Peter's speech to Cornelius and his household,

focusing on God's impartial acceptance of people from all nations. Peter also repeats themes from previous speeches concerning Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

10:34-35 God doesn't play favorites but instead treats everyone, including immigrants from other nations, with fairness and justice (cf. Deut 10:17-19; Rom 2:6-11).

10:39 *hanging him on a tree*: crucifying Jesus (Acts 13:29; see note on Acts 5:30).

10:41 *ate and drank with him after God raised him*: See Luke 24:36-43; Acts 1:3-4.

10:42 *commanded us to preach*: See Luke 24:44-48; Acts 1:8. *the one whom God appointed as judge*: See Acts 17:31.

10:44-48 The Holy Spirit is poured on the Gentiles in Cornelius' house, and they're baptized in Jesus' name. This experience, including *speaking in other languages*, mirrors that of the early Jewish believers on Pentecost (see sidebar, "Receiving the Spirit at Pentecost" at Acts 2).

10:44 *While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell*: See sidebar, "God's Gift of the Holy Spirit" at Acts 8.

10:45 *circumcised believers who had come with Peter*: Compare with Acts 10:23; 11:12. Noting their circumcised status distinguishes these Jewish believers from the uncircumcised Gentile God-worshippers (Acts 11:2).

⁴⁸He directed that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited Peter to stay for several days.

Jerusalem church questions Peter

11 The apostles and the brothers and sisters throughout Judea heard that even the Gentiles had welcomed God’s word. ²When Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him. ³They accused him, “You went into the home of the uncircumcised and ate with them!”

⁴Step-by-step, Peter explained what had happened. ⁵“I was in the city of Joppa praying when I had a visionary experience. In my vision, I saw something like a large linen sheet being lowered from heaven by its four corners. It came all the way down to me. ⁶As I stared at it, wondering what it was, I saw four-legged animals—including wild beasts—as well as reptiles and wild birds. ⁷I heard a voice say, ‘Get up, Peter! Kill and eat!’ ⁸I responded, ‘Absolutely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹The voice from heaven spoke a second time, ‘Never consider unclean what God has made pure.’ ¹⁰This happened three times, then everything was pulled back into heaven. ¹¹At that moment three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea arrived at the house where we were staying. ¹²The Spirit told me to go with them even though they were Gentiles. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered that man’s house. ¹³He reported to us how he had seen an angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and summon Simon, who is known as Peter. ¹⁴He will tell you how you and your entire household can be saved.’ ¹⁵When I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as the Spirit fell on us in the beginning. ¹⁶I remembered the Lord’s words: ‘John will baptize with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷If God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, then who am I? Could I stand in God’s way?”

¹⁸Once the apostles and other believers heard this, they calmed down. They praised God and concluded, “So then God has enabled Gentiles to change their hearts and lives so that they might have new life.”

The Antioch church

¹⁹Now those who were scattered as a result of the trouble that occurred because of Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. They proclaimed the word only to Jews. ²⁰Among them were some people from Cyprus and Cyrene. They entered Antioch and began to proclaim the good news about the Lord Jesus also to Jews who spoke Greek. ²¹The Lord’s power was with them, and a large number came to believe and turned to the Lord.

^cOr *birds in the sky*

10:48 Ac 2:38, Ac 8:16
11:1 Ac 1:8, Ac 8:14, Ac 10:45, Ac 11:29, Ac 13:48
11:2 Ac 10:45
11:3 Ac 10:28; Ga 2:12
11:4 Lk 1:3
11:5 Ac 9:10, Ac 10:9
11:9 Ac 10:15
11:11 Ac 8:40
11:12 Ac 8:29, Ac 10:23, Ac 15:9
11:13 Ac 12:11
11:14 Jn 4:53; Ac 10:2, Ac 16:15, Ac 16:31, Ac 18:8
11:15 Ac 2:2, Ac 2:4, Ac 10:44
11:16 Lk 3:16; Ac 1:5
11:17 Ac 2:38, Ac 10:47
11:18 Ac 5:31, Ac 21:20; 2Co 7:10
11:19 Ac 4:36, Ac 8:1, Ac 8:4, Ac 11:26, Ac 15:3
11:20 Mt 27:32; Ac 2:10, Ac 5:42, Ac 11:19, Ac 13:1
11:21 Lk 1:66; Ac 2:41, Ac 2:47, Ac 4:4, Ac 9:35

10:48 *directed that they be baptized:* The baptized group is drawn from the “large gathering” of friends and relatives in Cornelius’ home (Acts 10:24, 27). For other baptisms of entire households, see Acts 16:15, 33; 18:8. *invited Peter to stay:* sign of continuing fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers. Peter’s extended visit no doubt included sharing many meals with Cornelius and his household (cf. Acts 11:3).

11:1-18 Circumcised Jewish believers in the Jerusalem church criticize Peter’s fellowship with the Gentiles. In his defense, Peter tells them about his visionary experience and visit to Cornelius’ house, stressing that these events were caused by God and God’s Spirit.

11:2 *went up to Jerusalem:* In Jewish tradition travel from any direction toward Jerusalem is upward. This fits the concept of the temple mount as the place of highest importance on earth.

11:12 *six brothers also went with me:* specifying the number of circumcised believers from Joppa who accompanied Peter to Cornelius’ home (Acts 10:23, 45-46). These Jewish brothers in Christ could provide eyewitness confirmation of Peter’s testimony.

11:16 See Acts 1:4-5.

11:18 *change their hearts and lives:* See note on Acts 2:38.

11:19-30 Unnamed missionaries establish a church in Antioch of Syria. Barnabas and Saul come and teach the new believers for a year. During a time of famine, the disciples in Antioch send financial aid to their Christian brothers and sisters in Judea.

11:19 *those who were scattered:* See Acts 8:1, 4.

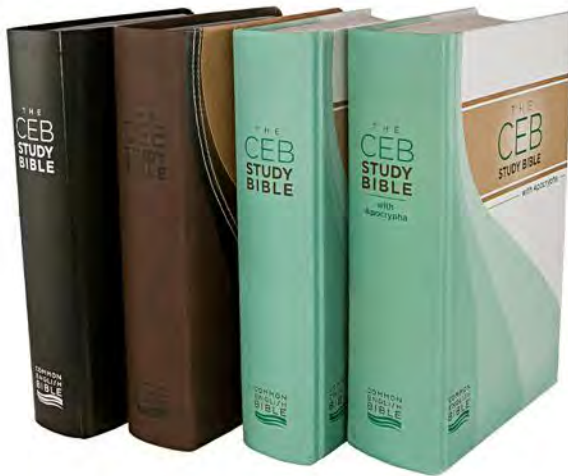
11:20 *Cyprus and Cyrene:* Cyprus, an island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, was the homeland of Barnabas (Acts 4:36) and another disciple named Mnason (Acts 21:16). Cyrene was a region in northern Africa near Libya. Jews from this area were represented at Pentecost (Acts 2:10). *Antioch:* third-largest city in the Roman Empire and capital of the province of Syria. It was a busy commercial and multicultural center, and had a sizable Jewish community.

11:21 *large number came to believe:* In addition to Greek-speaking Jews (Acts 11:20), the diverse population of Antioch and the developing plot of Acts suggest that Gentiles are also included among this large group of new believers. The Antioch church is a mixed Jewish-Gentile congregation.

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