

Matthew

Written in Aramaic by Jesus' Apostle Matthew about 42-CE and translated into Greek in the early 2nd Century

The Poetry of Jesus: Recognize that many of the sermons and parables of Jesus were spoken poetically in order to be remembered by his followers. And although the cadence comes through clearly to Bible translators, most have chosen not to write it as poetry due to the extra effort this requires, and because most Bible readers simply aren't interested in the beauty of his words, but in the content. However, Jesus spoke and taught beautifully, and you will notice how we have attempted, within the range of accuracy, to render Jesus' words as he spoke them.

Remember that there was no television, radio, or newspapers in Jesus' time, since printing and electronic media had not been invented. So the main method for communicating widely to the public was through poetry and the words of songs that could be remembered and repeated.

Chapter 1

¹ This is the book of the origins of Jesus the Anointed, the Son of **David**, the Son of **AbraHam**.

² **AbraHam** fathered IsaAc. IsaAc fathered Jacob. Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers. ³ Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar. Perez fathered Hezron. Hezron fathered Ram. ⁴ Ram fathered AmiNadab. AmiNadab fathered Nashon. Nashon fathered Salmon. ⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz by RaHab. Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth. Obed fathered Jesse. ⁶ Jesse fathered David, the king.

David fathered Solomon by the wife of UriAh. ⁷ Solomon fathered RehoBoam. RehoBoam fathered AbiJah. AbiJah fathered Asa. ⁸ Asa fathered JehoShaphat. JehoShaphat fathered JehoRam. JehoRam fathered UzZiAh. ⁹ UzZiAh fathered JoTham. JoTham fathered Ahaz. Ahaz fathered HezekiAh. ¹⁰ HezekiAh fathered ManasSeh. ManasSeh fathered Amon. Amon fathered JosiAh. ¹¹ JosiAh fathered JeconiAh and his brothers before the deportation to Babylon.

¹² **After the deportation to Babylon**, JeconiAh fathered ShalathiEl. ShalathiEl fathered ZerubBabel.

¹³ ZerubBabel fathered AbiUd. AbiUd fathered EliAkim. EliAkim fathered Azor. ¹⁴ Azor fathered Zadok. Zadok fathered Achim. Achim fathered EliUd. ¹⁵ EliUd fathered EliAzar. EliAzar fathered MatThan. MatThan fathered Jacob. ¹⁶ Jacob fathered JoSeph, the father of Mary, from whom Jesus was born, who is called the Anointed One.

¹⁷ So, there were fourteen generations from AbraHam to David, fourteen generations from David until the deportation to Babylon, and fourteen generations from the deportation to Babylon until [the coming of] the Anointed One.

¹⁸ This is the way that Jesus the Anointed started out: While his mother Mary was promised in marriage to JoSeph, she was found to be pregnant by [God's] Holy Breath before the marriage was consummated. ¹⁹ However, because JoSeph (her man) was righteous and didn't want to make [Mary] a public spectacle, he planned to release her secretly. ²⁰ But after he came to that conclusion, {Look!} Jehovah's messenger appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'JoSeph, [descendant] of David; Don't be afraid to take Mary as your woman, because what has been fathered in her is from [God's] Holy Breath. ²¹ She will give birth to a son and you will call his name Jesus (Jehovah is Salvation), because he will save his people from their sins.'

²² This whole thing happened so that what was spoken by Jehovah through the Prophet would be fulfilled:

²³ 'A virgin will get pregnant and then bear a son,

Whose name you must call, ImManuEl,' (which translates as, *With Us is God*).

²⁴ Then, after he woke up, JoSeph did what Jehovah's messenger told him to do, and he took the woman. ²⁵ However, [JoSeph] didn't have sexual relations with her until after she had given birth to a son, whom he called by the name, Jesus.

Chapter 2

¹ After Jesus was born (in BethLehem of Judea during the days of King Herod), {Look!} Magi from the east came to JeruSalem, ² asking, 'Where is this one who was born to be the king of the Judeans? We saw his star in the east and we came to bow low before him.'

³ Well, when he heard about this, King Herod was very disturbed (as was all JeruSalem). ⁴ So he gathered all the chief priests and the peoples' scribes and asked them where this Anointed One was to be born. ⁵ And they replied: 'In BethLehem of Judea... because, this is what was written through the Prophet:

*⁶ And you, O BethLehem in the land of Judea;
Will in no way be the least
Among the rulers of Judah.
For from you, will come forth a leader,
Who will shepherd IsraEl, My people.'*

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for those Magi and carefully determined from them when the star had appeared. ⁸ And as he sent them on to BethLehem, he said, 'Search carefully for the young child; and when you find him, report back to me, so I can go and bow before him also.'

⁹ Then, after listening to what the king had to say, they went on their way... and {Look!} the star that they saw in the east went ahead of them until it stood directly over [the place] where the young child was. ¹⁰ Well, when they saw the star [do this], they were beside themselves with joy. ¹¹ And after they entered the house, they saw the little boy with Mary (his mother), and they fell down and bowed before him. Then they opened their treasures and gave the child gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² However, because they had been given a divine warning in a dream that they weren't to return to Herod, they went back home via another route.

¹³ Well, after they left, {Look!} Jehovah's messenger appeared to JoSeph in a dream saying, 'Get up! Take the boy and his mother, then hurry to Egypt and stay there until I tell you otherwise, because Herod is going to search for the boy to destroy him!'

¹⁴ So he got up during the night and took the child and his mother, and they left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where they stayed until after Herod had died, so this thing that was said by Jehovah through the Prophet would be fulfilled: 'I called My son out of Egypt.'

¹⁶ Well, when Herod saw that the Magi had outwitted him, he was furious. So he sent [a proclamation] throughout BethLehem and its districts to have all the boys who were two-years-old and younger to be gathered [for destruction], since that was the period he had determined so carefully from the Magi.

¹⁷ And that's also when the thing that was spoken through the Prophet JeremiAh was fulfilled, which said:

*¹⁸ 'A voice was heard out of RamAh...
The sounds of weeping, wailing, and grief.
It was RachEl, who wept for her sons,
And she wouldn't take any comfort;
Because, they are not anymore.'*

¹⁹ Well, after Herod died, {Look!} Jehovah's messenger appeared in a dream to JoSeph while he was in Egypt ²⁰ and said: 'Get up! Take the child and his mother and go [back] to the land of IsraEl, because those who wanted to take the child's life are now dead!'

²¹ So [JoSePh] got up and took the child and his mother, and returned to the land of IsraEl. ²² But when he heard that ArcheLaus had taken over as ruler in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there because of a divine warning that had been given to him in a dream. As the result, he traveled to the territory of GaliLee ²³ and they went to live in a city named Nazareth. Thus the thing that was spoken through the Prophet was fulfilled: 'A Nazarene is what he'll be called.'

Chapter 3

¹ It was in those days that John the Baptist came preaching in the desert of Judea, ² saying: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God) has drawn near.'³ He's the one of whom the Prophet IsaiAh spoke in the words:

'A voice calls out in the desert:

Prepare the way for the Lord;

Before him, straighten the roads!'

⁴ John wore clothes made of camel's hair, he wore a thick leather belt around his waist, and what he ate was locusts and wild honey.

⁵ Then [people from] JeruSalem, the rest of Judea, and all the area around the Jordan came to him ⁶ to be baptized in the Jordan River, as they openly admitted their sins.

⁷ Well, when he saw many of the Pharisees and SadDucees (actually, *Sad dou kai um*) coming to the baptism, he said to them: 'Children of vipers; Who has shown you the need to flee from the coming rage?' ⁸ Produce the [type of] fruitage that proves you are worthy of repentance. ⁹ And don't be so bold as to say, *Our father is AbraHam*; for I tell you that God can make children of AbraHam from these stones! ¹⁰ Why, the ax is already lying at the roots of the trees and every tree that isn't producing good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire!

¹¹ 'Indeed, I baptize you in water [as a sign of your] repentance. But the one coming after me is greater than me. In fact, I'm unfit to remove his sandals! [When he arrives], he'll baptize you in fire and Spirit... ¹² he'll [take] his shovel into his hands and completely clean up his threshing floor, then he'll gather the wheat into his storehouse and burn all the chaff with a fire that can't be extinguished!'

¹³ Well later, Jesus came from GaliLee to see John at the Jordan River in order to be baptized by him.

¹⁴ But [John] tried to prevent him, saying, 'I'm the one who should be baptized by you! So, why are you coming to me?'

¹⁵ But Jesus said: 'Let it be like this for now... this is the right thing for us to do, so we can fulfill all that is righteous.'

And at that, [John] no longer tried to stop him.

¹⁶ Well, after Jesus was baptized (immediately after he come up out of the water), {Look!} the heavens opened before him, and [John] saw God's Breath descending upon him [in the form of] a dove. ¹⁷ And {Look!} there was a voice that came out of the sky that said: 'This is my dearly-loved Son who has pleased me well.'

Chapter 4

¹ Then [God's] Breath led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Slanderer. ² And after he had

fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was very hungry, ³ so the Tempter came to him and said, 'If you are a the Son of The God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread!'

⁴ And [Jesus] replied, 'It is written:
*Man doesn't live by just bread alone,
But by every word that comes from God's mouth.'*

⁵ Then the Slanderer took him to the Holy City, put him up on one of the Temple's high battle towers,
⁶ and said, 'If you're a son of The God, jump down! For it's written:
*He'll assign [His] messengers around you,
And on their hands, they will lift you,
So you'll not hit your foot on a stone.'*

⁷ But Jesus told him, 'Once again, it is written:
Do not put Jehovah your God to the test.'

⁸ Then once again, the Slanderer took him along to an unusually high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said, 'I will give all of these to you if you'll just bow before me with your face to the ground.'

¹⁰ But Jesus replied, 'Go away Slanderer, because it's written:
*Indeed; you must worship Jehovah, your God,
And Him alone may you serve.'*

¹¹ Then the Slanderer left him, and {Look!} [God's] messengers came and started serving [Jesus' needs].

¹² Well, after he heard that John had been arrested, [Jesus] returned to GaliLee... ¹³ he moved out of Nazareth and started living in CapharNaum (which is by the sea in the districts of ZebuLun and NaphTali). ¹⁴ This was done so [the prophecy] that was spoken through the Prophet IsaiAh could be fulfilled:

¹⁵ 'O lands of ZebuLun and NaphTali...
You coasts and those on the Jordan's east shore,
And you, O Galilee of the gentiles!

¹⁶ The people who were traveling in darkness,
Then saw a [very] bright light.
For a light will then shine upon those,
Who live in the place of the shadow of death.'

¹⁷ Well, from that time on, Jesus started preaching and saying: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God) has drawn near!'

¹⁸ It was while he was walking along by the Sea of GaliLee that he saw two brothers, Simon (the one called Peter) and his brother Andrew... fishermen who were casting their nets on the sea. ¹⁹ And he said to them: 'Follow me and I'll make you fishers of men!'

²⁰ Well, they immediately dropped their nets and they started following him.

²¹ And traveling on from there, he saw two more brothers, James [the son] of ZebediOu, and his brother John. They were in the boat with ZebediOu their father, repairing their nets, when he called

them; ²² and right away, they left the boat and their father and they also started following him.

²³ Thereafter, [Jesus] traveled throughout all of GaliLee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, and curing all the peoples' diseases and infirmities. ²⁴ Why, they had heard of him all the way to the land of Syria, from which they also brought their sick (those with various diseases and ailments, the demon-possessed, as well as epileptics and paralyzed persons), and he cured them all. ²⁵ As the result, huge crowds from GaliLee, the DecaPolis, JeruSalem (and the rest of Judea), as well as those from the other side of the Jordan, started following him.

Chapter 5

¹ Well, when [Jesus] saw the crowds, he went up a mountain and sat down, and his disciples came to him. ² Then he opened his mouth and started teaching them, saying:

³ 'Blest are those poor in spirit,
For, theirs is the Kingdom of the heavens.

⁴ 'Blest are those who are sad,
For, they will be given comfort.

⁵ 'Blest are the meek,
For, they will inherit the land.

⁶ 'Those hungering and thirsting for righteousness are blest,
For, they will find satisfaction.

⁷ 'Blest are those who show mercy,
For, mercy is what they'll receive.

⁸ 'Blest are those pure in heart,
For, they will [come to] see God.

⁹ 'Blest are those who make peace,
For, they will be called Sons of God.

¹⁰ 'Blest are those who receive persecution,
For doing [things that are] righteous,
Since, theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ 'You're blest when they insult and persecute you,
Then say many bad things about you,
And lie about you for my sake.

¹² So, rejoice and [cry out in] joy;
For your reward is great in the heavens,
Since, that's how they treated the Prophets before you.

¹³ 'You are the salt of the earth,
But if salt becomes weak, is it still salt?
No, when it no longer has strength,
It's thrown outside to be walked on.

¹⁴ 'You are the light of this world...

And a city on a hill can't be hidden!

¹⁵ You don't light a lamp, then put it under a basket...

You put it on a lampstand instead,

Where it can shine throughout the whole house!

¹⁶ 'So, let your light shine before all,

Then they can speak of the good things you've done,

And give glory to your Father in the heavens.

¹⁷ 'Don't think that I came to destroy

The Law or the [words of the] Prophets...

For I came to fulfill, not to destroy.

¹⁸ 'I'm telling you the truth when I say, it's more likely that the land and the skies would pass away than for an iota or a small point on a letter of the Law to pass away before it is all fulfilled. ¹⁹ So, whoever breaks the least of Commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; while those who teach and follow [the Law] will be called great in the Kingdom. ²⁰ And I also say this to you: If you aren't more righteous than the scribes and Pharisees, you won't enter the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God).

²¹ 'You've heard that it was said to the ancients: *You must not commit murder, for those who murder will be judged.* ²² However, I tell you this: Whoever stays angry with his brother will also have to be judged, and anyone who calls his brother empty-headed must stand before the religious court. Also, anyone who [calls his brother] a moron will be [condemned] to the fires in the garbage-dump.

²³ 'If you bring a gift to [God's] Altar, but while you're on the way you remember that your brother holds something against you; ²⁴ leave your gift at the Altar and go. First make peace with your brother, and then return to offer your gift.

²⁵ 'Also, while you're on your way [to a court], you should quickly work out an agreement with your adversary so won't have to leave the matter in the hands of the judge, who may hand you over to the bailiff, who will then lock you in jail. ²⁶ If that happens, I tell you this for a fact: You won't be released until you've paid your last cent.

²⁷ 'You've also heard that it's said: *You must not commit Adultery.* ²⁸ But I tell you that any man who stares at a woman and develops a desire [to have] her, has committed adultery [with her] in his heart.

²⁹ So if your right eye becomes a trap to you, pull it out and throw it away! For it's better to lose a piece of yourself than to lose your whole body in the garbage dump. ³⁰ Or if your right hand becomes a trap to you, cut it off and throw it away! For it's better to lose a piece of yourself than to lose your whole body in the garbage dump.

³¹ 'It is said that whoever releases his woman should give her a certificate of rejection. ³² But I say: Whoever releases his woman except on the count of being sexually immoral, leads her into adultery. And whoever marries a woman who's been so released is committing adultery.

³³ 'Again, you heard it was said long ago: *You must not swear a false oath; rather, you must do as you vow before Jehovah.* ³⁴ However, I tell you this:

Swear oaths by nothing at all!

Don't swear by heaven, because that's God's throne;

³⁵ Don't swear by the earth, because that's His footstool;
And do not swear by JeruSalem,
Because, that's the city of the great king.
³⁶ Do not swear by the hair on your head,
Because, you can't turn a hair black or white!
³⁷ Let your yes mean yes, and your no just mean no,
For it's things like this that lead you to evil.

³⁸ 'You've also heard it was said: *Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.* ³⁹ But I say to you: Don't oppose evil men. If someone slaps your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰ And if someone wants to take you to court to sue you for your underwear, give him the rest of your clothes! ⁴¹ Or if someone forces you to serve him for a mile, go with him for two miles! ⁴² Yes, give freely to all those who ask, and don't turn away anyone who wishes to borrow.

⁴³ 'You've heard the saying that goes: *You must love your neighbors and dislike your enemies.* ⁴⁴ But I say: Show love for your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; ⁴⁵ for by doing this, you'll prove yourselves sons of your Father in the heavens, who allows the sun to rise upon both the wicked and the good, and who sends rain to both the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you only love those who love you, what reward are you due... don't tax collectors do the same thing? ⁴⁷ And if you only greet your brothers, what are you doing that's so special... don't the gentiles do the same thing? ⁴⁸ You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect!

Chapter 6

¹ 'Be careful not to practice your righteousness before other men so that they can see what you're doing; for then you will receive no reward from your Father in heaven. ² And when you're giving gifts to the needy, don't blow a trumpet in the synagogue or on the streets like the hypocrites do so they can be praised by the people. I tell you the truth; when they do this, they've received their reward in full measure. ³ Rather, when you give gifts to the needy, don't [tell] your left hand what your right hand is doing. ⁴ Give your gifts to the needy in secret, and then your Father who watches in secret will be [the One] who repays you.

⁵ 'And don't pray like the hypocrites do, for they [like to] pray as they're standing in their synagogues and on the corners of the main streets, so they can be seen by other men. I tell you the truth; they're receiving their reward in full measure. ⁶ Rather, when you pray, go into your room and after shutting the door, pray to your Father in secret. Then you'll be repaid by your Father who is watching in secret.

⁷ 'When praying, don't foolishly repeat the same words as the gentiles do. For they think that they may only be heard through the use of many words. ⁸ No, don't act like them, for your God and Father already knows everything that you need before you ask Him.

⁹ 'Now, this is how you should pray:
Our Father who is in the heavens;
May Your Name be treated as Holy;
¹⁰ *May Your Kingdom arrive;*
And may Your Will take place on the earth,
As [it has] in the heavens.

¹¹ *'Give us our bread for this day,*
¹² *And forgive us of all our debts,*
As we have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ *Into temptation, may we not be led,
And from the Wicked [One], save us.*

¹⁴ 'If you're willing forgive other people's errors, your Father in heaven will overlook yours. ¹⁵ But if you aren't willing to forgive their errors, your Father won't forgive yours.

¹⁶ 'Also, when you fast, don't put on a sad face like the hypocrites do, because they contort their faces to make it plain that they're fasting. I tell you the truth; [by doing this], they're receiving their reward in full measure. ¹⁷ Rather, whenever you fast; put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so others won't know that you're fasting... only your Father who is watching in secret. For then your Father who's watching in secret will be [the One] who repays you.

¹⁹ 'Stop storing up treasures on earth, which can be eaten by rust and by moths, or which thieves can break in and steal. ²⁰ Rather, store your treasures in the heavens where they can't be consumed by moths or by rust, and where thieves can't break in and steal them. ²¹ For where your treasures are is where your hearts will also be.

²² 'Your eyes are the lamps of your bodies, and if [you keep] your eyes simple, they will make your whole body bright. ²³ But if your eyes are just wicked, they'll make your whole body dark. And when the only light within you is darkness; how great that darkness will be!

²⁴ 'No one can slave for two masters; for you'll [find that] you won't care for the one, but love the other... you'll be devoted this one, but you'll despise the other. This is why you can't slave for God and for wealth!

²⁵ 'I'm also telling you that you shouldn't worry about your lives and the things that you'll eat --- or about your bodies and what you'll wear. For the person you are inside is more important than food and [your] body is more important than clothes. ²⁶ Rather, pay attention to the birds in the skies; for they don't plant seeds, or harvest, or put things in storage sheds, because your Father in the heavens provides them their food... and aren't you [greater than] they are? ²⁷ Why, which of you can through worry add even a smidgen of length to your lives?

²⁸ 'Also, when it comes to clothes, why worry? Rather, pay attention to the way that lilies grow in the fields. Although they don't work or spin cloth, ²⁹ not even Solomon in all of his glory was as well-dressed as they. ³⁰ So if God so well dresses the plants in the fields, which are here today and thrown into the oven tomorrow; wouldn't He rather clothe you... you with so little faith?

³¹ 'Therefore, never be worried and ask, *What are we going to eat and drink*, or, *What are we going to wear?* ³² For these are the concerns of the gentiles... and your Father in the heavens already knows that you need these things! ³³ Rather, put the Kingdom and righteousness first, and then all these other things will be given to you. ³⁴ No, don't worry about what tomorrow will bring, because tomorrow will have its own problems and each day will have its own badness.

Chapter 7

¹ 'Do not judge others, so you won't be judged.

² For the [rules] by which you judge others,
Are the rules they will use to judge you,
And the standards you're setting for them,
Are the standards that they'll set for you.

³ 'Why look for the chaff in your brother's eye,
When you can't see the rafter in yours?

⁴ For, how can you say to your brother,
Let me remove this chaff from your eye,
When {Look!} there is a rafter in yours?

⁵ 'Hypocrites! Remove first the rafter from your own eye,
And then you'll be able to see,
How to take chaff from the eye of your brother.

⁶ 'Don't lay holy things before dogs,
Or throw your pearls before pigs,
So they can't trample them under their feet,
And then turn around and gore you.

⁷ 'Keep asking and it will be given...
Keep searching and you will find...
Keep knocking and it will be opened.

⁸ For, all will receive, who keep asking...
All who keep searching, will find...
And [the door] will be opened to all those who knock.

⁹ 'For, of which man isn't this true:
When his son asks him for bread,
He will not hand him a stone;

¹⁰ And if he asks for a fish,
He will not hand him a snake!

¹¹ So if you in your wicked condition
Will give good gifts to your children;
How much more will your Father in heaven
Give good things to those who keep asking?

¹² 'What you would want others to do for you
Is what you should be doing for them. For, that's [the whole point] of the Law and the Prophets!

¹³ 'You should enter through the gate that is narrow,
For the road to destruction is both broad and wide,
And that's the way most people are going.

¹⁴ But the gateway to life is narrow and tight,
And few are those who can find it.

¹⁵ 'Beware of false prophets who come dressed as sheep,
But, on the inside are just hungry wolves.

¹⁶ You'll recognize them by the fruit that they bear...
For you don't pick grapes from the briars,
And you don't pick figs from the thistles.

¹⁷ Good trees produce fruit that is good,
While the rotten trees give that is bad.

¹⁸ Good trees will not bear bad fruit,
And rotten trees won't bear what's good;

¹⁹ Then, any trees that don't bear good fruit
Will be cut down and thrown into the fire...
²⁰ And you'll recognize them by the fruit that they bear!

²¹ 'Not all who call out *Lord Lord* to me
Will enter the Kingdom of heaven...
Just those who are doing the Will
O my Father in heaven. ²² Yet, many will then] say to me,
*O Lord, in your name, haven't we prophesied...
In your name, haven't we cast out demons...
And haven't we done great works in your name?*
²³ Yet, I'll tell them that I never knew them!
Get away from me, you lawbreakers!

²⁴ 'Now, those who listen and do what I say,
Are like the wise man who built his home upon rock.
²⁵ So, when the rains and the floods came,
And the winds beat down on his house,
It was able to stand,
Because it had a [solid] foundation.
²⁶ But, those who hear and don't do what I say,
Are like the fool who built his house upon sand.
²⁷ Then, when the rains and the floods came
Along with the winds that blew on his house; It fell in a mighty collapse.'

²⁸ Well, when Jesus finished saying these things, the crowds were awe-struck by his way of teaching. ²⁹
Because, unlike their scribes, he taught with authority.

Chapter 8

¹ Then, as he was coming down the mountain being followed by a large crowd, ² {Look!} a man with leprosy came up and bowed low saying, 'Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean!'

³ So [Jesus] stuck out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I want to... be clean.' And [the man] was immediately wiped clean of his leprosy.

⁴ Then Jesus said to him: 'Don't tell anyone [about this]... just go show yourself to the Priests and offer the gift that Moses specified, so they can testify to what has happened.'

⁵ [Well later], as he was entering Capharnaum, a [Roman] Centurion came to him pleading: ⁶ 'Lord; My [house]boy is so paralyzed that he can't leave my home, and he's in a lot of pain!'

⁷ And [Jesus] said to him: 'I'll cure him when I get there.'

⁸ However, the Centurion said: 'Sir, I'm unfit to have you enter my house. Just say the word and I know that my boy will be healed. ⁹ You see, I'm also a man who has been given great authority, because I have many soldiers under me. So if I tell this one, *Be on your way*, he's on his way; or if I say to another, *Come*, he comes; or if I tell my slave to do something, he does it.'

¹⁰ Well, Jesus was amazed, and he said this to those who were following him: 'I tell you the truth; I haven't found anyone in IsraEl with this much faith. ¹¹ I tell you; many from the sunrise to the sunset

will come and recline [at the table] with AbraHam, IsaAc, and Jacob in the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God),¹² while the Sons of the Kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness, where they'll cry and grind their teeth.'

¹³ Then Jesus said to the Centurion: 'Then go... let it be just as you've believed!' And the man's [house]boy was healed in that very hour.

¹⁴ Well, when he got to Peter's house, Jesus saw [Peter's] mother-in-law lying down and burning up with a fever.¹⁵ So he touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and started serving him.

¹⁶ Then later that evening, people were bringing him many who had been demon-possessed. So he cast out the spirits with a word and he cured all those who were in poor health,¹⁷ to fulfill the words that were spoken through the Prophet IsaiAh: 'He took our diseases and carried our illnesses upon himself.'

¹⁸ But then, when Jesus saw that people were starting to crowd around him, he gave orders [to his disciples] that they were to leave for the other side [of the Sea of GaliLee].¹⁹ But [as they were leaving], a scribe came up to him and said: 'Teacher, I'll follow you wherever you go!'²⁰ And Jesus told him: 'Though foxes have burrows and birds in the skies have their nests, the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'

²¹ Then another disciple came up and said to him: 'Lord, allow me to first go and bury my father.'

²² But Jesus told him: 'Keep following me and let the dead bury their own dead.'

²³ Then he stepped into a boat and his disciples followed along.²⁴ However, {Look!} [very soon] the sea started shaking and waves were crashing over the boat, but [Jesus] was just lying there asleep.²⁵ So [the disciples] went over and woke him up, saying, 'Lord save us, for we're about to be destroyed!'

²⁶ But [Jesus] asked, 'Why are you so afraid... you with so little faith?' Then he got up and scolded the winds and the sea, and a great calm set in,²⁷ which caused the [disciples] to start wondering and asking each other, 'What kind of person is this; for even the winds and the seas obey him!'

²⁸ Well, when they got to the other side [of the sea], into the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out from among the tombs. They were so unusually fierce that no one else had the courage to even pass that way.²⁹ And {Look!} they started shouting, 'What do you want with us, O Son of God? Did you come here before the appointed time to torment us?'

³⁰ Meanwhile, there was a large herd of pigs feeding [in a field] some distance away.³¹ So the demons started begging [Jesus], saying, 'If you are going to cast us out, send us into that herd of pigs!'

³² And [Jesus] said to them: 'Then, go!'

So they came out and went into the pigs. And {Look!} the entire herd ran down a steep cliff into the sea, where they [drowned] in the water.

³³ Well at that, those who were keeping watch over the pigs in the field ran away. And when they got to the city, they described everything that had happened... including what [he had done] to the demon-possessed men.³⁴ So {Look!} everyone in the city came out to meet Jesus. But when they saw

him, they begged him to cross back [over the sea], away from their district.

Chapter 9

¹ So he stepped into the boat and traveled back to the town where he was staying. ² And when he got there, {Look!} some people brought him a paralyzed man lying on a cot. Well, when he saw that the man had a lot of faith, Jesus said to him: 'Take courage child; your sins are forgiven.'

³ However, {Look!} some scribes [who overheard this] were thinking to themselves: 'He's blaspheming!'

⁴ But Jesus (who knew what they were thinking) asked: 'Why are you thinking such wicked things in your hearts? ⁵ Is it easier to say, *your sins are forgiven*, or just, *get up and walk*? ⁶ However, I want you to know that the Son of Man has the power to forgive sins here on the earth.' So he told the paralyzed man: 'Now, get up, pick up your cot, and go home.' ⁷ And with that, he got up and went home.

⁸ Well, when the crowds saw this, they were frightened and they all started praising The God who gives such powers to men.

⁹ Thereafter, he left that place, and while he was traveling from on, Jesus noticed a man named Matthew sitting in the tax office. And he said to him: 'Be my follower.' And immediately, [Matthew] stood up and started following him.

¹⁰ Then later, while [Jesus] was reclining at the table in [Matthew's] home, {Look!} many tax collectors and sinners came in and reclined along with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ But on seeing this, the Pharisees asked [Jesus'] disciples: 'Why is your teacher eating with these tax collectors and sinners?'

¹² Well, when [Jesus] heard them say this, he told them: 'Healthy people don't need a doctor... only the sick do. ¹³ So, go and learn the meaning of the words, *I want mercy, not sacrifice*. For I didn't come to call the righteous, just the sinners.'

¹⁴ Then some of John's disciples came to [Jesus] and asked: 'Both we and the Pharisees fast regularly... so, why don't your disciples fast?'

¹⁵ And Jesus answered: 'The bridegroom's friends don't have any reason to be sad as long as the bridegroom is with them, do they? But the day is coming when the bridegroom will be taken away from them... and then they will fast.'

¹⁶ [And he went on to say]: 'No one sews a patch of un-shrunk cloth onto old clothes, because its [shrinking] strength will pull the clothes and make the tear worse. ¹⁷ And people don't put new wine into old wineskins; for if they do, the wineskins will burst, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. So people put new wine into new wineskins, and both things are preserved.'

¹⁸ Well, as he was telling them this, {Look!} a certain ruler came up and bowed low saying: 'By now, my daughter must already be dead... but please come and lay your hands on her to bring her back to life!'

¹⁹ So Jesus got up and followed the man, as did his disciples. ²⁰ But [on the way], {Look!} a woman who had suffered from a blood flow for some twelve years came up behind him and touched the

fringe on [Jesus'] clothes. ²¹ [She did this] because she kept saying to herself: 'If I can just touch his clothes, I'll be saved [from this illness].'²² And when Jesus turned around and saw her, he said: 'Take courage daughter; Your faith has saved you.' And from that hour on, the woman became well.

²³ Then, when he entered the house of the ruler and saw flute players and a wailing crowd, ²⁴ Jesus said: 'Leave! The little girl hasn't died, she's just sleeping!' And everyone started laughing and making fun of him. ²⁵ But after the crowd had been ushered outside, [Jesus] went in, took hold of her hand, and the little girl got up. ²⁶ Well thereafter, word of this spread throughout all that area.

²⁷ Then, just as Jesus was leaving that place, two blind men started following him, hoarsely shouting, 'Have pity on us, O Son of David!' ²⁸ And when he entered the house [where he was staying], these blind men followed him on in. So Jesus asked them, 'Do you really believe that I can do this thing?'

And they answered, 'Yes, Lord!'

²⁹ So he touched their eyes and said: 'As you believed, may it happen to you...'³⁰ and their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly: 'Don't tell anyone about this!' ³¹ But after going outside, they spread the news throughout all that area.

³² Then, just as they were leaving, {Look!} some more people brought him a man who couldn't speak, because he was demon possessed. ³³ And after the demon had been thrown out, the man was able to speak. Well, the crowds were amazed and said: 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in IsraEl.'³⁴ But the Pharisees were saying: 'He's casting out demons by the ruler of the demons!'

³⁵ Well thereafter, Jesus traveled around to all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, and curing every sort of disease and infirmity. ³⁶ For when he looked at the crowds, he felt sorry for them because they were scraped and knocked about like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples: 'There is in fact a huge harvest, but too few workers. ³⁸ So beg the Master of the harvest to send more workers into the field to do His harvesting.'

Chapter 10

¹ Then he called twelve of his disciples to him and he gave them the power to dominate and throw out unclean spirits and to cure every sort of disease and infirmity.

² These are the names of those twelve Apostles: First, there was Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew. And there was James the son of ZebediOu and his brother, John. ³ There was also Philip, BarTholomew ([NathaniEl]), Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (the son of Alpheus), ThadDeus ([Judas]), ⁴ Simon (the Cananaean), and Judas IsCariot (who [later] betrayed him).

⁵ Jesus sent these twelve out, giving them the orders: 'Don't go to the gentiles or into any of the Samaritan cities...⁶ just go to the lost sheep of the house of IsraEl. ⁷ [You may each] go your own way; but as you go, preach that the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near. ⁸ Cure sick people, raise the dead, make lepers clean, and throw out demons... you received it for free, so give it for free!⁹ Don't carry along any gold, silver, or copper in your waist sashes¹⁰ or a food pouch for the trip; nor should you carry two pairs of underwear, or extra sandals, or walking sticks, because the worker has earned his provisions.

¹¹ 'Whenever you enter a city or village, search for those who are deserving and stay with them until you must travel on. ¹² And when you enter a house, offer the household a greeting of peace. ¹³ Then if

the house is worthy, let peace come into it. But if it isn't worthy, let the peace return to you.

¹⁴ 'Wherever people don't take you in or listen to your words; on leaving that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth; On the Judgment Day, it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that city.

¹⁶ 'Look, I'm sending you out as sheep among wolves. So prove yourselves to be as cautious as snakes but as innocent as doves.

¹⁷ 'Now, be careful, because men will carry you before our religious courts and they'll whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You'll be taken before governors and kings for my sake as a witness to them all... and to the gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they bring you up [for trial], don't worry about what you should say or how you should say it, because what you must say will be given to you at that time... ²⁰ you won't be the one doing the talking; the Breath of your Father will be speaking through you.

²¹ 'Brothers will betray their own brothers for death,
As fathers will do to their children.
Children will rise against parents,
And they will put them to death...

²² Yes, all will hate you because of my name.
But those endure to the end will be saved.

²³ 'When they chase you down in one city,
[You should just] run to another.
For I tell you this as the truth;
You may not reach all of IsraEl's cities,
Before the Son of Man has arrived.

²⁴ 'A disciple isn't higher than his teacher,
Nor does a slave [lord] over his master.

²⁵ A disciple may become like his teacher,
And a slave may become like his master.
So if they call the master BeElZebub;
How much more [will they say this] of those in his home?

²⁶ So, you should [expect this] and not be afraid!

'There's nothing that's covered which will not be shown,
And there are no secrets that will not be known.

²⁷ What I say in darkness, you must say in the light;
And whatever is whispered into your ear,
You must preach from the housetops!

²⁸ 'Don't fear those who can kill the body,
But can't kill the person inside.
Rather, fear the One who can fully destroy,
The person and the body in the garbage.

²⁹ 'Aren't two sparrows worth very little?
Yet, none of them falls to the ground,
Without your Father knowing of it.

³⁰ Why, the hairs of your head are all numbered,
³¹ So you have no reason to fear;
For, more than many sparrows, is your value!

³² 'If you'll admit that you're with me to others,
I'll also admit that I am with you,
Before my Father in the heavens.
³³ But, if you deny that you know me to men;
I'll also deny knowing you,
Before my Father in the heavens.

³⁴ 'Don't think that I came to bring peace to the earth;
For I'm not bringing peace... just the sword!
³⁵ I came to divide men from their fathers,
As well as daughters from their mothers,
And brides from their mothers-in-law.

³⁶ 'A man's enemies will be those in his own home;
³⁷ But the one who cares less for me,
Than for his father or mother,
Isn't worthy of me.
And the one who cares less for me,
Than for his sons or his daughters,
Isn't worthy of me.

³⁸ 'Those who won't carry their own torture poles,
And follow behind me, aren't worthy of me.
³⁹ For those seeking their lives will lose them;
But they'll find them if they lose their lives for my sake.

⁴⁰ 'Those who invite you into [their homes],
Are also inviting me in.
And those who are inviting me in,
Are inviting the One by whom I was sent.

⁴¹ 'Those who welcome a Prophet,
Just because he's a Prophet,
Will receive a Prophet's reward.
And those who welcome the righteous,
Because [of their] righteous ways,
Will receive the reward of the righteous.

⁴² 'And whoever gives one of these least ones,
So much as a cold cup of water,
Because he is my disciple...
I swear that he will not lose his reward.'

Chapter 11

¹ Now, after Jesus had finished giving his twelve disciples these instructions, he went out to preach and teach in their cities. ² But because John [the Baptist], who was in jail, heard about the things that

the Anointed One was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, ³ 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'

⁴ And this is what Jesus told them: 'Go back and report to John about what you're seeing and hearing. ⁵ Tell him that the blind are seeing, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised, and the poor are being taught the good news. ⁶ So, whoever doesn't stumble over me will be blest.'

⁷ Then, after [John's disciples] had gone, Jesus asked the crowd this about John:

'What did you go to the desert to see;

Reeds being blown in the wind?

⁸ Yes, what did you go out to see;

A man who was dressed in soft clothes?

'Those wearing soft clothes live in mansions.

⁹ So really, why did you go...

Did [you go there] to [visit] a Prophet?

Yes, and one who's far more than a Prophet!

¹⁰ For, this is the one of whom it was written:

*{Look!} I'm sending My messenger before him,
To prepare the road that's ahead!*

¹¹ 'I tell you the truth;

Of those who've been born to women,

None have been raised that are greater than John.

But the least in the Kingdom of heaven (or, of God),

Will be greater than him.

¹² 'From the time of John [until now],

The Kingdom of the heavens has been taken by force,

And the forceful are those who have seized it.

¹³ Indeed, this was all prophesied,

In the Law and the Prophets.

¹⁴ And if you're willing to accept it;

He's the EliJah that was to come [first]...

¹⁵ Let those who have ears pay attention!

¹⁶ 'To whom can I liken this generation?

They're like children who sit in the markets,

From which they shout at their playmates:

¹⁷ *We played the flute, but you didn't dance,
And we wailed, but you didn't beat on yourselves!*

¹⁸ 'For, after John came along,

He ate no fine food and he drink no [wine],

So they said that he has a demon!

¹⁹ But because the Son of Man eats fine food and wine,

They call him an alcoholic and glutton...

A friend of tax collectors and sinners!

Yet, wisdom proves that these good deeds are righteous.'

²⁰ And then he started to scold the cities where he had done most of his powerful deeds, because they hadn't repented. He said:

'Woe to you O ChoraZin,
And woe to you, O BethSaida;
For if the powerful deeds that had happened in you,
Had happened in Tyre and Sidon,
They would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

²² So I say that the Day of the Judgment,
Will be easier for Tyre and Sidon than for you.

²³ 'And you, O CapharNaum;
Will you be lifted to heaven?
No, you will go down to the place of the dead!
For if the powerful deeds that happened in you,
Had also happened in Sodom,
It would still be here today.

²⁴ 'So I tell you that it will be better,
For the land of Sodom in the Judgment,
Than it will then be for you.'

²⁵ It was concerning this that Jesus prayed:
'I publicly praise you [my] Father,
Lord of the heavens and earth;
For You've hidden these things from the smart and the wise,
But You have revealed them to infants.

²⁶ Yes, [my] Father;
This is the way that You have approved.

²⁷ 'I've received it all from my Father.
For, no one knows the Son like his Father,
And no one knows the Father as well as His Son...
And those to whom he reveals Him.

²⁸ 'Come to me, O you who've worked hard
And you who must tote heavy loads;
For I will provide you refreshment!

²⁹ 'Learn from me and put on my yoke;
For I'm meek and I have a kind heart.
So your souls will find refreshment in me,

³⁰ Since my yoke is gentle and my load is light.'

Chapter 12

¹ Well, it so happened that Jesus was traveling through some grain fields on a Sabbath; and on the way, his disciples got hungry and started plucking some of the grain and eating it. ² But when the Pharisees saw this, they said: 'Look! Your disciples are doing what's illegal on the Sabbath!'

³ And [Jesus] replied: 'Haven't you read what David did when he and his men got hungry... ⁴ how they entered the House of God and ate the show bread, which wasn't legal for them to eat, since it was only for the Priests? ⁵ Or haven't you read in the Law that the Priests in the Temple can violate the Sabbath and still not be guilty? ⁶ So now I'm telling you that something greater than the Temple is here! ⁷ And if you understood what the words mean, *I want mercy, not sacrifice*, you probably wouldn't be condemning these innocent ones... ⁸ and [let me also point out that] the Son of Man is also the Lord of the Sabbath!'

⁹ Then, after leaving there, he entered their synagogue, ¹⁰ where {Look!} he found a man who had a withered hand. So [those Pharisees] then asked [Jesus]: 'Is healing on the Sabbath something that's legal?' (They said this so they could find something that they could accuse him of doing wrong).

¹¹ But he answered:

'Which of you who has a sheep...
And if it should fall in a ditch on the Sabbath,
Would not go there to lift it out?

¹² So since this man is worth more than a sheep,
It's legal to do good [for him] on the Sabbath.'

¹³ Then he said to the man: 'Now, stretch out your hand.' And when he stretched it out it became healthy, just like the other hand!

¹⁴ However, the Pharisees then went out and assembled a counsel to destroy him... ¹⁵ and Jesus knew this, so he left that place.

Yet, many followed him and he cured them all. ¹⁶ But he sternly warned them not to expose him, ¹⁷ so that the words spoken through the Prophet IsaiAh might be fulfilled:

¹⁸ 'Look, he's My chosen child...
My loved one who's approved by My Soul!
In him, I will now put My Breath,
And he'll speak of My judgments to the nations.

¹⁹ 'He will not argue or shout,
Nor will his voice be heard in main streets.

²⁰ Even bruised reeds, he won't crush,
Nor will he extinguish a smoking flax wick,
Until he makes justice triumphant,

²¹ And the nations put hope in his name.'

²² Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and couldn't speak, and he cured him so that he could both speak and see. ²³ So all the crowds were amazed and started asking, 'Isn't this the Son of David?'

²⁴ But on hearing [what the people were saying], the Pharisees said: 'He's throwing out demons by [the power of] BeElZebub, the ruler of the demons!' ²⁵ And because he knew what they were thinking, [Jesus] said to them:

'A kingdom that's divided will fall,
And a city or house that's divided won't stand.

²⁶ So if the Opposer casts out the Opposer,

He's just fighting himself and his kingdom won't stand.

²⁷ 'So, if I'm using BeElZebub's [power]
In order to cast out those demons;
What [power] do your sons use when they cast them out?

'So, this is the reason why you'll be condemned!
²⁸ For if I'm casting out demons by God's Holy Breath,
You've been overrun by God's Kingdom!

²⁹ 'You can't break in and steal from a strong man
Without first tying [him up]...
Only then, can you loot his house.

³⁰ 'Now, those that aren't with me are against me,
And those not on my side will be scattered.

³¹ 'So now, I'm telling you this:
Sins and blasphemies can all be forgiven...
But not when you blaspheme [God's Holy] Breath!
No, that won't be forgiven.

³² 'If someone speaks badly against the Son of Man,
This is something that can be forgiven.
But if someone speaks ill of [God's] Holy Breath,
He will not be forgiven...
No, not in this age, or in that to come.

³³ 'So declare the tree and its fruit to be good,
Or declare it [all] to be rotten;
For you recognize trees by the fruit that they bear.

³⁴ 'O you offspring of vipers;
How can you speak good, when you're wicked,
For your mouths speak the things that come from your hearts.

³⁵ A good man brings good from the things [in his heart],
While the evil bring bad from their treasures.

³⁶ 'I say that, when the Judgment Day comes,
You will answer for the things that you've said to mislead.

³⁷ 'You'll either be found to be righteous,
Or you'll be condemned for the things that you've said.'

³⁸ Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him: 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from you!'

³⁹ And [Jesus] replied:
'A wicked and adulterous generation
[Is always] looking for signs.
However, they will not receive one
Other than the sign of Jonah the Prophet.

⁴⁰ 'For as Jonah was in the sea creature's belly
For three days and three nights,
The Son of Man will be in the heart of the ground
For three days and three nights.

⁴¹ 'Then the men of Nineveh will stand in the Judgment
Along with this generation,
And they will speak out and condemn it,
For they repented at what Jonah preached.
But look... something more than Jonah is here!

⁴² 'And in the Judgment, the Queen of the South,
Will face and condemn this generation;
For she came from the ends of the earth,
To listen to Solomon's wisdom.
But look... something more than Solomon is here!

⁴³ 'When an unclean spirit comes out of a man,
It travels through [many] dry places,
Searching for a [good] place to rest.
But if it doesn't find one, it will say:

⁴⁴ *I'll return to the house that I left.*

'And then, upon his return;
If he finds [the house] empty, furnished, and swept,
⁴⁵ He will just move back in,
Bringing along seven more spirits,
Which are even more wicked than him.

'And after [they] get inside [of the man],
The others will dwell in him also.
So things will be worse for him than before...
And that's how this generation will be.'

⁴⁶ Well, while he was still talking to the crowds, {Look!} his mother and brothers arrived and they were standing outside waiting to speak to him. ⁴⁷ So someone said to [Jesus]: 'Look, your mother and brothers are standing outside and they want to talk to you.'

⁴⁸ But he asked that person: 'Just who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' ⁴⁹ Then he held out his hand toward his disciples and said: 'Look... my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For these who are doing the Will of my Father in heaven are my brothers, sisters, and mother.'

Chapter 13

¹ Then there was the day when Jesus came out of the house and was sitting by the sea, ² as huge crowds gathered around him. So he stepped into a boat and sat down, while the crowd stood on the beach. ³ Then he started speaking to them in illustrations, saying:

'{Look!} A farmer went out to do planting. ⁴ And as he was doing his planting, some [seeds] fell by the side of the road, where birds came along and ate them. ⁵ Others fell among rocks, where there

wasn't much soil, and they quickly sprouted. ⁶ But when the sun came up, they were scorched and they withered, because they [had no place to] grow roots. ⁷ Still others fell among briars, which [quickly] grew and choked them all out. ⁸ But the rest fell on the good soil and started producing [much] fruit... this one a hundred, that one sixty, and the other thirty. ⁹ Let those who have ears, pay attention!

¹⁰ Well later, the disciples thereafter came and asked him, 'Why are you speaking to the crowd in illustrations?'

¹¹ And he replied: 'You've been allowed to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God), but they haven't. ¹² For whoever has will be given more, and then he will have more than enough. But as for those who don't have; even what they own will be taken away. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in illustrations; because when they look they don't see, and when they listen they don't hear or understand the meaning.

¹⁴ 'So the prophecy of IsaiAh is being fulfilled in them that says:
*By listening, you will hear, but not understand,
And by looking, you will look, but not see.*

¹⁵ 'The hearts of these people have grown thick, so they listen heavily with their ears, and their eyes are all closed, so they can't see with their eyes, hear with their ears, or understand with their hearts, then turn back so I can heal them.

¹⁶ 'But your eyes are blest because they can see, as are your ears, because they can hear.

¹⁷ 'I tell you the truth; many of the Prophets and righteous men wished to see the things that you're seeing, but they didn't see them; and [they wanted] to hear the things that you're hearing, but they didn't hear them.

¹⁸ 'So now, listen to the [meaning of the] illustration of the farmer who planted: ¹⁹ Whenever someone hears about the Kingdom but doesn't understand it, the wicked one comes and snatches away what has been planted in his heart. This one was planted alongside the road.

²⁰ 'As for the one that was planted among the rocks; he hears the word and quickly accepts it with joy.

²¹ But because he has no roots, he's just here for a short time... when hard times or persecution come along because of the Word, he's immediately trapped.

²² 'As for the one planted among the thistles; this one hears the word, but the concerns of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke out the Word, so he doesn't produce any fruit.

²³ 'But as for the one planted on good soil; he hears the Word, understands it, and actually puts out fruit... this one a hundred, that one sixty, and the other thirty.'

²⁴ He gave them another illustration, saying: 'The Kingdom of the heavens is like a man who had good seeds planted in his field. ²⁵ But while his men were all sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed [seeds] over the wheat, and then left. ²⁶ So when the blades sprouted with fruit, the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ 'Then the master's slaves came and asked, *Lord, weren't those good seeds [that you gave us] to plant in your field? So, why are there so many weeds?*

²⁸ 'And he replied: *It was an enemy of mine who did this.*

'So they asked: *Then, do you want us to go and pull up [the weeds]?*

²⁹ 'And he replied: *No, for as you're pulling out the weeds, you might uproot the wheat! ³⁰ Just let them both grow together until it's time for the harvest. Then I'll tell the reapers to collect the weeds first and put them into bundles and burn them; and thereafter, they can gather the wheat into my storehouse.'*

³¹ He told them another illustration, saying: 'The Kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard seed that a man planted in his field. ³² For a fact, it's the smallest of seeds; but when it grows, it can become the largest of vegetables and can actually grow [as large as] a tree, where the birds of the skies can roost in its branches.'

³³ He told them another illustration: 'The Kingdom of the heavens is like fermentation that a woman hid in three scoops of flour, until it was filled with [yeast].'

³⁴ Jesus said all these things to the crowds in illustrations. And it's a fact that if he wasn't using illustrations, he wasn't talking to them. ³⁵ This was done in order to fulfill what was spoken through the Prophet, who said:

'With illustrations, I'll open my mouth,
And I'll talk about things that were hidden,
Since the founding [of this system of things].'

³⁶ Then, after dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. And there his disciples came to him and said: 'Explain the illustration of the weeds in the field to us.'

³⁷ So [Jesus] said: 'The one who planted the good seeds is the Son of Man, ³⁸ and the field is this system of things. The good seeds are the sons of the Kingdom, the weeds are the sons of the wicked one, ³⁹ and the enemy who planted them is the Slanderer. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are [God's] messengers. ⁴⁰ Then, just as the weeds are collected and burned in a fire; that's how it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his messengers to collect all the snares and all the lawless people out of his Kingdom, ⁴² and they will be thrown into a flaming furnace, where they will cry and grind [their] teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine as brightly as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father... let those who have ears pay attention to this! ⁴⁴ For the Kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure that a man found and hid in a field; and to [get the treasure], he went and sold everything he had to buy that field. ⁴⁵ And the Kingdom of the heavens is like a traveling merchant who was searching for good pearls; ⁴⁶ and when he found one very valuable pearl, he went away and quickly sold everything that he had to buy it.'

⁴⁷ 'Again, the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God) is like a net that is dropped into the sea to collect every sort [of sea creature]; ⁴⁸ then when it's full, they haul it onto the beach and sit down to collect the good ones into baskets and to throw the bad ones away. ⁴⁹ For that's how it will be at the end of the age... [God's] messengers will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous, ⁵⁰ and they will throw [the wicked] into a flaming furnace, where they'll cry and grind their teeth.'

⁵¹ [Then after that, he asked], 'Did you understand all these things?'

And they replied, 'Yes.'

⁵² Then he said: 'So, every instructor (when serving as a disciple of the Kingdom of the Heavens) is like a man, a master of his house, who brings both old and new things out of his treasures.'

⁵³ Well, after Jesus had finished explaining these illustrations, he left that area. ⁵⁴ And going to the place where he was raised, he started teaching in their synagogue. However, the people were dumbfounded and asked, 'Where did this man get such wisdom and powers? ⁵⁵ Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother called Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And his sisters... aren't they all with us? Where did he get all these things?'

⁵⁷ So they stumbled over him. But Jesus said:

'A Prophet is never dishonored,
Except in the place he was raised,
And within his own home.'

⁵⁸ So he didn't do many powerful deeds there, because of their lack of faith.

Chapter 14

¹ It was about this time that the district ruler, Herod, heard about Jesus. ² And he said to his boys: 'This is John the Baptist. He was raised from the dead, and that's why he can do such powerful things!' ³ For Herod had arrested John and thrown him in prison because of his brother's (Philip's) wife. ⁴ This is because John had kept telling him: 'It's against the Law for you to have her.' ⁵ But although [Herod] wanted to kill [John], he was afraid of the people, because they believed him to be a Prophet.

⁶ It was during Herod's birthday party that Herodias' daughter [had come out and] danced before them, and this pleased Herod so much ⁷ that he promised with an oath to give her anything that she might ask for. ⁸ So (with her mother's coaching) she said: 'Give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter!'

⁹ Well, the king was really saddened by this; but because he had given his word (and because of those who were eating at the table with him), [Herod] gave the command ¹⁰ to have John beheaded in prison.

¹¹ Then, when his head was brought in on a platter, it was given to the young girl, who took it to her mother.

¹² Well afterward, [John's] disciples went to get his body and they buried him, then they went and reported all of this to Jesus. ¹³ And when Jesus heard about it, he took a boat to a quiet place where he could be alone. However, when the crowds heard [where he was headed], they followed him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ So when he got to the place where he was going, he saw a huge crowd of people. And because he felt sorry for them, he cured their sick.

¹⁵ Then later that evening, [Jesus'] disciples came to him and said: 'This is a remote place and it's really late. We should send the crowds away so they can go into the villages and buy something to eat!'

¹⁶ But Jesus replied: 'They don't have to go; you give them something to eat!'

¹⁷ However, [the disciples] answered: 'All we have is five loaves [of bread] and two fish!'

¹⁸ And he said: 'Bring them to me.'

¹⁹ Then he told the crowd to lie down on the grass, and he took the five loaves and two fish, and after looking up into the sky, he spoke a blessing. So he broke the bread and handed it to the disciples, and

the disciples distributed in among the crowd... ²⁰ and everyone ate until they were full. But when they picked up the scraps, they found that there were twelve baskets full of leftovers. ²¹ Yet, almost five thousand men ate... that is, in addition to the women and children.

²² Well thereafter, [Jesus] dismissed the crowd and he told his disciples to take the boat on to the other side [of the sea] ahead of him. ²³ Then, after most of the people had left, he went up the mountain to a private spot to pray; and although it was getting dark, he stayed there all by himself.

²⁴ Meanwhile, the boat [that the Apostles were rowing] had gotten a long way from land. However, it had been fighting the waves, because [a strong] wind was blowing against it. ²⁵ And sometime before sunrise, [Jesus] came to them, walking across the sea. ²⁶ Well, when they saw him walking on the sea, the disciples were terrified and they shouted, 'It's a phantom!' And they started screaming out of fear.

²⁷ But right away, Jesus told them: 'Be brave... don't be afraid, it's me!'

²⁸ Then Peter said: 'Lord; If it's you, command me to come out to you on top of the water!'

²⁹ So [Jesus] said, 'Then come on!'

Well, Peter got out of the boat and he started walking across the water toward Jesus. ³⁰ But he got distracted by the windstorm and he got frightened... and then he started to sink and he shouted, 'Lord, please save me!' ³¹ So Jesus immediately reached out his hand and grabbed him, and he said: 'You with so little faith; Why did you start to doubt?' ³² And after they got into the boat, the windstorm subsided. ³³ Then the others in the boat bowed low to him, saying: 'You truly are the Son of The God!'

³⁴ Well, when they finished the crossing, they landed in GenNesaret. ³⁵ And there the people recognized him and sent word throughout the surrounding countryside, so people started bringing him all those who weren't doing well... ³⁶ they were begging to just touch the fringes on his clothes. And all those who touched them were made completely well.

Chapter 15

¹ Sometime later, there were some Pharisees and scribes who came to Jesus from JeruSalem, and they asked him: ² 'Why do your disciples overstep the traditions of the elders? For example, they don't wash their hands before they eat bread!'

³ But [Jesus] asked: 'Well, why do you overstep the Commands of God with your traditions? ⁴ For God told you to honor your father and mother, and to have those who speak badly to their fathers or mothers put to death! ⁵ Yet you say: *You may tell your father and mother that anything you might give them is already [dedicated] as a gift [to God]*. ⁶ So [what you're really telling people] is that they shouldn't honor their parents at all. And when you do this, you're voiding the Word of God with your traditions!

⁷ 'You hypocrites! How well IsaiAh prophesied about you, when he said:

⁸ *Though they offer Me praise with their lips,
They're far away from Me in their hearts!*

⁹ *So it's in vain that they come to bow before Me,
Since they're teaching the ideas and instructions of men.'*

¹⁰ Then he called the crowds closer and said to them: 'Listen and understand! ¹¹ It isn't what goes into his mouth that dirties a man; it's the things that come out of his mouth that pollute him!'

¹² Well, the disciples then came up and said: 'Don't you know that the Pharisees were stumbled by what you said?'

¹³ But he replied: 'Anything that my heavenly Father didn't plant will be uprooted. ¹⁴ So let them go, for they're blind guides! And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.'

¹⁵ Then Peter said: 'Well, explain the meaning of that illustration to us.'

¹⁶ And [Jesus] asked: 'Don't you get the point? ¹⁷ Don't you realize that whatever you put in your mouth just goes into your belly and then into the sewer? ¹⁸ But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart... these are the things that dirty a man. ¹⁹ For out of the heart comes wicked thinking, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, thievery, false testimonies, and blasphemy. ²⁰ These are the things that pollute a man! But eating with unwashed hands doesn't make him dirty.'

²¹ Well, on leaving that place, Jesus traveled up into areas of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And there, Look!} a Phoenician woman who lived there came to him and started shouting: 'Have mercy on me O Lord, son of David! For my daughter is badly demon possessed.' ²³ However, [Jesus] just ignored her.

Then his disciples started begging him to [do something for her], because (as they said), 'She keeps following us and shouting at us!'

²⁴ But he told them: 'I wasn't sent to [help] anyone other than just the lost sheep of the house of IsraEl.'

²⁵ However, the woman then came up to [Jesus]. She bowed low and said: 'Lord, please help me!'

²⁶ And he said to her: 'It isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the puppies.'

²⁷ But she replied: 'Yes Lord, but aren't puppies allowed to eat the crumbs that fall from the tables of their masters?'

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her: 'O woman; you have a lot of faith. So, may it be as you wish.' And her daughter was healed from that hour on.

²⁹ Well, going cross-country from there, Jesus traveled close to the Sea of GaliLee. There he climbed a mountain and sat down, ³⁰ and large crowds came to him, bringing along people who were lame, injured, blind, and those who were unable to speak (along with many others). They almost threw them at his feet, and he cured them all. ³¹ So the crowds were amazed when they saw the speechless talking, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they praised the God of IsraEl.

³² Then later, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 'I feel sorry for the crowds, because they've stayed with me for three days and they don't have anything to eat. I certainly don't want to send them away hungry, because they might give out on the road!'

³³ However, the disciples asked: 'Where will we get enough bread to satisfy this large a crowd in such a remote location?'

³⁴ But Jesus asked: 'How many loaves do you have?'

And they replied: 'Seven, plus a few little fish.'

³⁵ So he told the crowd to lie down on the ground, ³⁶ then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after offering thanks, broke them, gave them to the disciples, and the disciples in turn [distributed them] among the crowd... ³⁷ and everyone ate until they were satisfied. And [afterward], they picked up seven full provision baskets of scraps, ³⁸ though there were some four thousand men, plus women and children, who ate!

³⁹ Finally, after dismissing the crowd, he got into the boat and they traveled to the area of Magadan.

Chapter 16

¹ This is where the Pharisees and Sadducees (actually, *Sad dou kai um*) came to [Jesus] and tried to tempt him by asking for a sign from heaven. ² --- ³ --- But he said:

⁴ 'A wicked and adulterous generation,
Is always looking for signs, However, no sign will be given [to them],
Other than the sign of Jonah [the Prophet].'
Then he just walked away and left them.

⁵ Well, after he and his disciples got to the other side [of the sea], they [realized that they] had forgotten to bring along any bread. ⁶ And when Jesus told them, 'Keep your eyes open and watch out for the fermentation of the Pharisees and Sadducees,' ⁷ the disciples started saying to each other, 'Why [did he say this]? We didn't bring any bread along!'

⁸ Well, because Jesus knew [what they were thinking], he said: 'You with so little faith; Why are you talking about not having any bread?' ⁹ Don't you get the point... don't you remember how many baskets you picked up after [we fed] five thousand [with just] five loaves; ¹⁰ or how many provision baskets you picked up after we fed four thousand with just seven loaves? ¹¹ Why don't you understand that I'm not talking about bread... [I'm telling you to] watch out for the fermentation of the Pharisees and Sadducees!'

¹² Well with that, they [finally] realized that he wasn't telling them to watch out for the fermentation in the bread, but for the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

¹³ Then he went to Caesarea Philippi, and there Jesus asked his disciples: 'Who are people saying the Son of Man is?'

¹⁴ Well, they replied: 'Some say you're John the Baptist, others EliJah, and still others say you are JeremiAh or one of the Prophets.'

¹⁵ And he asked: 'But, who do you say that I am?'

¹⁶ And Simon Peter answered: 'You're the Anointed One; the Son of the Living God.'

¹⁷ Then Jesus said to him: 'You are blest, Simon, son of Jonah, because this wasn't shown to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in the heavens.

¹⁸ 'I also tell you this: As you are Rock (Peter), I will build my congregation on this bedrock so that the gates of the place of the dead won't overpower it. ¹⁹ And I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of the heavens, so that whatever you bind on earth will be bound in the heavens, and whatever you set free on the earth will be set free in the heavens.'

²⁰ Well after that, he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he is the Anointed One. ²¹ And that's when Jesus (the Anointed One) started showing his disciples that he would have to go to JeruSalem and suffer many things at [the hands of] the elders, chief priests, and scribes... and though he would be killed, [he would thereafter be] raised on the third day.

²² However, Peter took him aside and started scolding him, saying, 'Be kind to yourself Lord; this isn't going to happen to you!'

²³ But [Jesus] turned to Peter and said: 'Get behind me opposer! You're a trap to me, because you aren't thinking God's thoughts, but those of men.'

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples: 'If anyone wants to follow me, he'll have to deny his own needs, then pick up his impaling pole and walk behind me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

²⁶ '[Yet, you might ask], *What good does it do for a man to gain the whole world if he loses his life? And, What will a man give [to save] his life?* ²⁷ Well, the Son of Man is about to come into the glory of his Father and of His messengers, and then he will repay each one for the things that he did. ²⁸ Yet, I tell you the truth; some of you who are standing here won't taste death at all until you see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.'

Chapter 17

¹ Then just six days later, Jesus took along Peter, James, and John (the brother of James), and brought them to a private spot on a high mountain, ² where he changed form in front of them... his face became as bright as the sun and his clothes were as white as light... ³ and {Look!} they saw Moses and EliJah talking to [Jesus].

⁴ So Peter said to Jesus: 'Lord, it's good for us to be here... and if you want, I'll put up three tents; one for you, one for Moses, and one for EliJah.'

⁵ But just as he said this, {Look!} a bright cloud covered them and {Look!} a voice came out of the cloud that said: 'This is my loved Son of whom I approve... listen to him!'

⁶ Well, at hearing this, the disciples were frightened and they fell to their faces. ⁷ But Jesus came over to them and touched them, saying, 'Get up; don't be afraid!' ⁸ And when they looked up, they saw just Jesus all alone.

⁹ Then, as they were walking down the mountain, Jesus gave them a warning, saying: 'Don't tell anyone what you saw here until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'

¹⁰ Well sometime later, these disciples asked him: 'Why do the scribes say that EliJah must come first?'

¹¹ And he told them: 'EliJah does indeed come and he restores everything. ¹² However, I tell you that EliJah has already come and they didn't recognize him, so they did whatever they wanted to him... and this is the same way that the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands!'

¹³ Well, it was then that the disciples finally realized that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

¹⁴ Then, as they were approaching a crowd, a man came up to him, kneeled down, and said: ¹⁵ 'Lord, please show mercy on my son! He has [epilepsy] and he often falls into the fire or into the water. ¹⁶ And although I brought him to your disciples, they haven't been able to cure him!'

¹⁷ But Jesus said: 'O faithless and twisted generation, how much longer must I be with you... how much longer will I have to put up with you? Bring him here to me!' ¹⁸ So Jesus scolded the demon and it came out, and the boy was cured from that hour on.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus while he was alone and asked, 'Why couldn't we cast it out?'

²⁰ And he replied: 'Because of your lack of faith! I tell you the truth; If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, *Move from here to there*, and it would go... nothing would be impossible for you!'

²¹ _____

²² Then, while they were all gathered in GaliLee, Jesus said to them: 'The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men ²³ who will kill him... but he will be raised on the third day.' And this made them all very sad.

²⁴ Well, after they arrived in CapharNaum, the men who collected the double-silver [tax] came to Peter and asked, 'Doesn't your teacher pay the double-silver [tax]?'

²⁵ And he replied, 'Yes he does.'

Then when he went into the house, Jesus was already ahead of him and asked, 'What do you think, Simon; From whom do the kings of the earth get their duties and head taxes... from their sons, or from strangers?'

²⁶ And [Peter] answered, 'From strangers.'

Then Jesus said: 'So the sons are really tax-free, aren't they! ²⁷ But, because we don't want to stumble them, go over to the sea and cast out a hook, then take the first fish that you catch, and when you open its mouth you'll find a coin. Take [the coin] and give it to them for both you and me.'

Chapter 18

¹ It was less than an hour later that the disciples came up to Jesus and asked, 'Which [of us] will be the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God)?'

² So [Jesus] called a little boy over and stood him in their midst, ³ and he said: 'I tell you the truth; Unless you change your ways and become like this little boy, you won't get into the Kingdom of the heavens! ⁴ But the one who humbles himself like this little boy will be the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens. ⁵ And whoever welcomes such a little boy in my name, welcomes me. ⁶ But if anyone sets a snare before one of these little ones that believes in me; it would be better for him to have the type of millstone that's turned by a burro hung around his neck and then to be dropped into the open sea.

⁷ 'Woe to this system of things, because of its snares! Of course, the snares will be there... but woe to the man who sets them! ⁸ If your hand or your foot is a snare, cut it off and throw it away. For it's better to enter life maimed or lame than to be thrown into the age-long fire with two hands or two

feet. ⁹ Also, if your eye is a snare, rip it out and throw it away. For it's better to enter life with one eye than to be thrown with two eyes into the fires of the garbage dump.

¹⁰ 'This is why you should never disregard any of these little ones! For I tell you: Their messengers in the heavens gaze upon the face of my Father in the heavens!' ¹¹ ——

¹² 'What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays, won't he leave the ninety-nine --- and search for the one that strayed? ¹³ Then, if he happens to find it, I tell you; he'll be happier over that one than over the ninety-nine that didn't stray!

¹⁴ '[The same is true of] my Father in the heavens. He doesn't want even one of these little ones to perish. ¹⁵ Therefore, if your brother should fail in some way, take him aside and discuss it between you and him alone; then if he listens to you, you'll have won over your brother. ¹⁶ But if he doesn't listen, bring along one or two others so that whatever is said can be proven by the mouths of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ Then if he refuses to listen to them, you should speak to the congregation. And if he refuses to listen to even the congregation, let him become as a man of the nations or a tax collector to you.

¹⁸ 'I tell you the truth; everything that you bind on the earth will be bound in the heavens, and everything that you set free on the earth will be set free in the heavens.

¹⁹ 'Again I truthfully say; If two of you agree to anything on this earth that you need to request, it will happen because of my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I will be there among them.'

²¹ Then Peter came up to him and asked: 'Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother when he sins against me... up to seven times?'

²² But Jesus replied: 'I tell you; not up to seven times, but up to seventy-seven times! ²³ To illustrate; The Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God) is like a man, a king, who wanted to settle some accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ So he started by bringing in a man who owed him ten thousand valuable silver coins. ²⁵ But because he couldn't repay it, the master ordered that he, his wife, his children, and all the things that he owned were to be sold to make the payment.

²⁶ 'However, the slave fell down with his face to the ground before [the master] and begged: *Be patient with me and I'll pay back everything that I owe you!* '

²⁷ 'Well he was moved to pity at this, so the master forgave him and freed him from his entire debt. ²⁸ But right after that, the slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him just a hundred small coins, and he grabbed him and started choking him, saying: *You must pay back everything that you owe me!*

²⁹ 'But the fellow slave fell down and started begging him, saying, *Be patient with me and I'll pay you back.* ³⁰ However, [the first slave] wasn't willing; so he had the man thrown in jail until he could pay everything that he was owed.

³¹ 'Well, when all the other slaves saw this, they became very upset, so they went and told their master what had happened. ³² Then the master summoned him and said: *Wicked slave; I canceled all that debt for you, because you begged me.* ³³ So, why didn't you see the need to show the same type of mercy for your fellow slave that I had shown to you? ³⁴ And the master became so furious that he had him taken

off to jail until he could repay all that he owed.

³⁵ 'Now, this is how my heavenly Father will deal with you if you don't forgive your brothers from your hearts.'

Chapter 19

¹ Well, after Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and traveled to the Judean border across the Jordan River, ² and huge crowds followed along, so he cured them there. ³ However, the Pharisees came to test him, asking: 'Is it legal for a man to divorce his woman on just any sort of grounds?'

⁴ And [Jesus] replied: 'Didn't you read that the One who created them long ago made them male and female, ⁵ and said, *This is why a man will leave his father and mother and join to his woman making the two one flesh?* ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, no man should split apart what The God has yoked together!

⁷ And they said, 'Then, why did Moses say that we could give her a divorce certificate and dismiss her?'

⁸ And he replied: 'Moses, realizing how hardhearted you are, allowed that you would release your women... but it hasn't always been that way! ⁹ I tell you that whoever divorces his woman except on the grounds of sexual immorality and marries another, is an adulterer! And whoever marries a released woman is an adulterer.'

¹⁰ At this, his disciples said to him: 'If this is true of a man and his woman, then it's best not to marry at all!'

¹¹ And he replied: 'This is something that not every man can do... just those who have the gift. ¹² Because, there are eunuchs who were born that way, eunuchs who were made that way by men, and those who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of the heavens. Let those who can make room for it, make room for it!'

¹³ Well after that, [people] started bringing their young children to him so he could lay his hands on them and offer a prayer, but the disciples scolded them. ¹⁴ And Jesus told them: 'Leave the children alone and don't stop them from coming to me, because the Kingdom of the Heavens is for people like that!' ¹⁵ And after he laid his hands on them, he traveled on.

¹⁶ Later, {Look!} someone came up to him and asked: 'Teacher, what sort of good things must I do to get age-long life?'

¹⁷ And [Jesus] replied: 'Why do you ask me about doing what is good? There's just One who is truly good. But if you want to enter into the life, just follow the Commandments!'

¹⁸ Then [the man] asked, 'Which ones?'

And Jesus replied: 'You must not murder; you must not commit adultery; you must not steal; you must not testify falsely; ¹⁹ honor [your] father and mother; and you must love your neighbor as [you love] yourself.'

²⁰ Then the young man said to him: 'Well, I've kept all these things... so what else am I lacking?'

²¹ And Jesus said to him: 'If you want to be perfect, then go and sell all your belongings and give to the poor, then come follow me... for you'll have treasures in the heavens.'

²² But after the young man heard this, he left very sad, because he owned many things.

²³ Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you the truth; It will be difficult for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of the heavens. ²⁴ Let me put it this way: It's easier [to thread] a rope through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of God.'

²⁵ Well, the disciples were very surprised at hearing this, and they asked: 'Then, who can really be saved?'

²⁶ And looking them straight in their faces, Jesus said: 'With men, this is an impossibility. However, all things are possible with God.'

²⁷ But Peter said to him: 'Look, we've left everything and followed you. So, what will we really get?'

²⁸ And Jesus replied: 'I tell you the truth; In the rebirth – when the Son of Man sits down on his glorious throne – you who have followed me will sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ Also, anyone who has left a house, or his brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or land for the sake of my name, will receive many times more and he will inherit age-long life. ³⁰ But many who are the first will be the last, and the last will be the first.'

Chapter 20

¹ 'The Kingdom of the heavens is like a man, the master of his house, who went out very early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² And when he agreed with the workers on one silver coin per day, he sent them out to work in his field.

³ 'But later he went out again (about the third hour) and saw others standing around unemployed in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said, *You go into the vineyard also, and I'll pay you whatever is fair.* ⁵ So off they went.

'Then he went out again about the sixth and the ninth hours and he did the same thing. ⁶ And finally (about the eleventh hour), he went out and found more workers standing around, and he asked them, *Why have you been standing here all day long unemployed?*

⁷ 'And they answered, *Because nobody has hired us.*

'So he said to them, *You go into the vineyard also.*

⁸ 'Then that evening, the master of the vineyard said to his man in charge: *Call all the workers and pay them their wages... proceed from the last to the first.*

⁹ 'Well, [after] the eleventh hour, the men came in and they were each [paid] a silver coin. ¹⁰ However, when it came time [to pay] the first, these figured that they would be getting more... but they were also paid a [single] silver coin. ¹¹ And as they were receiving it, they started complaining about the master, saying, ¹² *Though these last ones just put in one hour's work, you paid them the same as those of us who worked all day long in the burning heat!*

¹³ 'But in reply to one of them, [the master] said: *Man, I haven't done you any wrong! Didn't we agree on one silver coin?* ¹⁴ *So, take what is yours and go. I paid the last ones the same as you, because I wanted to!* ¹⁵ *And isn't it legal for me to do whatever I wish with my own things, or are you looking at things in a wicked way because I am good?*

¹⁶ 'So, the last will be the first and the first will be the last.'

¹⁷ Then, as they were starting down the road to JeruSalem, Jesus took the twelve disciples off privately and explained this to them, saying: ¹⁸ 'Look! We're heading up to JeruSalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death. ¹⁹ Then they'll hand him over to the gentiles, who will make fun of him, whip him, and impale him... but on the third day he'll be raised!'

²⁰ Well afterward, the mother of the sons of ZebediOu came to him with her sons, and she bowed low as if to request something. ²¹ So he asked her, 'What do you want?'

And she said: 'Give the word that my two sons will sit, one at your right hand and one on your left, in your Kingdom.'

²² But Jesus replied: 'You don't know what you're asking... can they drink from the cup that I'm about to drink?'

And [her sons] answered: 'We can!'

²³ So he said to them: 'You will indeed drink from my cup! But, sitting on my right and left isn't mine to give... it belongs to those for whom my Father has prepared it.'

²⁴ Well, when the ten other [disciples] heard what they had done, they became very angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them all to him and said: 'You know how the rulers of the nations like to be masters over [the people] and subdue them... ²⁶ but you shouldn't be like that! Rather, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. ²⁸ For this is how the Son of Man came... not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

²⁹ Well, as they were leaving JeriCho, there was a large crowd following him. ³⁰ And {Look!} when two blind men that were sitting alongside the road heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted: 'Lord... have mercy on us, Son of David!' ³¹ Well, the crowd told them to be quiet. But then they shouted even louder: 'Lord... have mercy on us, Son of David!' ³² So Jesus stopped and called them over, and asked: 'What do you want me to do for you?'

³³ And they replied: 'Lord; We want you to open our eyes!'

³⁴ Then moved with pity, Jesus touched their eyes, and immediately they were able to see... and they started following him.

Chapter 21

¹ Well, when they got close to JeruSalem and arrived at BethPhage (on the Mount of Olives), Jesus sent two disciples ahead, ² telling them: 'Go into the village that's across from us, and you'll immediately find a burro that's tied next to its colt. Untie them and bring them here to me. ³ If anyone says anything, just tell him that the Lord needs them, and he'll send them with you.'

⁴ Now, the reason why this happened is so that the thing spoken through the Prophet might be fulfilled:

⁵ 'Say this to the daughter of Zion:

Look! Your King is coming to you!

[He's] gentle and comes riding the colt of a burro...

The foal of a creature that carries heavy loads.'

⁶ So the disciples went and did just as Jesus told them. ⁷ They brought the burro and its colt to him, then they put their robes [over their backs] for him to sit on. ⁸ Then many in the crowd spread their robes out on the road ahead of him, while others cut branches from trees and spread them out on the road. ⁹ Thereafter, part of the crowd walked ahead of him, while the rest followed behind him shouting: '[God] save the Son of David! Praise the one who comes in the Name of Jehovah... save, we pray, from the heights!'

¹⁰ Well, as he was entering JeruSalem, this caused quite a stir throughout the city, [for people were asking], 'Who is this?' ¹¹ And the crowd [that was with Jesus] replied: 'This is Jesus, the Prophet from Nazareth of GaliLee!'

¹² Then Jesus went to the Temple and threw out all those who were buying and selling there. He also overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the benches of those who were selling doves, ¹³ saying to them, 'It's written: *My house will be called a house of prayer...* but you're turning it into a den of thieves!'

¹⁴ And after that, people who were blind and lame started coming to him in the Temple, and he cured them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things he was doing and heard all the children shouting in the Temple, '[God] save the Son of David,' they became very upset. ¹⁶ So they said to him, 'Don't you hear what they're shouting?'

And Jesus replied, 'Yes! Haven't you ever read this:

From the mouths of infants and babies,

You have ordered up praises.'

¹⁷ And then he left them... he walked out of the city and went to BethAny, where he spent the night.

¹⁸ Then on the way back to the city early the next morning, because he felt hungry, ¹⁹ he walked over to a fig tree that was growing alongside the road. However, he found nothing on it but leaves. So he said: 'Let no fruit come from you anymore through the rest of the age.' And the fig tree withered instantly.

²⁰ Well, when the disciples saw this, they wondered, 'How can a fig tree wither instantly?' ²¹ And Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth; If you have faith (and you must not doubt), not only will you do what I did to the fig tree, but you could say to this mountain, *Lift up and be thrown into the sea*, and it will happen... ²² you will receive anything you ask for in prayer if you have faith.'

²³ Well, after he had entered the Temple and started teaching, the chief priests and the peoples' elders came up to him and asked, 'Who authorized you to do these things... who said you could do this?'

²⁴ In reply, Jesus said: 'Let me ask you something, and if you answer me, I'll tell you where I got the authority to do these things. ²⁵ What was the source of John's baptizing... did it come from heaven or

from men?'

So they started reasoning among themselves and saying to each other: 'If we say *from heaven*, he'll ask us, *Then why didn't you believe him?*'²⁶ But if we say *from men*, we'll have to deal with the crowd, because they think John was a Prophet.'²⁷ So they told Jesus: 'We don't know.'

And he told them: 'Then I'm not going to tell you where I got the authority to do the things that I'm doing.'

²⁸ 'What do you think? There was once a man who had two children. He went to the first one and said, *Son, I want you to work in the vineyard today.*'²⁹ This one answered, *Yes sir...* but he didn't [do it].³⁰ Then [the man] went to the second son and said the same thing. And he replied, *I don't want to...* but he later felt sorry and he did go [to work in the vineyard].³¹ So, which of the two did what their father wanted?'

And they replied, 'The second one.'

Then Jesus said to them: 'I tell you the truth; tax collectors and whores are going ahead of you into the Kingdom of God,³² because John came to you [preaching] the ways of righteousness, but you didn't believe him. However, tax collectors and whores believed him... and although you saw this, you didn't feel sorry later and put faith in what he was saying.'

³³ 'Listen to another illustration: There was a man – the master of his house – who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, built a tower [to protect it], and hired [people to] cultivate it before he traveled abroad.³⁴ Then when the [harvest] season arrived, he sent his servants to the farmers to collect the fruit.³⁵ However, the farmers took his slaves and beat the first one up, they threw stones at the second, and they killed the third one.³⁶ So he sent other slaves to them (more than the first)... but they did the same things to these.'

³⁷ 'Finally, he sent his son to them, saying, *They will respect my son.*'³⁸ But when they saw the son, the farmers said, *This is the heir! Let's kill him and get his inheritance!*'³⁹ So they grabbed him and threw him out of the vineyard, then they killed him.'

⁴⁰ 'Now, when the owner of the vineyard returns, what do you think he'll do to those farmers?'

⁴¹ And they replied: 'Because they're so bad, he'll destroy them in a painful way, then he'll hire others who will cultivate the vineyard and give him the fruit when it's due.'

⁴² And Jesus said to them: 'Haven't you ever read in the Scriptures,
The stone that the builders rejected
Has become the head cornerstone...
And this is a wonderful thing in our eyes?

⁴³ 'This is why I tell you; The Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that produces its fruit.⁴⁴ For the person who falls on this stone will be shattered, and anyone it falls on will be smashed!'

⁴⁵ Well, when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these illustrations, they finally realized that he was talking about them.⁴⁶ And although they were looking to grab him, they didn't because they were afraid of the crowds, since [the people] viewed him as being a Prophet.'

Chapter 22

¹ Then Jesus gave them another illustration: ² 'The Kingdom of the heavens (or, of God) is like a man... a king, who arranged a wedding banquet for his son. ³ Then he sent his slaves out to call all those whom he wished to invite. However, none of them wanted to come.

⁴ 'So he sent other slaves, and he said to them: *Tell those whom I've invited that {Look!} the banquet is ready... bulls and fattened animals have been slaughtered, and everything is prepared, so come to the meal!* ⁵ But no one paid them any attention. One went out to his field, another to his business, ⁶ and the rest grabbed his slaves, abused them, and then killed them. ⁷ Well, this sent the king into a rage! So he sent his army to destroy those murderers and to burn their city.

⁸ 'And after he did this, he told his slaves: *The marriage feast is indeed ready, but those whom I invited were unworthy. ⁹ So now, go to the roads that lead out of the city and invite everyone you find there to my wedding banquet!*

¹⁰ 'So the slaves went to the roads and gathered everyone they could find (both the wicked and the good), and the banquet hall was filled with people reclining at the tables.

¹¹ However, when the king came in to inspect the guests, he noticed a man who wasn't properly dressed for a wedding celebration. ¹² And he asked him, *How did you get in here [dressed like that]?*

'Well, the man was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to his servants: *Tie him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside, where he can cry and grind his teeth.* ¹⁴ For many are the called, but few are the chosen.'

¹⁵ Well after that, the Pharisees all went off and held a meeting [to discuss ways to] trap [Jesus] in something he might say. ¹⁶ So they sent some of their disciples along with some of the followers of Herod to ask him this: 'Teacher, we know that you tell the truth and what you teach about the way of God is right. We also know that you aren't overly impressed by anyone, because you don't look at what men seem to be on the outside. ¹⁷ So tell us what you think... Is it right for us to pay Caesar's head tax, or not?'

¹⁸ But Jesus (knowing their wickedness) asked them: 'Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin that you use to pay the head tax.'

So they brought him a silver coin, ²⁰ and he asked them: 'Whose image and inscription is on this?'

²¹ And they replied: 'Caesar's.'

Then he said to them: 'Give Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God.'

²² Well, when they heard that, they were bewildered. So they left him and went away.

²³ Then on that same day, the SadDucees (actually, *Sad dou kai um*) (who don't believe in a resurrection) approached [Jesus] and asked him this: ²⁴ 'Teacher; Moses said that if a man dies without having children, his brother must take his woman and sire [children] for his brother. ²⁵ So now, let's say there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without having [children], leaving his woman to his brother. ²⁶ Then the same thing happened to the second and to the third, until [she had gone] through all seven. ²⁷ Finally, the woman died. ²⁸ So, to which of the seven will she be married in

the resurrection, since they all had her?'

²⁹ And Jesus replied: 'This is why you're headed in the wrong direction... for you don't understand the Scriptures or the power of God. ³⁰ In the resurrection they won't marry or be given in marriage, for they'll be like the angels in the heavens.

³¹ 'Also, haven't you read what God told you about the resurrection of the dead [when he said], ³² *I am the God of AbraHam, the God of IsaAc, and the God of Jacob?* He isn't the God of the dead, but of the living!'

³³ Well when the crowds that, they were amazed by his teachings.

³⁴ Then, after the Pharisees heard how he had muzzled the SadDucees, they came to him as a group. ³⁵ And one of them (who was well-versed in the Law) asked (to test him): ³⁶ 'Teacher, which is the greatest Commandment of the Law?'

³⁷ And he replied: '*You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart, soul, and mind.* ³⁸ This is the first and the greatest Commandment. ³⁹ The second, which is like it, is this: *You must love your neighbor as yourself.* ⁴⁰ These two commandments are the basis of the whole Law and all the [words of the] Prophets.'

⁴¹ Then as all the Pharisees were still there in front of him, Jesus asked them: ⁴² 'What do you believe about the Anointed One... whose son is he?'

And they replied, 'David's.'

⁴³ So he said: 'Then, why did David (through the Breath [of God]) call him lord, saying,

⁴⁴ *Jehovah said this to my lord:*

'Sit here at My right hand,

Til I set your enemies as a stool for your feet?

⁴⁵ If David called him lord, then how could he be his son?'

⁴⁶ Well, nobody was able to say even a word in reply, nor did anyone dare to ask him any more questions from that day on.

Chapter 23

¹ Thereafter, Jesus spoke to the crowd and to his disciples, and said this: ² 'The scribes and Pharisees have put themselves in the seat of Moses. ³ So, do whatever they tell you to do... yes, do and pay attention! But don't do as they do, because they like to talk but they don't [practice what they preach]. ⁴ Rather, they bundle heavy loads to lay on men's shoulders, which they wouldn't lift a finger to raise.

⁵ 'Why, everything that they do is done just to be seen by men. For they broaden the [scripture-carrying] cases they wear, they make the fringes [on their clothes] a bit longer, ⁶ they like the first places at meals and the front seats in the synagogues, ⁷ and they enjoy being greeted in the markets and having people call them Rabbi. ⁸ But not you! Don't [have people] call you rabbi, for you have but one teacher, while you are all just brothers. ⁹ Nor should you address anyone on earth as *Father*, because there's just One who's your Father, the Heavenly One. ¹⁰ Don't even be called leaders, because you have but one Leader, the Anointed One. ¹¹ Rather, the greatest one among you must be your servant. ¹² For whoever promotes himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be promoted.

¹³ 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees – you hypocrites – for you're blocking the way into the Kingdom of the heavens. You don't enter it, and you don't allow the rest who are on their way to enter it! ¹⁴ ——

¹⁵ So, woe to you scribes and Pharisees – you hypocrites – because you travel land and sea to make a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of the garbage dump as yourselves!

¹⁶ 'Woe to you blind guides who say, *If anyone swears an oath by the Temple, it's nothing. But if he swears by the gold in the Temple, the oath is binding.* ¹⁷ Morons and blind men! Which is really greater... the gold, or the Temple that makes the gold holy?

¹⁸ 'You also say, *If anyone swears an oath by the Altar, it's nothing. But if anyone swears by the gift on [the Altar], the oath is binding.* ¹⁹ Blind men! Which is really greater... the gift, or the Altar that makes the gift holy? ²⁰ Those who swear an oath by the Altar are swearing by it and by everything that's on it; ²¹ those who swear an oath by the Temple are swearing by the One who dwells there; ²² and those who swear an oath by heaven are swearing by the throne of God and by the One who is sitting upon it!

²³ 'Yes, woe to you scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you even contribute a tenth of [your herbs, such as] mint, dill, and cumin; but you ignore the deeper things of the Law, like justice, mercy, and faith! Yes, you should do those things also... in addition to the rest. ²⁴ [However, you are just] blind guides who strain out weevils as you gulp down camels!

²⁵ 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you wash the outsides of cups and dishes that are still filled with theft and excesses on the insides. ²⁶ Blind Pharisees; first clean the insides of the cups and dishes, and then the outsides can also be clean!

²⁷ 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you're like whitewashed graves that look beautiful on the outside, but you're full of dead men's bones and every sort of filth on the inside... ²⁸ you look like righteous men on the outside, but on the inside you're full of hypocrisy and lawlessness!

²⁹ 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you build places to bury dead Prophets and you decorate the tombs of the righteous, ³⁰ and say, *If we had lived back in the days of our forefathers, we wouldn't have shared in [spilling] the blood of the Prophets.* ³¹ But when you say this, you're testifying against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the Prophets. ³² And now, fully measure up to [the badness of] your ancestors!

³³ 'Snakes and children of vipers; How can you escape the judgment of the garbage dump? ³⁴ Look! I'm sending you Prophets, wise men, and writers, whom you'll kill... you'll hang some on poles, and you'll whip others in your synagogues and chase them down in one city after another. ³⁵ And that's when you'll become responsible for all the righteous blood that has been spilled on the earth from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah (the son of Barachiah), whom you murdered between the Holy Place and the Altar. ³⁶ Yes, I'm telling the truth when I say that all this [guilt] will be laid upon this generation!

³⁷ 'O JeruSalem, JeruSalem... you killer of Prophets and stoner of those who were sent to you! How often I've wanted to gather your children the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings... but you didn't want that! ³⁸ So look... your house has been taken from you!

³⁹ 'I tell you the truth; You won't see me again until you say, *Praise the one who comes in the Name of*

Jehovah!

Chapter 24

¹ Well, as Jesus was walking along (after leaving the Temple), his disciples came up to him and they were pointing admiringly toward the Temple buildings. ² Then he said to them: 'Do you see all these things? I tell you the truth; there won't be a stone left on top of a stone here that won't be thrown down.'

³ Then, while he was sitting in a quiet spot on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came up to him and asked, 'Tell us when these things will happen... what will be the signs?'

⁴ And Jesus replied: 'Watch out so that no one misleads you; ⁵ for many will come in my name, saying, *I am the Anointed*, and they'll mislead many. ⁶ You'll also hear of wars and reports about wars, but don't let that frighten you, because these things must happen. However, the end is yet to come. ⁷ For nations will be rising against nations and kingdoms against kingdoms, and there'll be famines and great shakings in many places... ⁸ but these are just the beginnings of the birth pangs.

⁹ 'Then people will hand you over to be persecuted and killed... you'll be hated by all the nations on account of my name. ¹⁰ And because many will be stumbled, they will dislike like each other and they'll turn each other in!

¹¹ 'There will also be false prophets who will arise and mislead many; ¹² and because of the increasing of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ However, those who endure to the end will be saved.

¹⁴ 'For this good news of the Kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole habitation of mankind as a testimony to all the nations... and then the end will arrive.

¹⁵ 'So when you see the disgusting destroyer that was spoken of through the Prophet Daniel standing in the Holy Place (let the reader pay attention to this); ¹⁶ those [who are living] in Judea should flee to the mountains! ¹⁷ The man who is standing on his roof shouldn't go down to remove things from his house, ¹⁸ and the man who is standing in his field shouldn't [go back home] to get his clothes.

¹⁹ 'Woe to those who are pregnant and those who are nursing babies in those days... ²⁰ they should keep praying that their time to run doesn't come in the winter or on a Sabbath! ²¹ For a difficult time will then arrive that's unlike anything that has happened since the beginning of this arrangement until now, nor should ever happen again! ²² And if those days weren't going to be shortened, no flesh could be saved... but for the sake of the elected, those days will be shortened.

²³ 'Then if anyone should say, *Look... here or there is the Anointed One*, don't believe it! ²⁴ Because, false anointed and false prophets will arise and they'll perform omens and great signs to mislead (if possible) even the elected!

²⁵ 'Now, I've warned you; ²⁶ so if people should say, *Look! He's in the desert...* don't go there; or, *Look! He's in that barn...* don't believe it. ²⁷ For as lightning flashes across the skies from the east to the west; that's how you'll know the Son of Man is nearby... ²⁸ as when vultures gather at a carcass.

²⁹ 'Then immediately after that difficult time;
The sun will grow dark,
The moon won't give out its light,

*The stars will fall from the skies,
And the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

³⁰ 'Then the Son of Man's sign will appear in the skies, and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief as they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds in the sky with great glory and might. ³¹ For He'll send his messengers [blowing] loud trumpets, and they'll collect his elected from the four winds... from one end of the sky to the other.

³² 'Now, learn this point from the story of the fig tree: When its young branches grow tender and it starts putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ Likewise, when you see all of these [things starting to happen], recognize that it's near... at the doors! ³⁴ I tell you the truth; this generation will not pass away until all these things have been fulfilled. ³⁵ Though the skies and the lands may all pass away, my words will not pass away!

³⁶ 'Yet, no one knows the day or the hour, not the angels in heaven or the Son... just the Father. ³⁷ For, as it was in the days of Noah is how it will be at the arrival of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For back in the days that led up to the downpour, the people were all eating and drinking, getting married and being taken in marriage, right up to the very day that Noah entered the Chest. ³⁹ Yes, they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away! And that's how it will be when the Son of Man arrives.

⁴⁰ 'Then two men will be out in a field; one will be taken along and the other abandoned. ⁴¹ Two --- will be grinding [grain] at a mill; one will be taken along, and the other abandoned. ⁴² So, [you should all] stay awake, since you don't know the day that your Lord will arrive.

⁴³ 'I want you to recognize this: If the master of the house had known in which watch the thief would be coming, he would have stayed awake and not allowed his house to be [broken into]. ⁴⁴ So always prove yourselves ready; for the Son of Man will arrive at a time that he isn't expected.

⁴⁵ 'Who is the faithful and sensible slave whom the master has put in charge of his household to provide them their food at the right times? ⁴⁶ That slave will be blest if he's found doing so when his master arrives. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth; he'll put him in charge of all that he owns! ⁴⁸ But if that bad slave should ever say in his heart, *My master is late in arriving*, ⁴⁹ and then he starts beating his fellow slaves and eating and drinking with the drunks; ⁵⁰ that slave's master will arrive on a day and hour that he isn't expected ⁵¹ and cut him down, then assign him among hypocrites, where he'll weep and grind his teeth.'

Chapter 25

¹ 'The Kingdom of the heavens is like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom and his bride. ² Five were wise, but five just didn't care. ³ So although those who didn't care brought their lamps, they failed to bring any oil... ⁴ while the wise brought jars of oil for their lamps.

⁵ 'Well, as the bridegroom was taking his time, they all nodded off and went to sleep. ⁶ But in the middle of the night someone shouted: *Look, it's the groom and his bride... let's go and meet them!* ⁷ So, as all the virgins got up and started preparing their lamps, ⁸ those who didn't care said to the wise, *Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are about to go out!*

⁹ 'But the wise replied: *There probably isn't enough for us all, so you'd best go to the store to buy your own.*

¹⁰ 'Well, the bride and groom arrived just as they were leaving, and those who were ready entered the

wedding banquet along with him... after which, the door was closed.

¹¹ 'Then later on, the other virgins finally showed up and they shouted, *Lord! Lord! Open to us!*

¹² 'But he said: *I tell you the truth; I don't know you.*

¹³ 'So stay awake, for you don't know the day or the hour!

¹⁴ 'It's [the same] as when a man who was about to travel abroad called for his slaves to entrust his belongings to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five [silver] coins, to another he gave two, and to another he gave just one (each according to his ability); and thereafter, he left on his trip.

¹⁶ 'Well, the one who got five went right out and put [his five coins] to work, gaining five more coins.

¹⁷ The same was true of the slave who received two; he gained two more. ¹⁸ But [the slave] who received just one went and dug a hole in the ground, where he buried his master's silver.

¹⁹ 'Then, after some time, the master of those slaves [finally] returned and he called them in for an accounting. ²⁰ So the one who'd received the five coins came forward carrying the five more and said, *Master, you gave me five coins, and look... I've gained you five more!*

²¹ 'And his master said, *Well done, good and faithful slave! Since you've been faithful in a few things, I'll appoint you over many... enjoy the favor of your master!*

²² 'Next, the one who received the two coins came forward and said to his master: *Master, you gave me two coins, and look... I've gained you two more!*

²³ 'So his master said to him: *You've done well, my good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things, so I'll appoint you over many... share in the joy of your master!*

²⁴ 'Finally, the [slave] who was given the one coin came up to his master and said, *Master, I know that you're a hard man who reaps where he doesn't sow and harvests where he doesn't plant. ²⁵ And because I was afraid, I hid your coin in the ground. Now see; I give you what is yours!*

²⁶ 'In reply, his master then said: *O you wicked and lazy slave; so you know that I reap where I don't sow and harvest where I don't plant, do you? ²⁷ Then you should have deposited my silver with the bankers; and when I returned, I would have received what is mine with interest! ²⁸ Therefore, take the coin away from him and give it to the one who has ten coins. ²⁹ Because, more will be given to those who have... and they will have plenty. But all will be taken from those who don't have. ³⁰ Now, throw this useless slave into the darkness outside, where he will weep and grind his teeth!*

³¹ 'Likewise, when the Son of Man arrives in his glory along with all of the messengers, he's going to sit down on his glorious throne, ³² and then all nations will be led before him, and he'll separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He'll put the sheep on his right, but the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those on his right: *Come, you who've been praised by my Father; inherit the Kingdom that's been prepared for you since the founding of the world. ³⁵ For when I was hungry, you fed me; when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink; when I was a stranger, you took me in; ³⁶ when I was naked, you clothed me; when I was sick, you looked after me; and when I was in prison, you came to me.*

³⁷ 'Then the righteous will ask: *Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give*

you something to drink? ³⁸ *When did we see you a stranger and take you in, or naked and clothe you?*
³⁹ *When did we see you sick or in prison and come to your [aid]?*

⁴⁰ *'And the king will say: I tell you the truth; when you did it for the least of my brothers, you also did it for me.'*

⁴¹ *'Then he will say to those on his left: Leave me, you who've been cursed into the age-long fire that was prepared for the Opposer and his messengers. ⁴² For when I was hungry, you didn't feed me; when I was thirsty, you gave me nothing to drink; ⁴³ when I was a stranger, you didn't take me in; when I was naked, you didn't clothe me; and when I was sick and in prison, you didn't come to my aid.'*

⁴⁴ *'Then they will also ask: Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and not serve your needs?'*

⁴⁵ *'And he will answer: I tell you the truth; when you didn't do it for one of these least ones, you didn't do it for me.'*

⁴⁶ *'Then these will go off into age-long punishment, but the righteous into age-long life.'*

Chapter 26

¹ After Jesus had finished saying all these things, he told his disciples: ² *'You know that the Passover will be here in just two days, and the Son of Man is going to be betrayed and hung on a pole.'*

³ Meanwhile, the chief priests and the peoples' elders had all gathered in the courtyard of the High Priest (who was called CaiAphas) ⁴ to discuss sneaky ways to grab Jesus and kill him. ⁵ However, they decided not [to do it] at the festival, because that would have created a commotion among the people.

⁶ Then while Jesus was in BethAny, at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman carrying an expensive alabaster case of perfumed oil came to him as he lay in a reclined position, and she started pouring it over his head. ⁸ But when the disciples saw that, they were irritated and asked, *'Why all this waste?'* ⁹ *We could have sold this for a lot [of money] and given it to the poor!'*

¹⁰ And noticing this, Jesus said to them: *'Why are you bothering this woman? She just did a nice thing for me! ¹¹ You'll always have the poor, but you won't always have me. ¹² When this woman poured the oil on my body, she did it to prepare me for my burial. ¹³ And I tell you the truth; wherever this good news is preached throughout the entire world, what this woman did will be told in memory of her.'*

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve (the one called Judas IsCariot) went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and asked, *'What will you give me if I betray him to you?'* And they arranged to give him thirty silver coins. ¹⁶ So from that point on, he kept looking for a good opportunity to betray him.

¹⁷ It was [just before] the first day of No Fermentation that the disciples came to Jesus and asked, *'Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?'*

¹⁸ And he said, *'Go into the city to (a certain person), and tell him that the Teacher says, My appointed time is near, so I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples in your home.'*

¹⁹ Then the disciples did just as Jesus ordered and got things ready for the Passover.

²⁰ It was later that evening, while [Jesus] was reclining at the table ²¹ eating with the twelve disciples, that he said, 'I tell you the truth; one of you will betray me.'

²² And deeply saddened by this, they each asked him, 'Lord, it isn't me, is it?'

²³ Then he said: 'One who has dipped his hand into this bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ Indeed, the Son of Man will leave... just as it was written about him. But woe to the one through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for him had he never been born!'

²⁵ Then Judas (the one who was about to betray him) asked, 'That isn't what I am, is it Rabbi?'

And [Jesus] replied, 'You said it yourself.'

²⁶ Then as they ate, Jesus took a loaf, and after giving thanks, broke it and gave it to the disciples saying, 'Take some and eat it, because this is my body.'²⁷ He also took a cup [of wine], and after giving thanks, gave it to them saying, 'All of you, drink from it; ²⁸ indeed, this is my blood of the Sacred Agreement with the many, which is being poured out for the forgiveness of sins.

²⁹ 'But now I'm telling you that I definitely won't drink of the product of the vine anymore until the day that I drink it with you as it has never been drunk before, in the Kingdom of my Father.'

³⁰ And finally, after singing songs of praise, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹ [It was there that] Jesus said to them: 'All of you will be stumbled [by what will happen to] me tonight, because it's written: *I will beat the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.* ³² But after I wake up, I'll go ahead of you into GaliLee.'

³³ However, Peter said to him: 'Although all the others may be trapped, I'll never stumble!'

³⁴ But Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; before a rooster crows tonight, you'll have denied knowing me three times.'

³⁵ Yet Peter just kept on saying, 'Even if I have to die with you, I'll never deny knowing you!' And all the other disciples were saying the same thing.

³⁶ Then Jesus took his disciples to the spot called GethSemane (the Oil Press), and he said to them: 'Sit here while I go over there to pray.'

³⁷ So he took Peter and the two sons of ZebediOu with him, and he became very sad and deeply disturbed. ³⁸ Then he said to them: 'My soul is sad to the point of death; so wait here and stay awake with me.'

³⁹ And going a little way forward, he fell to his face praying and said, 'My Father; if it's possible, let this cup pass from me. However, not my will, but Yours.'

⁴⁰ Then when he returned to the disciples, he found them sleeping; and he asked Peter, 'Aren't you strong enough to stay awake with me for just one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you won't be put to the test! Indeed; although the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.'

⁴² So he went off and prayed a second time, saying: 'My Father; if this can't pass and I have to drink it,

may Your will be done.' ⁴³ And when he returned, he found them sleeping again, because their eyes were heavy.

⁴⁴ Well, he left them and went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. ⁴⁵ Then he came back to the disciples and told them: 'Here you are resting and sleeping... and look! The time has arrived when the Son of Man will be handed over to sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up... let's go! Look! Here comes my betrayer!'

⁴⁷ And while he was still speaking, {Look!} Judas (one of the twelve) came up with a large mob of Priests and elders, each of whom was carrying a sword or a club!

⁴⁸ Now, the betrayer had given them a sign to watch for. He said, 'Whomever I kiss is the one... grab him!' ⁴⁹ And going straight up to Jesus, [Judas] greeted him with the words, 'Rejoice, Rabbi!' as he kissed him tenderly.

⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him: 'Man, just why are you here?'

Then [some of the mob] came up and grabbed Jesus, and tied him up. ⁵¹ But {Look!} one who was there with Jesus reached down and unsheathed his sword and struck the Chief Priest's slave, taking off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus told him: 'Put your sword away; for all who take up the sword will perish by the sword!' ⁵³ Don't you realize that I can ask my Father to immediately send more than twelve battalions of angels? ⁵⁴ But if [I did] that, how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?'

⁵⁵ Then Jesus asked the mob: 'Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like some robber? Why, I used to sit and teach in the Temple every day, and you didn't choose to grab me then. ⁵⁶ But all of this has happened so that the writings of the Prophets can be fulfilled.'

Well, all the disciples just ran away and left him. ⁵⁷ Then those who'd arrested Jesus carried him off to [the house of] Caiaphas the High Priest, where the scribes and the elders had already assembled.

⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Peter had followed quite some way behind all the way to the courtyard of the High Priest. Then he entered and sat among the building supervisory staff, to see how things would turn out.

⁵⁹ At the time, the chief priests and those of the Judean High Court were trying to find [someone who would] lie about Jesus so they could condemn him. ⁶⁰ However, of all those who came forward, none were willing to perjure themselves. But later on, two did come forward, who said, ⁶¹ 'This man told us that he could tear down the Most Holy Place of The God and rebuild it in just three days.'

⁶² Well at that, the High Priest stood up and asked Jesus, 'Don't you have a reply? What is it that these people are accusing you of?' ⁶³ But Jesus just kept silent.

So the High Priest said to him: 'By the living God; I put you under oath to tell us whether you're the Anointed One... the Son of The God!'

⁶⁴ And Jesus replied: 'You're saying it yourself! Let me tell you something; from this point on, you will see the Son of Man sitting at [His] powerful right hand and coming on the clouds in the sky!'

⁶⁵ Then the High Priest ripped his clothes and shouted, 'He has blasphemed! Why do we need any

more witnesses? See... now you've heard the blasphemy! ⁶⁶ So, what's your opinion?

And they all replied: 'Hold him for death!'

⁶⁷ Then they spit in his face and hit him with their fists, as others slapped him in the face, ⁶⁸ saying, 'Prophecy to us, O Anointed One. Who hit you?'

⁶⁹ Meanwhile, as Peter was still sitting outside in the courtyard, a servant girl came up to him and said: 'You were also with Jesus the Galilean!' ⁷⁰ But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, 'I don't know what she's talking about!'

⁷¹ Then, as he [was walking out toward] the gatehouse, another girl noticed him and said to everyone there: 'This man was with Jesus the Nazarene!' ⁷² And once again he denied it with an oath, saying, 'I never knew the man!' ⁷³ But all those who were standing around came up and said to him, 'Sure, you're one of them! Why, your accent gives you away!' ⁷⁴ So Peter started cursing them and swore, 'I don't know the man!' And immediately, a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ It was then that Peter remembered Jesus' words, 'Before a rooster crows, you'll have denied that you know me three times.' So he went outside and cried bitterly.

Chapter 27

¹ The next morning, all the chief priests and peoples' elders held a meeting to discuss ways to have Jesus put to death. ² So they bound him and took him to be handed over to Governor Pilate.

³ It was then that Judas (who had betrayed [Jesus]) realized that he was condemned. So, feeling deeply regretful about what he had done, he tried to return the thirty silver [coins] to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ saying, 'I sinned when I betrayed righteous blood.'

But they replied: 'What is that to us? You see to it!'

⁵ So he threw the silver into the Temple and left; and then he went out and hung himself.

⁶ Well thereafter, the chief priests [picked up] the silver coins and said, 'It isn't legal to put them into the sacred treasury, because they're the price of blood.' ⁷ So after discussing it further, they decided to use it to purchase the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. ⁸ And to this day, that field has been called 'The Field of Blood.'

⁹ It was then that the words of the Prophet were fulfilled:

'And they took the thirty pieces of silver
(The price that was put on a man
By some of the sons of IsraEl),

¹⁰ And used them to pay for the field of the potters;
As Jehovah had told me.'

¹¹ Next, they stood Jesus before the governor, who asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?'

And Jesus replied: 'You're saying it yourself.' ¹² (However, when the chief priests and elders were accusing him, he hadn't said anything).

¹³ Then Pilate asked: 'Don't you hear all the things that they're saying against you?'

¹⁴ But [Jesus] wouldn't answer him – he didn't say a word – and that really got the governor to wondering.

¹⁵ Now, it was the governor's custom to release whichever prisoner the crowd wanted during these festivals. ¹⁶ And at that time, they were holding a particularly notorious criminal called BarAbbas. ¹⁷ So when the people gathered before him, Pilate asked: 'Which do you want me to release to you, BarAbbas or Jesus... the so-called Anointed One?' ¹⁸ ([Pilate] knew that the only reason they had bound [Jesus] over, was because they were jealous of him. ¹⁹ Also, while he was sitting on his judgment seat, [Pilate's] wife had sent [a message] to him, saying, 'Don't have anything to do with that righteous man, because I suffered a lot in a dream today over to him'). ²⁰ But the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for BarAbbas, and they demanded to have Jesus destroyed. ²¹ So when the governor asked which of the two they wanted released, they shouted, 'BarAbbas!'

²² And when Pilate asked, 'Then what should I do with Jesus, the so-called Anointed One?' They all said, 'Hang him up on a pole!'

²³ But when he asked, 'Why? What bad thing did he do,' they all kept shouting louder and louder, 'Hang him up on a pole!'

²⁴ Well, when he saw that he wasn't doing any good and he was just inciting a riot, Pilate got some water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, 'I'm innocent of this man's blood... you take the responsibility for this on yourselves!'

²⁵ And all the people said, 'May we and our children be responsible for his blood!'

²⁶ Then he released BarAbbas to them, but he had Jesus whipped and bound over for impaling.

²⁷ So the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the palace and brought in all the troops. ²⁸ There they removed [Jesus'] clothes, wrapped a scarlet cape around him, ²⁹ braided a crown of thorns and slipped it over his head, and they put a piece of cane in his right hand. Then kneeling down, they made fun of him by shouting the greeting, 'Rejoice, O you King of the Jews!' ³⁰ Then they spit on him and they took the cane and started hitting him on the head with it. ³¹ Finally, after they had tired of their fun, they took off the cape, put his clothes back on, and took him out to be impaled.

³² Well, as they were leading him out, they found a man from Cyrene [Libya] whose name was Simon, and they made him carry the pole. ³³ Then, when they got to the place called GolGotha (Skull Place), ³⁴ they offered [Jesus] some wine mixed with gall to drink. But after he tasted it, he wouldn't drink it.

³⁵ It was after [they had nailed] him on the pole that [the soldiers] divided his clothes by throwing lots.

³⁶ Then they all just sat around and watched him. ³⁷ They also put a sign over his head that showed the charge against him: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

³⁸ Two robbers were also hung on poles beside him... one on his right and the other on his left.

³⁹ Then those who were passing by started shouting terrible things at [Jesus], shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying: 'O you who would tear down the Most Holy and rebuild it in three days; save yourself... if you're a son of God, come down off the pole!'

⁴¹ That's the way the chief priests, scribes, and elders also made fun of him, saying, ⁴² 'He saved others, but he can't save himself! If he's the King of IsraEl, let him come down from the pole and we'll

believe him. ⁴³ He has put his trust in God, so let [God] rescue him if He wants him. After all, he says, *I'm God's Son.*'

⁴⁴ In fact, even the robbers who were hung on poles with him started saying cruel things to him.

⁴⁵ Then from the sixth to the ninth hours, darkness fell over the whole land. ⁴⁶ And at about the ninth hour, Jesus called out in a loud voice: 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' That is, 'My God, my God; why have you abandoned me?'

⁴⁷ Well, when some of those who were standing around heard this, they thought he was calling for EliJah. ⁴⁸ And immediately, one of them ran and took a sponge, soaked it in vinegar, then lifted it on a reed to give him something to drink. ⁴⁹ But the rest of them said, 'Leave him alone! Let's see if EliJah comes to save him!'

Finally, a man took a spear and jabbed it into his side, and blood mixed with water poured out. ⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried out loudly and gave up his breath.

⁵¹ And at that, {Look!} the Temple's [inner] curtain ripped in two from top to bottom, as the ground shook and rocks split. ⁵² ---- ⁵³ ----

⁵⁴ But the army officer and those with him who were watching over Jesus (after they saw the earthquake and the other things that had happened) were really frightened and said, 'This truly was God's Son!'

⁵⁵ Well, during this entire time, many women were standing around and watching from a distance. These women had traveled with Jesus from GaliLee in order to serve him, ⁵⁶ including Mary from Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of ZebediOu.

⁵⁷ Then later that afternoon, a rich man from HariMathea named JoSeph (who was also a disciple of Jesus) ⁵⁸ went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. So Pilate commanded that it should be given to him. ⁵⁹ Then JoSeph took the body, wrapped it up in fine clean linen, ⁶⁰ and laid it in a new tomb that had just been quarried in the bedrock. And after rolling a large rock against the tomb entrance, he left.

⁶¹ Meanwhile, Mary from Magdala and the other Mary just sat there across from the tomb.

⁶² Then the next day (after the Preparation), the chief priests and Pharisees gathered and they went before Pilate to say, ⁶³ 'Lord; We remembered that while he was alive, that impostor said: *In three days I will be raised.* ⁶⁴ Therefore, order the grave to be made secure until the third day, so his disciples don't come and steal him, then tell the people that he was raised from the dead. For that would make this last deceit even worse than the first!'

⁶⁵ But Pilate replied: 'You have watchmen; Go make it as secure as you know how.' ⁶⁶ So they went and made the grave secure by sealing the stone and posting guards.

Chapter 28

¹ It was after the Sabbath, in the early morning light of the first day of the week that Mary of Magdala and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² But {Look!} a great shaking had occurred. For Jehovah's messenger had come down from heaven and rolled away the stone, and there he was sitting on top of it. ³ He looked like lightning and his clothes were as white as snow... ⁴ which made the watchmen shake in fear and become as dead men.

⁵ But the messenger said to the women: 'Don't be afraid, for I know that you're looking for Jesus who was impaled. ⁶ He isn't here, because he was raised... just as he said. Come and see the place where he was lying, ⁷ then hurry and tell his disciples that he was raised from the dead. Why look... he has gone ahead of you into GaliLee! Look! You'll see him there, just as I said.'

⁸ So, quickly leaving the tomb (with both fear and great joy), they ran to report this to his disciples. ⁹ Then {Look!} Jesus met up with them, greeting them with the word, 'Rejoice!' So they went up to him, caught him by his feet, and bowed low. ¹⁰ And Jesus said, 'Don't be afraid! Go and report this to my brothers, so they will go to GaliLee... they'll see me there.'

¹¹ Meanwhile, as [the women] were on their way, {Look!} some of the guards returned to the city to report all that had happened to the chief priests. ¹² And after holding a conference and meeting with the elders to ask for advice, they [bribed] the soldiers with enough silver, ¹³ and said: 'Tell the people that his disciples came in the night and stole him while you were sleeping. ¹⁴ And if the governor hears about this, don't worry; we'll persuade [him] to release you.'

¹⁵ So [the guards] took the silver and did as they were instructed. And the story they told has been spread among Judeans everywhere down to this day.

¹⁶ However, the eleven disciples went on to GaliLee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged [to meet] them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him, they bowed low... though some were doubtful. ¹⁸ Then coming toward them, Jesus spoke, saying: 'All power has been given me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ So, go make disciples in all nations in my name, ²⁰ and teach them to obey all the things that I commanded you. {Look!} I will be with you every day until the end of the age.'

Mark

Written in Greek by the Disciple Mark about 55-CE and based loosely on the Gospel of Matthew.

Chapter 1

¹ **This is the beginning of the good news about Jesus the Anointed.**

² This was written by the Prophet IsaiAh:

'Look!

I'm sending My messenger ahead,
To prepare the road that's before you.

³ Listen!

Someone calls out in the desert,
*Prepare the way for the Lord, you people;
Straighten out all of his roads!*

⁴ This is why John came doing baptizing in the desert and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And throughout Judea and JeruSalem, people went there to be baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they openly confessed their sins.

⁶ John wore clothes that were made of camel's hair and he wore a wide leather belt around his waist. His diet consisted of locusts and wild honey, ⁷ and this is what he preached:

'Someone greater is coming behind me,
Whose sandals I'm unworthy to bend and untie.

⁸ And though I baptize you in water,
He'll baptize you in [God's] Holy Breath.'

⁹ Back then, Jesus came from Nazareth of GaliLee to be baptized in the Jordan by John. ¹⁰ And immediately after coming up out of the water, [John] saw the sky split open and the Breath [of God] descending upon [Jesus in the form of] a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from the sky that said: 'You're My Son whom I love and with whom I'm well pleased.'

¹² Then [God's] Breath immediately forced [Jesus] into the desert, ¹³ where he spent forty days among the wild animals, as he was being tempted by the Opposer. However, the messengers [of God] were serving [his needs].

¹⁴ It was after John had been arrested that Jesus went into GaliLee and started preaching the good news of God. ¹⁵ For he was saying:

'This period has reached its fulfillment,
And the Kingdom of God is at hand.
So, you must repent and believe the good news!'

¹⁶ Then, as he was walking along [the shore of] the Sea of GaliLee he noticed Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets on the sea (they were fishermen). ¹⁷ So Jesus said to them: 'Come follow me and I'll make you fishers of men.' ¹⁸ And right away, they released their nets and started following him.

¹⁹ Then going a little farther, he saw James the son of ZebediOu and his brother John in their boat mending their nets. ²⁰ So he called them, and they immediately left their father ZebediOu in the boat with his crew, and they started following [Jesus].

²¹ Well, they all went to CapharNaum. Then on the Sabbath, [Jesus] entered the synagogue and started teaching ²² in a way that amazed everyone, because (unlike the scribes) he taught with great authority.

²³ At the time, there was a man in the synagogue who was under the influence of an unclean spirit, which caused him to shout, ²⁴ 'What dealings do I have with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Did you come here to destroy me? I know who you are; you're The Holy One of The God!'

²⁵ But Jesus scolded it, saying: 'Put a muzzle on it and come out of him!' ²⁶ So the unclean spirit (after throwing the man into convulsions and causing him to yell loudly) came out. ²⁷ This shocked the people, and they started asking each other, 'What is this, some new teaching? Why, he has the power to give orders to unclean spirits and they obey him!' ²⁸ So after that, the story about him was immediately spread throughout all the country around GaliLee.

²⁹ Then [Jesus] walked out of the synagogue (along with James and John), and they went directly to the home of Simon and Andrew, ³⁰ where they found Simon's (Peter's) mother-in-law lying down and burning up with a fever... which they immediately pointed out to [Jesus]. ³¹ So he took her by the hand to help her up, then the fever left her and she started serving them.

³² Well that evening, after sunset, people started bringing him all those who were ill as well as the demon-possessed... ³³ the whole city gathered at their door! ³⁴ So he cured their various illnesses and he expelled many demons. However, he wouldn't allow the demons to speak, because they knew that he was the Anointed One.

³⁵ Then early the next morning, while it was still dark, he got up and went outside to a lonely place where he started praying. ³⁶ However, Simon (and those who were with him) searched ³⁷ for him, and when they found him they said: 'Everyone has been looking for you!'

³⁸ But he replied: 'Let's go somewhere else... into the nearby villages, so I can preach there also. For that's why I came outside.' ³⁹ And [after that], he went preaching in the synagogues throughout all of GaliLee and casting out demons.

⁴⁰ It was there that a leper came to him, who got down on his knees and said: 'If you just want to, you can make me clean!'

⁴¹ And moved with pity, [Jesus] stuck out his hand and touched him, saying: 'I want to... be clean.' ⁴² Then the leprosy immediately left him and he became clean. ⁴³ However, [Jesus] sent him away, giving [the man] strict orders ⁴⁴ not to tell anyone what he had done. And he said: 'Now, go show yourself to the Priests and give the offering of cleansing that was specified by Moses, as a witness to them.'

⁴⁵ However, after he left, [the man] started telling everyone and spreading the word around, so that Jesus wasn't able to enter the cities openly and he had to camp out in lonely places... yet [the people] kept coming to him from all directions.

Chapter 2

¹ After several days, he returned to CapharNaum, and when word got out that he was home, ² so many people came to him that there wasn't any room around the door. Then he started preaching the Word to them.

³ Well, four people came to him carrying a man who was paralyzed. ⁴ But because the crowd was so large, they couldn't get him to [Jesus]. So they dug an opening through that part of the roof where [Jesus] was standing, and lowered the cot on which the [man] was lying. ⁵ Then when Jesus saw how much faith they had shown, he said to the paralyzed man: 'Child, your sins are forgiven.'

⁶ But at this, some of the scribes who were sitting there started reasoning in their hearts: ⁷ 'Why is he talking that way, for this is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins other than the one God?'

⁸ But by spirit, Jesus immediately realized that they were reasoning in this way inside themselves, so he asked: 'Why are [such bad] thoughts entering your hearts?' ⁹ Which is easier; to tell the paralyzed man, *Your sins are forgiven*, or, *Get up, pick up your cot, and walk?* ¹⁰ Well, so that you men will know that the Son of Man has been authorized to forgive sins on the earth, ¹¹ I'm telling [this man] to get up, pick up his cot, and go home.' ¹² Then the man got right up, picked up his cot, and walked out in front of everyone.

Well, they were all beside themselves and they started glorifying God, saying, 'We've never seen anything like this!'

¹³ Thereafter, he went outside again to the seashore, where huge crowds came to him and he taught them.

¹⁴ Then, as he was passing the tax office, he noticed Levi the son of AlphaEus, sitting there. And [he] said to him, 'Follow me'... and he got right up and followed him. ¹⁵ Then later [that day], as Jesus was reclining at the table in [Levi's] home, many tax collectors and sinners started coming and reclining with him and his disciples, and thereafter, several of them became Jesus' followers. ¹⁶ But when the scribes and Pharisees saw that he was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why is he eating with the tax collectors and sinners?'

¹⁷ And because he overheard them saying this, Jesus said: 'Those who are well don't need a doctor... just the ill do. So I didn't come to call the righteous, just the sinners.'

¹⁸ Back then, the Pharisees and all of John's disciples practiced fasting. So they came to [Jesus] and asked, 'Why is it that although the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, your disciples don't fast?'

¹⁹ And Jesus replied: 'The sons of the bride chamber can't fast while the bridegroom is among them; for as long as he's with them, there's [no reason to] fast. ²⁰ But the days are coming when the groom will be taken away... and then they will fast.

²¹ 'No one patches old clothes with new cloth; for if they do, the new [cloth] will shrink and pull on the old, which will make tear worse. ²² Also, if you put young wine into old wineskins, the [new] wine will burst the skins and both the wine and the skins will be lost. This is why people use new wineskins for new wine.'

²³ Then one day, as [Jesus] was walking through the grain fields on the Sabbath, his disciples started plucking heads of grain [to eat] as they were traveling along. ²⁴ And the Pharisees asked, '{Look!} Why are they doing something that's illegal on the Sabbath?'

²⁵ But he replied: 'Haven't you ever read what David did when he was in need and he and the men that were with him got hungry (in the account about AbiAthar, the High Priest)... ²⁶ how he entered the

House of God and ate the Presentation Bread, which isn't legal for anyone to eat except the Priests, and how he also gave some of it to the men who were with him?'

²⁷ Then [Jesus] said this: 'The Sabbath came into existence for the sake of mankind, not mankind for the Sabbath. ²⁸ Also, you should also know that the Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath.'

Chapter 3

¹ On another occasion, he entered a synagogue where there happened to be a man with a withered hand, ² and [the Pharisees] were watching [Jesus] closely to see if he would cure him on the Sabbath, because they were trying to find something that they could accuse him of doing. ³ So he said to the man with the withered hand: 'Get up and come here into the center [of the room].'⁴ Then he asked them all: 'Is it legal to do something good or bad, or to save a life or destroy it on the Sabbath?'

Well, no one would answer.

⁵ Then, after looking around at them angrily (because he was saddened by the dullness of their hearts), he said to the man: 'Now, stretch out your hand.' So he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

⁶ Well right away, the Pharisees went outside and met with the followers of Herod and they discussed ways to destroy him.

⁷ Then Jesus and his disciples got up and walked over to the sea, followed by a huge crowd that had come from all around GaliLee and Judea, ⁸ for people had come to him from as far away as JeruSalem, Idumea, the other side of the Jordan, and the area around Tyre and Sidon... huge numbers came to him when they heard of the things he was doing.

⁹ Well, to keep the crowds at bay, [Jesus] had instructed his disciples to always have a little boat available for him, ¹⁰ for he cured so many people that those with terrible diseases were literally falling on him just to touch him. ¹¹ And when unclean spirits saw him, they would bow low before him and shout, 'You're the Son of The God!' ¹² But he would scold them and warn them not to expose him.

¹³ Then [Jesus] walked up a mountain, where he called for those whom he'd chosen... so they went to him there, ¹⁴ and he formed a [special] group of twelve that he called *Apostles* (Sent Ones), who were to stay with him. He thereafter sent them out to preach, ¹⁵ and he gave them the power to cast out demons. ¹⁶ The names of those in the group of twelve that he formed were, Simon (Peter), ¹⁷ James (the son of ZebediOu) and his brother John (he called them BoanErges, which means *Sons of Thunder*), ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, BarTholomew ([NathaniEl]), Matthew, Thomas, James (the son of AlphaEus), ThadDaeus (Judas), Simon the CanaNaeen, ¹⁹ and Judas IsCariot (who later betrayed him).

Well, whenever he went into a house, ²⁰ so many would show up that they couldn't even eat a meal. ²¹ And when his relatives heard about this, they tried to take him away, because they said that he'd lost his mind.

²² There were also some scribes who had come down from JeruSalem and were telling people that he was [under the influence of] BeElZebub, and that he was using the ruler of the demons to cast out demons. ²³ So he called [the scribes] to him and reasoned with them using [these] illustrations:

'How can the Opposer throw out the Opposer? ²⁴ For if a kingdom's divided against itself, it won't be able to stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house won't be able to stand. ²⁶ So if the Opposer is divided against himself, he'll be unable to stand and he's reaching his end. ²⁷ Also, no one

can enter the house of a mighty man and rob him of all his things unless he first ties the man up... only then can he loot his house. ²⁸ So I tell you the truth: Sons of men can be forgiven for almost anything, no matter what sins they commit or whatever blasphemous things they might say. ²⁹ But whoever blasphemes [God's] Holy Breath won't be forgiven through the age... for that remains a sin through the ages.' ³⁰ Of course, [Jesus told] them this, because they were saying he has an unclean spirit.

³¹ Now, [Jesus'] mother and brothers had arrived and were standing outside, so they asked [someone] to call for him, ³² because there was a crowd sitting around him at the time. And someone said to him: 'Look! Your mother and brothers are outside searching for you!'

³³ But he replied to them:

'Just who are my mother and brothers?'

³⁴ Then he looked at those who were sitting around him in a circle, and said:

'See... my mother and my brothers!

³⁵ For, all who do the Will of our God
Are my brothers, sisters, and mother.'

Chapter 4

¹ And on another occasion, when he started teaching by the seaside, such a huge crowd came to him there that he stepped into a boat and sat out on the sea, as the crowd stood on the shore. ² Then he taught them many things through illustrations, saying:

³ 'Now, pay close attention!

{Look!} A farmer went out to do planting.

⁴ And as he was scattering seeds,
A few fell onto the road,
Which were eaten by birds.

⁵ 'Other seeds fell among rocks,
And sprouted where there wasn't much ground.
But because there was little soil;

⁶ When the sun arose, they were scorched...
They withered, because they didn't have roots.

⁷ 'Other seeds fell among briars,
Which grew and choked out those seeds,
So they didn't produce any fruit.

⁸ But others fell on good soil that was good,
Where they flourished and grew, producing much fruit,
Some thirty, some sixty, or a hundred times more.'

⁹ Then he added: 'Let those who have ears pay attention!'

¹⁰ Well later, the twelve (as well as those who were around him) asked [Jesus] about the illustrations. ¹¹ And he told them this: 'The mystery of the Kingdom of God has been given to [just] you, while those on the outside only hear the illustrations. ¹² So although they can look, they can't see; and although they can hear, they don't listen and understand. Therefore, they can never turn back and be forgiven.'

¹³ Then he said, 'But if you don't understand these illustrations, how will you understand all the rest?' ¹⁴ For the one who is scattering the seed is planting the word, ¹⁵ and where it falls beside the road, the Opposer immediately comes and snatches away that which was planted there.

¹⁶ 'The same is true of those who fall among the rocks; as soon as they hear the word, they joyfully accept it; ¹⁷ but because they don't have roots, they only last a little while. For when some difficulty or persecution comes along over the word, they are stumbled.

¹⁸ 'Likewise, those that are planted among the thorns are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ but let it get choked out by the concerns of this life, the allure of wealth, and desire for other things, so they become unfruitful.

²⁰ 'However, those who are planted on the fine soil are the ones who listen to the word and accept it, then they bear fruit thirty, sixty, and a hundred times more.'

²¹ Then after that, he went on to tell them this:

'You don't put a lamp under a basket,
Nor do you put it under a bed.
You put it on a table, instead.

²² Likewise,
There is no secret that won't be made known,
And nothing that's hidden, which will not be shown...

²³ Let those who have ears pay attention!'

²⁴ He continued:

'Pay attention to what you are hearing!
For, whatever amount that you measure for others,
Is the amount that you will receive...
And more will be added to that.

²⁵ For, those who have will be given more,
While all will be taken from those who have little.'

²⁶ Then he went on to say:

'The Kingdom of God is much like a man,
Who scatters seeds on the ground,

²⁷ And goes to sleep through the night.
Then, when he awakes up the next morning,
He finds that the seeds have sprouted and grown...
And he doesn't know how it all happened!

²⁸ 'For the ground produces fruit by itself...

First the blades, and then come the stalks,
And finally, the full heads of grain.

²⁹ 'Then, as soon as it becomes ripe,
The man comes with his sickle;
For the time to harvest has arrived.'

³⁰ And he asked:

'To what [else] can the Kingdom of God be compared...'

What illustrations can we use to describe it?

³¹ It's like the small mustard seed,
Which before it's planted under the ground,
Is one of the smallest seeds on the earth.
³² Yet, after it's planted, it grows,
To be larger than all vegetation...
It grows branches which can be so great,
That birds of the skies can dwell in their shadow.'

³³ Yes, this is the way he taught the word to them, using illustrations for as long as they were able to pay attention. ³⁴ It's a fact that if he wasn't using illustrations, he wasn't talking to them. However, when they were all alone, he explained everything to his disciples.

³⁵ Well later that evening, he said to them: 'Now let's cross over to the other shore.'

³⁶ So after they dismissed the crowd, they left in the same boat that he had been teaching from (and some other boats also came along with them).

³⁷ Well, a gale-force wind then arose and waves were pouring into the boats. --- ³⁸ Meanwhile, [Jesus] was in the stern, sleeping on a pillow. So they woke him up and said: 'Teacher, aren't you worried that we're about to die?'

³⁹ So he got up and scolded the wind, then he said to the sea: 'Be quiet! Hush!' And at that, the wind died down and a great calm set in. ⁴⁰ And he asked them: 'Why are you so cowardly? Don't you have any faith?'

⁴¹ Well, this really frightened them and they asked each other: 'Who really is this? For even the wind and the sea obey him!'

Chapter 5

¹ Then, when they got to the other side of the sea to the country of the Garasenes, ² [Jesus] got out of the boat and was immediately confronted by a man with an unclean spirit, who had come there from the tombs. ³ For he lived among the tombs and no one had been able to restrain him, even with chains.

⁴ In fact, he had often been bound with leg irons and chains, but he broke the chains and smashed the leg irons, for nothing had enough strength to hold him. ⁵ So all day and all night long he would go yelling crazily amid the tombs and in the mountains, while he beat on himself with rocks.

⁶ Then, when he saw Jesus coming in the distance, he ran up to him and bowed low, ⁷ screaming: 'What dealings do I have with you, Jesus, the Son of the Most High God? I put you under oath by God not to torment me!' ⁸ [He said this] because [Jesus] had told the unclean spirit to come out of the man.

⁹ Then [Jesus] asked [the spirit], 'What is your name?' And it replied, 'My name is Legion, because there are many of us!' ¹⁰ And [the spirits] repeatedly begged [Jesus] not to drive them out of that field.

¹¹ Well at the time, there was a large group of pigs feeding up on the mountain. ¹² So [the demons] begged Jesus to send them into the pigs, ¹³ and he gave them permission. So the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs, then they all ran down a steep drop-off and fell into the sea, drowning about two-thousand of them.

¹⁴ Well thereafter, the herdsmen ran off and reported this to people who were in the fields and in the cities, and everyone went there to see [what had happened]. ¹⁵ And when they reached Jesus, they could see that the man who had once been possessed by the legion [of demons] was sitting there wearing clothes and in his right mind, and this frightened them. ¹⁶ Then after those who'd been there explained what had happened to the demon-possessed man and the pigs, ¹⁷ they all begged [Jesus] to leave their district.

¹⁸ Well, after [Jesus] got back into the boat, the man who was once demonized begged him to let him come along with them. ¹⁹ However, [Jesus] wouldn't allow this. He said: 'Go back to your home and your family and tell them all the things that Jehovah has done for you, and about the great mercy He has shown to you.'

²⁰ So [the man] went back to the Decapolis and started telling everyone about the many things that this Jesus had done for him, which amazed all the people.

²¹ Well, after Jesus had crossed back to the other side [of the sea] by boat, a huge crowd started to gather at his arrival. ²² Then one of the [local] synagogue's head people (a man named JaiRus) came and fell at his feet, ²³ repeatedly begging him, saying: 'My little daughter is [about to breathe her] last. Please come and lay your hands on her so she can recover and live!'

²⁴ So [Jesus] went off with him, and a huge number followed along, all crowded against him. ²⁵ [Among them] was a woman who had [endured] a blood flow for some twelve years... ²⁶ she'd suffered a lot at the hands of the healers, and she'd spent everything she had to no avail (she only got worse). ²⁷ And when she heard about Jesus, she came up behind [him] in the crowd and touched his clothes; ²⁸ for she kept saying: 'If I can just touch his clothes I'll be saved [from this condition].'²⁹ And right away, her fountain of blood dried up and she knew in her body that she had been healed of this plague.

³⁰ But Jesus recognized in himself that some power had left him. So he turned around in the crowd and asked, 'Who touched my clothes?'

³¹ And his disciples replied: 'You see all these people crowded around you and you ask, *Who touched me?*' ³² But he kept looking around to see who did this.

³³ Then the woman (who was frightened and trembling because she knew what had happened to her) came and fell down before him, and told him the truth. ³⁴ And he said to her: 'Daughter; Your faith has saved you! Go in peace, and may this be the last of the plague.'

³⁵ However, while he was still speaking, a messenger came from the home of the synagogue chief, who told him: 'Your daughter has died, so why bother the teacher?'

³⁶ But when Jesus overheard this, he told the chief of the synagogue: 'Don't be afraid, just have faith.'

³⁷ Well, he didn't allow anyone to follow along other than Peter, James, and John (James' brother). ³⁸ And when he got to the synagogue-chief's house and saw all the confusion, crying, and wailing, ³⁹ he went in and asked, 'Why are you creating such an uproar and crying? The little child isn't dead, she's just sleeping!'

⁴⁰ Well, they all started laughing at him. But after ushering them outside, he took the father, mother, and those who were with him into [the room] where the child was. ⁴¹ Then he took her by the hand and

said: 'Talitha; Cumi!' (which translates as, 'Little girl; Wake up!'). ⁴² And the twelve-year-old girl got up right away and started walking around.

At that, [the parents] were beside themselves [with joy]. ⁴³ Then he told them to give her something to eat, and he repeatedly ordered them not to tell anyone what had really happened.

Chapter 6

¹ Then he left that place and traveled with his disciples to the town where he was raised. ² And when the Sabbath arrived, he went to teach in their synagogue.

Well, most of those who heard him were shocked, and asked, 'Where did he get these things? Why has such wisdom been given to this man, and why are such powerful deeds being performed through his hands?' ³ For isn't this is the carpenter – the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon – and aren't his sisters here among us?' So they were stumbled over him. ⁴ And Jesus told them: 'A Prophet doesn't go without honor anywhere other than in his own home, among his relatives, and in the area where he was raised.' ⁵ And as the result, he wasn't able to do any powerful deeds there, other than laying his hands on a few [sick ones], whom he cured. ⁶ For he was amazed by their lack of faith.

From there he traveled around the villages in a circuit, teaching. ⁷ Then he called the twelve and started sending them out by twos, and he gave them power over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He ordered them not to bring anything with them other than a walking stick... no bread and no food pouch or copper money in their sashes. ⁹ And he told them not to tie on their sandals or to [carry extra] underclothes.

¹⁰ Then he said: 'Wherever you enter a house, stay in that place until you get ready to leave. ¹¹ But in those places where they don't invite you in or listen to you; shake the dirt off your feet as you leave, as a witness against them.'

¹² So they went out and preached, calling for people to repent, ¹³ as they were casting out many demons and greasing many sick people with oil to cure them.

¹⁴ Meanwhile, King Herod heard that [Jesus'] name was becoming famous. For people were saying, 'John (who did the baptizing) has been raised from the dead. And because of this, there are great powers working in him.' ¹⁵ However, others were saying, 'He's EliJah,' while still others were saying, 'He's a Prophet like one of the Prophets [of old].'

¹⁶ But after hearing all of this, Herod concluded: 'The John whom I beheaded has been raised!' ¹⁷ For it was Herod himself who had John arrested and locked in prison over the matter of [Herod] taking Herodias (his brother's woman), ¹⁸ since John kept telling Herod that he had broken the Law by taking her. ¹⁹ And this is why Herodias hated him and wanted to kill him... however [until then] she'd been unable to do so.

²⁰ Herod was actually afraid of John, because he knew that he was a righteous and holy man; and as the result, he kept him safely [locked away]. For after he had listened to him for a while, Herod was at a loss as to what to do with him. So he gladly just kept on listening to him.

²¹ But there came a day that turned out to be convenient for Herod... it was when he was holding a banquet to celebrate his birthday. He had invited several high-ranking men, military commanders, and the foremost people of Galilee. ²² And then the daughter of Herod and Herodias came in and danced before them, which pleased Herod and those at the table so much that the king said to the little girl:

'Ask for whatever you wish and I'll give it to you.'²³ Yes, he swore to her: 'Whatever you ask of me, I'll give you... up to half of my kingdom!'

²⁴ Well, she went out and asked her mother, 'What should I ask for?' And [her mother] replied, 'The head of John... the one who does the baptizing.'

²⁵ So she ran back to the king and said, 'I want you to give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter... right now.'

²⁶ And although this deeply disturbed the king, he didn't want to ignore her, because of the oaths and because of those who were reclining at the table.²⁷ So the king immediately sent his bodyguard and commanded him to bring back [John's] head. Therefore, [the guard] went off and beheaded John in the prison,²⁸ brought in his head on a platter, gave it to the young girl, and she gave it to her mother.

²⁹ Well, when [John's] disciples heard about this, they came and took his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

³⁰ Meanwhile, all of the Apostles had assembled to meet with Jesus and report to him about everything that they'd been teaching and doing.³¹ And he told them: 'I want you to come with me to a private place where you can rest up for a while.' He said this because there were so many coming and going that they virtually had no free time... not even to eat a meal.³² So they all traveled by boat to a remote place where they could be by themselves.

³³ However, some people noticed them leaving and they told many others, then they all ran from the cities on foot and got ahead of them.³⁴ Therefore, when [Jesus and his Apostles] got out of the boat, they saw an enormous crowd. But he felt sorry for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he started teaching them many things.

³⁵ Well by then, it was getting quite late. So his disciples came up to him and said: 'This is a very remote place and it's getting late,³⁶ so we should send the people off into the countryside and villages around here in order to buy some food for themselves.'

³⁷ But [Jesus] told them: 'You give them something to eat.'

And they replied: 'Why, that would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread just to feed them?'

³⁸ Then [Jesus] asked: 'How many loaves do you have? Go see!'

And after checking, they said: 'Five, plus two fish.'

³⁹ So he told all the people to lie down on the green grass in rows...⁴⁰ and they reclined in rows of fifties and hundreds.⁴¹ Then [Jesus] took the five loaves [of bread] and two fish, looked up toward the heavens and spoke a blessing, then he broke up the bread and divided the two fish, giving it to the disciples so they could set them in front of the people...⁴² and they all ate and were satisfied.⁴³ Well, when they went to pick up the scraps, they found there were twelve baskets full... not including the fish!⁴⁴ However, there were about five thousand men who ate the bread.

⁴⁵ Well, right after that, [Jesus] instructed his disciples to get into the boat and travel ahead of him toward BethSaida, which was on the opposite shore. Then he dismissed the crowd,⁴⁶ and after excusing himself, he went up the mountain to pray.

⁴⁷ Later that evening (as the boat was well out to sea and [Jesus] was there by himself on the land), ⁴⁸ he could see that they were rowing with all their might, since they had a strong headwind blowing against them. So the next morning (while it was still dark), he came toward them, walking on top of the sea... in fact, he started to walk right past them! ⁴⁹ Well, when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought, 'It's a phantom,' and they screamed in fright. ⁵⁰ For they all saw him and they were all deeply disturbed.

But right away, he spoke to them and said: 'Be brave... it's me! Don't be afraid.' ⁵¹ Then he got into the boat with them and the wind died down. However, all these events left them stunned, ⁵² because they really didn't understand the meaning of the bread, since their hearts had been dulled.

⁵³ Well, soon they got across to the land, arriving at GenNesaret and anchoring nearby. ⁵⁴ However, as soon as they got out of the boat, some people recognized [Jesus], ⁵⁵ and they ran throughout all that area. Then many people came carrying the ill on their cots to the place where they'd heard that Jesus was.

⁵⁶ And thereafter, wherever he went into a village or city, or even into the fields or markets, they would bring their sick and beg him just to let them touch the fringes of his clothes. And all who touched them were healed.

Chapter 7

¹ Now, some Pharisees and scribes came from JeruSalem and surrounded him, ² because they had seen some of his disciples eating bread with unwashed hands... ³ for none of the Pharisees or any of the Judeans would eat [anything] unless they vigorously washed their hands first, since they followed the traditions of the elders. ⁴ Nor did they eat anything that they brought [home] from the market until after they had rinsed it. And they observed many other traditions that had been passed down, such as soaking cups, pitchers, and copper pots in water.

⁵ So these Pharisees and scribes asked him: 'Why don't your disciples follow the traditions of the elders... look, they eat bread without first washing their hands!'

⁶ But [Jesus] replied, 'IsaiAh prophesied well about you hypocrites when he wrote:

With their mouths, these people approach Me,

And with their lips, they offer Me praise...

But they're far away from Me in their hearts.

So it's in vain that they bow before Me,

Since they're teaching the ideas and instructions of men!

⁸ 'Yes, you're ignoring the Commandments of God while you hang onto these traditions of men... ⁹ you zealously push aside the Commandments of God so you can observe these traditions! ¹⁰ And though Moses told you to honor your father and mother and that anyone who says bad things to his father or mother should be put to death; ¹¹ you say that a man should tell his father and mother that everything he owns with which he might help them has already been set aside as a holy gift! ¹² So you don't allow [people] to do anything at all [to help] their parents. ¹³ And by these traditions that you're passing on, you're nullifying the Word of God... and you're doing so many other things like that!'

¹⁴ Then he called the crowd to him again and he said to them: 'I want all of you to pay close attention and be sure that you understand! ¹⁵ There's nothing on the outside that goes into a man that can make him unclean. Rather, it's the things that come out of a man that defile him.' ¹⁶ — —

¹⁷ Well, after he left the crowd and went back inside the house, his disciples asked him about this illustration. ¹⁸ And he said: 'Don't you understand either? Nothing from the outside that enters a man can make him unclean, ¹⁹ for [such things] don't go into his heart, but into his belly and then into the sewer. Therefore, this means that everything you eat is clean!'

²⁰ Then he added: 'It's the things that come out of a man that makes him unclean. ²¹ It's things that come from the inside – from the heart – that bad thoughts come... things such as immorality, thievery, murder, ²² adultery, selfish desires, wicked actions, deceitfulness, lack of restraint, eyes that are wicked, blasphemy, arrogance, and unreasonableness. ²³ It's all these wicked things that come from the inside of a man that make him unclean.'

²⁴ Then he got up and left, traveling [north] into the area of Tyre and Sidon. There he entered a house, and although he didn't want anyone to know where he was, he couldn't escape their notice. ²⁵ So when a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard where he was, she came and bowed low at his feet ²⁶ (she was a Greek woman of Syrian-Phoenician extraction). And she kept asking [Jesus] to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ But he told her: 'The children should be satisfied first... it isn't right to take bread from the children and throw it to the puppies.'

²⁸ But she replied: 'Yes Lord; but don't the puppies under the table eat the crumbs [that fall from] the little children?'

²⁹ So he said to her: 'Because you said this, go! The demon has left your daughter.'

³⁰ Then when she got back home, she found the child lying on her bed, and the demon was gone.

³¹ Thereafter, he left the area of Tyre and traveled through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, and then on through the middle of the region called *the Ten Cities*. ³² There they brought him a man who was deaf and dumb, and they begged [Jesus] to lay his hands on him. ³³ So [Jesus] took him away from the crowd to a private spot and put his fingers into the man's ears. And after spitting, he touched his tongue; ³⁴ then he looked up into the sky and groaned, saying, 'Eph phatha,' (which means, 'Be opened').

³⁵ Well, the man's hearing ability was opened and the thing that held his tongue was loosened, so he started speaking normally. ³⁶ Then Jesus commanded those who were there not to tell anyone about this... but the more he commanded them, the more they spoke about it. ³⁷ For everyone was amazed beyond belief, and said, 'He does everything well... he even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak!'

Chapter 8

¹ Back in those days, there was another huge crowd [listening to him] that had nothing to eat. So [Jesus] called his disciples and said to them: ² 'I feel sorry for the crowd, because they've stayed here with me for the past three days and they have nothing to eat. ³ If I just send them home hungry, they may give out on the road, for some of them have for a fact come a long way.'

⁴ But his disciples asked: 'Where could anyone find enough loaves [of bread] here in this isolated place to satisfy that many people?'

⁵ And he asked them, 'How many loaves do you have?'

And they replied, 'Seven.'

⁶ So he told the crowd to get down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to serve... then they passed them out to the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few little fish. And after offering a blessing over them, Jesus told [the disciples] to serve these also. ⁸ Well, everyone ate until they were satisfied; and when they picked up the leftovers, [they filled] seven provision baskets. ⁹ Yet [there were] about four thousand who were fed!

Then he sent the crowd away, ¹⁰ and he immediately got into the boat with his disciples and traveled into parts of Dalmanutha. ¹¹ It was there that the Pharisees came up and started arguing with him, asking him to give them a sign from heaven (in order to test him). ¹² But he breathed a deep sigh and asked them: 'Why is this generation always looking for signs? I tell you the truth... this generation won't be given a sign!' ¹³ And with that, he walked over and got back into the boat, and traveled to the opposite shore.

¹⁴ Meanwhile, [the Apostles] had forgotten to bring any of the [leftover] loaves [of bread] along. So except for one loaf, they had nothing with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And as the result; when [Jesus] started warning them saying, 'Keep your eyes open and watch out for the fermentation of the Pharisees and the fermentation of Herod,' ¹⁶ they started quarreling with each other over the fact that they didn't have any bread.

¹⁷ Well, when [Jesus] recognized this, he asked them: 'Why are you arguing about not having any bread... don't you understand yet and don't you get the meaning... are your hearts so dull when it comes to understanding?' ¹⁸ You have eyes; Can't you see? You have ears; Can't you hear? Do you remember when ¹⁹ I broke five loaves [to feed] five thousand, and how many baskets full of leftovers were you able to pick up?'

And they replied, 'Yes, twelve.'

²⁰ 'And when I broke the seven loaves [to serve] four thousand men; [do you remember] how many provision baskets full of leftovers you picked up then?'

And they said, 'Seven.'

²¹ So he asked them: 'Don't you understand all of this yet?'

²² Well, from there, they traveled on to Bethsaida, where the people brought him a man who was blind... and they begged [Jesus] just to touch him. ²³ So he took the blind man by the hand and led him outside of the village, then he spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him and asked, 'Do you see anything?'

²⁴ And the man looked up and said, 'I see men... they look a little like trees, but they're walking around.'

²⁵ So [Jesus] laid his hands on the man's eyes again, and after that, he started seeing through. And before long, [his eyesight] was completely restored and he was able to see everything clearly. ²⁶ So [Jesus] sent him home with the warning: 'Don't return to the village.'

²⁷ From there, Jesus and his disciples traveled on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. And as they were on the way, he asked his disciples: 'Who are the people saying that I am?'

²⁸ And they replied: '[Some say you're] John the Baptist, others say you're EliJah, while others say you're one of the Prophets.'

²⁹ Then he asked: 'But who do you say that I am?'

And Peter answered: 'You're the Anointed One.'

³⁰ Then he ordered them not to talk about this to anyone. ³¹ And that's when he started teaching them that the Son of Man would have to suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and then be killed... but after three days, he would arise. ³² He told them plainly [what was about to happen], but Peter took him aside and started scolding him. ³³ Then [Jesus] turned and looked at his disciples, and he started scolding Peter, saying, 'Get behind me opposer, because you aren't thinking God's thoughts, but those of men!'

³⁴ Well after that, he called the crowd and his disciples to him and he said: 'If any of you want to be my disciples, [you'll have to] deny your own desires, then pick up your impaling poles and keep on following me. ³⁵ For, whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever is willing to lose his own life for my sake and for the [sake of the] good news, will save it.'

³⁶ 'What good does it do a man if he gains the whole world but he loses his life, ³⁷ and what would a man give in exchange for his life?' ³⁸ However, if anyone is ashamed of me and my words before this adulterous and sinful generation; the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he arrives in the glory of his Father with his holy messengers.'

Chapter 9

¹ Then he went on to say this to them: 'I tell you the truth; some of you who are standing here won't taste death before you see the Kingdom of God coming in power.'² And six days later, Jesus took just Peter, James, and John along to a private spot on a high mountain, where he changed form in front of them. ³ For his clothes started to glow much whiter than anyone on earth who washes and bleaches clothes could whiten them... ⁴ and then EliJah and Moses appeared and started talking to Jesus.

⁵ Well in reaction, Peter said to Jesus: 'Rabbi, it's good for us to be here. Now, let us erect three tents... one for you, one for Moses, and one for EliJah.'⁶ However, he really didn't know what he was saying, because they were all so frightened.

⁷ Then right away, a cloud formed that covered them all, and a voice came from the cloud that said: 'This is My loved Son; Listen to him!' ⁸ And when they looked around, they suddenly saw just Jesus standing by himself.

⁹ Well, as they were coming back down the mountain, [Jesus] ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Son of Man would be resurrected from the dead. ¹⁰ So they took these words to heart, but then they started talking among themselves about what [he meant] when he spoke of being resurrected from the dead.

¹¹ Well later, they asked him: 'Why do the scribes say that EliJah must come first?' ¹² And [Jesus] replied: 'EliJah does indeed come first and he restores everything. But, why do you suppose it was written about the Son of Man that he will be tried, suffer greatly, and be treated as a no-account?' ¹³ I tell you this: EliJah has in fact already come and they did whatever they wanted to him, just as it was written would happen to him.'

¹⁴ Then, when they got back to the rest of the disciples, they found that a large crowd had gathered around them, and there were some scribes who were arguing with them. ¹⁵ But when the crowd saw [Jesus], they were stunned and everyone ran up to him and started greeting him.

¹⁶ So he asked [the disciples]: 'What have you been arguing about?'

¹⁷ And someone in the crowd replied: 'Teacher, I was bringing my son to you, because he has a spirit that won't allow him talk. ¹⁸ And whenever it takes control of him, it throws him on the ground, he foams [at the mouth] and grinds his teeth, and then he just goes limp. I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they couldn't.'

¹⁹ And Jesus said: 'O you faithless generation; How much longer do I have to be with you, and how much longer must I tolerate you? Bring him to me!'

²⁰ So they brought [the boy] to him, and at the sight [of Jesus], the spirit immediately threw [the child] into convulsions... he fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming [at the mouth].

²¹ Then [Jesus] asked the father: 'How long has this been happening to him?'

And he replied: 'Since he was a child... ²² it has thrown him into the fire and into the water repeatedly to destroy him. So if you can do anything, [please] feel pity and help us!'

²³ And Jesus told him: 'You said, *If you can!* Don't you know that everything is possible for those who have faith?'

²⁴ Then the father of the young boy immediately shouted, 'I have faith... but help me to have more faith!'

²⁵ Well at the time, Jesus could see that more people were running toward [them]; so he scolded the unclean spirit saying, 'I order you to come out of him, you spirit of speechlessness and deafness... and don't go back into him anymore!'

²⁶ Then, after shouting and going through several convulsions, [the spirit] came out, and [the boy] looked like he was dead. So most of the crowd started shouting, 'He's dead!' ²⁷ But then Jesus took him by the hand, lifted him up, and he was able to stand erect.

²⁸ Well after that, [Jesus] went into a house, and his disciples came with him, where they asked him in private: 'Why couldn't we cast it out?'

²⁹ And [Jesus] replied: 'This is the kind that will only come out by means of prayer.'

³⁰ From there they went on and traveled through GaliLee. And [Jesus] didn't want anyone to know [where they were going], ³¹ because he was spending time teaching his disciples and explaining to them that the Son of Man was going to be betrayed into the hands of men who were going to kill him... but after being dead for three days, he would stand again. ³² However, they still didn't grasp the meaning of what he was saying, and they were afraid to ask him any more questions.

³³ Thereafter, they returned to CapharNaum, which is where [Jesus was staying]. And there he asked them: 'What were you arguing about along the road?' ³⁴ However, they didn't want to answer, because

they'd been arguing about which of them was the greatest. ³⁵ So he sat down and called the twelve over; then he said to them: 'If anyone wants to be first, he must be the last and the servant of all.'

³⁶ Then he took a little boy and stood him in their midst. He put his arms around him, and said: ³⁷ 'Whoever welcomes someone like this little boy in my name, also welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me is welcoming the One who sent me.'

³⁸ [Then later], John said to him: 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he isn't one of your followers.'

³⁹ But Jesus told him: 'Don't try to stop him, because no one who does powerful deeds in my name will be too quick to say bad things against me... ⁴⁰ for those who aren't against us are for us. ⁴¹ I tell you the truth; Anyone who gives you so much as a cup of water to drink because you're walking in the name of the Anointed One won't lose his reward. ⁴² But for anyone who becomes a snare to one of these little believers, it would be better if the type of millstone that's turned by a burro was hung around his neck and he was cast into the sea!

⁴³ 'Therefore, if your hand traps you, cut it off; for it's better to go through life physically handicapped than to have both hands and go into the garbage dump... into the fire that can't be put out. ⁴⁴ -- ⁴⁵ And if your foot traps you, cut it off; for it's better to go through life lame than to have both feet and end up in the garbage dump. ⁴⁶ -- ⁴⁷ Also, if your eye traps you, pluck it out and throw it away; for it's better to enter the Kingdom of God with one eye, than to have both eyes and be thrown into the garbage dump, ⁴⁸ where there are always maggots and the fire is never extinguished.

⁴⁹ 'You will all be salted with fire, as a sacrifice is [offered with] salt. ⁵⁰ And although salt is good; if it loses its salty flavor, how can you use it for seasoning? So, have salt in yourselves and stay at peace with each other.'

Chapter 10

¹ Well from there, he traveled on to the border of Judea and crossed over the Jordan. And all the while, the crowds kept coming to him. So as was his custom, he started teaching them.

² It was there that the Pharisees came, and to test him, asked whether it was legal for a man to divorce his woman. ³ Then [Jesus] asked them: 'What Commandment did Moses give you?'

⁴ And they replied: 'Moses allowed [us to] write out a certificate of dismissal and let her go.'

⁵ Then Jesus said: 'He wrote this commandment for you because you're so hardhearted. ⁶ However, back in the earliest [days] of their creation, He made them male and female [and said]: ⁷ *This is why a man will leave his father and mother ⁸ and the two will become one flesh.* So notice that they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore, what God has put together under the same yoke shouldn't be separated by any man.'

¹⁰ Well, when they got back home again, the disciples asked him about this. ¹¹ And he told them: 'Whoever divorces his woman and marries another, commits adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman divorces her man and marries another; she commits adultery.'

¹³ After that, people started bringing their young children to [Jesus] so he could touch them, but the disciples tried to discourage them. ¹⁴ And when Jesus saw this, he was irritated and said to them: 'Let the young children come to me... don't try to stop them, because God's Kingdom belongs to people

like this. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth; Anyone who doesn't welcome the Kingdom of God like a young child, won't ever get into it.' ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms and started blessing them, laying his hands on them.

¹⁷ Well, as Jesus was leaving, someone ran up and fell to his knees before him, then asked: 'Good Teacher; what must I do to inherit age-long life?'

¹⁸ And Jesus replied: 'Why do you call me good? No one is good except the one God. ¹⁹ You know the Commandments: *Don't murder; don't commit adultery; don't steal; don't give false testimony; don't defraud; honor your father and mother.*'

²⁰ But the man said: 'Teacher, I've kept all those things since my youth.'

²¹ Well, Jesus saw what he was on the inside, and feeling love for him, he said: 'Then there's just one thing that is missing; Go and sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in the heavens... then come and be my follower.'

²² But [the young man] grew very sad at what [Jesus] said and went off grieving, because he owned so many things.

²³ Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples: 'What a difficult thing it is for the wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God!' ²⁴ However (because the disciples were surprised at those words), Jesus added: 'Children, it will be difficult to enter the Kingdom of God. ²⁵ In fact, it would be easier [to thread a rope] through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of God.'

²⁶ And at this, they were even more shocked and they asked: 'Then, who can actually be saved?'

²⁷ And looking straight at them, Jesus said: 'With men, this is impossible. But that isn't true of God, for all things are possible with [Him].'

²⁸ Then Peter said: 'Look! We've left everything to follow you.'

²⁹ And Jesus told him: 'I tell you the truth; There's no one who has left a house, or brothers, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news ³⁰ who won't get a hundred times more now, --- and age-long life in the era that is coming. ³¹ However, many that are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

³² Thereafter, as they were traveling up to JeruSalem, Jesus was walking out in front of them, and everyone was amazed [by this] and his followers started to worry. Then he took the twelve aside to tell them the things that were about to happen to him, saying: ³³ '{Look!}' We are walking up to JeruSalem, where the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, who will then condemn him to death and turn him over to the gentiles, ³⁴ who will make fun of him, spit on him, whip him, and finally kill him... but after three days, he will stand again.'

³⁵ Well [sometime later], James and John (the two sons of ZebediOu) came up to him and said: 'Teacher, we want to ask you to do something for us.'

³⁶ And he replied: 'What do you want?'

³⁷ And they said: 'Allow us to sit, one at your right hand and the other on your left, in your glory.'

³⁸ But Jesus replied: 'You don't know what you're asking. Can you drink from the cup that I'll be drinking and can you be immersed in the same baptism with which I'll be baptized?'

³⁹ And they replied: 'We can.'

Then Jesus told them: 'You will indeed drink the cup that I'm drinking and be immersed in the baptism with which I'm being baptized. ⁴⁰ However, sitting at my right or left isn't mine to give. That belongs to those for whom it has been prepared.'

⁴¹ Well, when the ten others heard about [their request], they were very irritated with James and John.

⁴² But Jesus called [them all] to him and said: 'You know that those who appear to be ruling the nations act like masters over [their subjects], and [you know] how the greatest of them like to use their power. ⁴³ This isn't the way it should be among you. For whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever wants to be first among you must be everyone's slave. ⁴⁵ Why, even the Son of Man didn't come here to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

⁴⁶ Well, before long, they arrived at Jericho. And as [Jesus] was leaving Jericho (along with his disciples and quite a crowd), there was a man called Bartimaeus (a blind beggar) who was sitting alongside the road. ⁴⁷ And when he heard that Jesus the Nazarene [was passing], he started shouting, 'Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!' ⁴⁸ But many [in the crowd] just told him to be quiet. However, he started shouting even louder: 'Son of David; Have mercy on me!'

⁴⁹ So Jesus stopped and said: 'Call him over.'

Then they called the blind man and told him: 'Cheer up and come here... he's calling for you!'

⁵⁰ Well at that, the man threw off his robe, jumped to his feet, and went to Jesus.

⁵¹ Then Jesus asked: 'What do you want me to do for you?'

And the blind man replied: 'My Teacher; Let me see again!'

⁵² Then Jesus said to him: 'Go, for your faith has made you well.' And immediately, he was able to see! And thereafter, he started following Jesus.

Chapter 11

¹ Now, as they were getting close to JeruSalem (near BethPhage and BethAny on the Mount of Olives), he sent two of his disciples ahead, ² telling them: 'Go into the village across from us; and as soon as you enter, you'll find a colt that is tied, which no man has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks why you're doing this, just say, *The Lord needs it*. And he will immediately let you take it.'

⁴ So they went and found the colt tied outside a door on a side street, and they untied it. ⁵ Then when some of those who were standing there asked why they were untying the colt, ⁶ [the disciples] told them what Jesus had said, and they let them take it.

⁷ From there, they brought the colt to Jesus, then they put a robe over it and he mounted it. ⁸ So, many started spreading their robes on the road, and many others were laying down fronds that they'd cut

from trees in the fields. ⁹ Then those who walked in front of him and behind him started shouting, 'May [God] save him! Praise the one who comes in the Name of Jehovah! ¹⁰ Praise the Kingdom of our Father David that is coming! Save him, we pray, from the heights!'

¹¹ So he rode from there into JeruSalem. Then he went into the Temple and looked around, but because it was late, he just [went back] to BethAny with the twelve.

¹² Well, the next morning (as he was leaving BethAny), he became hungry. ¹³ And from a distance, he noticed leaves on a fig tree, so he went over to see if he could find some [fruit] on it. But when he got there, he found nothing other than just the leaves, because it was [a little early in the year] for figs. ¹⁴ Then [Jesus] said to [the tree]: 'May no one eat fruit from you for the rest of the age' (and his disciples heard [him say] this).

¹⁵ Well from there, they traveled on into JeruSalem. Then [Jesus] entered the Temple and started throwing out those who were buying and selling. He also pushed over the moneychanger's tables and the seats of those who sold doves, ¹⁶ and he wouldn't allow anyone to carry things through the Temple. ¹⁷ He kept teaching them and saying, 'It is written: *My house will be called a House of Prayer for all nations*. Yet, you've turned it into a den of thieves!'

¹⁸ Well, when the chief priests and scribes heard about this, they started looking for ways to destroy him. However, they were afraid of him, because his teaching always amazed the crowds.

¹⁹ Then after it got late, they left the city. ²⁰ And as they were traveling along early the [next] morning, they saw that fig tree all withered up from its roots. ²¹ Then, on remembering what Jesus had said, Peter said to him: 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered!'

²² And Jesus said: 'You must have faith in God. ²³ I tell you the truth; If you would say to this mountain, *Rise and be thrown into the sea*... if you don't have any doubts in your heart but have faith; whatever you say will happen, will happen. ²⁴ This is why I tell you: If you believe that you will receive anything you ask for in prayer, you will receive it. ²⁵ However, as you're stand there praying, also forgive anything that others may have done to you, so that your Father in the heavens will forgive your mistakes.' ²⁶ — —

²⁷ Well, after they had entered JeruSalem, and as Jesus was walking around in the Temple, the chief priests, scribes, and elders came up to him ²⁸ and asked: 'Who told you that you could do these things... just who gave you the authority?'

²⁹ Then Jesus replied: 'I'm going to ask you a question, and if you answer me, I'll tell you where I got the authority to do these things. ³⁰ Did the John's baptism come from heaven or from men? Tell me!'

³¹ So they started reasoning among themselves and saying, 'If we say it was from heaven, he'll ask: *Then why didn't you believe him?* ³² But if we say it was from men...' So they didn't answer because they were afraid of the crowds... for [the people] believed that John was a Prophet. ³³ So they told Jesus: 'We don't know.'

And Jesus told them: 'Then I'm not going to tell you where I got the authority to do these things.'

Chapter 12

¹ Well after that, Jesus started teaching them using these illustrations:

'There was a man who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a vat for the wine press, built

a lookout tower [to protect it], and then he rented it out to some tenant farmers before he traveled abroad. ² And when the [harvest] season arrived, he sent a slave to the farmers to get some of the vineyard's fruit. ³ But they grabbed [the slave], beat him up, and sent him away with nothing. ⁴ Then he sent another slave to them, whom they hit on the head and treated dishonorably. ⁵ So he sent another, whom they killed, and [he sent] many others, some of whom they flayed with whips and others whom they murdered.

⁶ 'Well, [the master] had one last [person whom he could send], a dearly loved son. So he sent his son to them, saying, *Surely they'll respect him!*

⁷ 'But those farmers said to each other: *This is the heir! Let's kill him, and then his [land] will be ours!*

⁸ So they grabbed him and killed him, then they threw [his body] outside of the vineyard.

⁹ 'Now, what do you think the owner of the vineyard will do? Won't he come and destroy those tenant farmers and entrust the vineyard to others?

¹⁰ 'Have you ever read the scripture that says:

The stone that the builders rejected,

Has become the chief cornerstone.

¹¹ *It was by Jehovah that this came to be,*

And we think that this is just grand.'

¹² Well, this is when they began to realize that he was applying this illustration to them, and after that, they started looking for ways to arrest him. However, because they were afraid of the crowd, they released him and left.

¹³ So they sent some of the Pharisees and some of the followers of Herod to him to try to get [Jesus] to say something [they could use against him]. ¹⁴ These people came to him and said: 'Teacher; we know that you tell the truth and that you aren't impressed by anyone, for you don't look at what men are on the outside, but you truly teach the ways of God. So tell us: Does the Law require us to pay the head tax to Caesar or not... ¹⁵ should we pay, or shouldn't we?'

But noting their hypocrisy, he said: 'Why are you testing me? Bring me a silver coin.'

¹⁶ So they brought him one, and he asked, 'Whose image and inscription is on this?'

And they replied, 'Caesar's.'

¹⁷ Then Jesus said: 'Pay Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God'... and that left them bewildered.

¹⁸ Now, the Sadducees (who say there's no such thing as a resurrection) came to [Jesus] and asked: ¹⁹ 'Teacher; Moses wrote that a brother of a man who dies and leaves his woman without a child should take his woman and raise offspring for him. ²⁰ So, let's say that there were seven brothers. The first took a woman, but he died without offspring. ²¹ Then the second took her, but he also died without offspring, as did the third... ²² so none of the seven left her with any offspring. And finally, she also died. ²³ Whose woman will she be in the resurrection, since all seven of them had her as theirs?'

²⁴ Then Jesus replied: 'This is why you're so misled, for you don't understand the Scriptures or the power of God! ²⁵ When the dead are resurrected, they won't marry or be married, because they will be

like the messengers in the heavens.

²⁶ 'When it comes to the dead that will be raised; haven't you read in the book of Moses (in the story about the thorn bush) that God said to him, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?* ²⁷ Notice that He isn't the God of the dead, but of the living! Yes, you are very misled!

²⁸ Well, one of the scribes (who had arrived and heard the things that were being said) knew that [Jesus] had given a good answer. So he asked: 'Then, which is the primary Commandment?'

²⁹ And Jesus answered: 'The primary one is this: *Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our God is the only Lord.* ³⁰ *So you must love your God Jehovah with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.* ³¹ The second one is this: *You must love your neighbor as yourself.* No Commandments are greater than these.'

³² Then the scribe said: 'That's good... you're speaking the truth, teacher, when you say that He is One and there is no other, ³³ and that loving Him with our whole heart, understanding and strength, and loving our neighbors as ourselves is worth much more than all our whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.'

³⁴ Then when Jesus recognized that [the scribe] had responded intelligently, he said to him: 'You aren't far from the Kingdom of God.'

Well from then on, no one else had enough courage to ask him any more questions.

³⁵ So (in reply to a question that had been raised while Jesus was teaching in the Temple), Jesus went on to ask them: 'Why do the scribes say that the Anointed One is David's son? ³⁶ For through the Holy Breath [of God], David said,
*Jehovah said to my Lord;
Sit here at my right hand
'Til I put your enemies under your feet.*

³⁷ Therefore, if David called him Lord, how could he be his son?'

[Well, all the while], the huge crowd was listening to him with a lot of pleasure. ³⁸ So as he was teaching, he gave them this warning: 'Watch out for the scribes who like to walk around in robes, who wish to be greeted in the markets, ³⁹ and who want the front seats in the synagogues and the first positions at the meals. ⁴⁰ For though they devour the homes of widows, they put on great pretenses and they deliver long prayers. This is the reason why they're going to receive a heavier judgment.'

⁴¹ Then, as he was sitting across from the [Temple] Treasury, he noticed the crowd dropping money into the boxes, and he could see that the rich people were dropping in many coins. ⁴² But he also noticed a poor widow who went up and dropped in just two small copper coins (they weren't worth very much). ⁴³ And at that, [Jesus] called his disciples over and said: 'I tell you the truth; this poor widow put in more than all the rest who were dropping their money into the Treasury chest, ⁴⁴ because they're throwing in something of which they have plenty. But this needy woman dropped in everything that she had... her whole [means of] living!'

Chapter 13

¹ Then, as he was leaving the Temple, one of his disciples said: 'Teacher; just look at these stones and these buildings!'

² And Jesus said to him: 'Do you see these great buildings? There won't be a stone left on top of a

stone here that won't be thrown down.'

³ Then, as he was sitting in a quiet spot on the Mount of Olives across from the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to him and asked: ⁴ 'When will these things happen, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to end?'

⁵ So Jesus said to them: 'Be careful so that no one misleads you, ⁶ for many will come in my name, saying, *I'm [the one]*, and they'll mislead many. ⁷ And when you hear of wars and reports of wars, don't worry, because [these things] must happen... but that isn't the end. ⁸ For though there will be wars of nations against nations and kingdoms against kingdoms, as well as famines and rumblings in one place after another; these things are just the beginnings of the birth pains.

⁹ 'At that time you'll have to watch out for yourselves, because you'll be brought before religious courts, you'll be whipped in the synagogues, and you'll stand before governors and kings for my sake, as a witness to them. ¹⁰ But first, the good news must be preached to all the gentiles. ¹¹ But when this happens and they're leading you off to face your accusers, don't worry about what you should say... just say whatever is given to you in that hour, since [God's] Holy Breath will be doing the speaking, not you.

¹² 'Then brothers will hand over their brothers for death, fathers [will hand over] their children, and children will oppose their parents and have them put to death! ¹³ For everyone will hate you because of my name... but those who endure to the end will be saved.

¹⁴ 'When you see the disgusting destroyer standing where it shouldn't (the readers should pay attention to this), then those in Judea should flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ The man who is standing on his roof shouldn't go down inside to take anything out of his house, ¹⁶ nor should the person who is out in a field go back home to pick up his clothes.

¹⁷ 'Woe to those who are pregnant and those who are nursing babies in those days... ¹⁸ keep praying that this doesn't happen during the winter. ¹⁹ For a difficult time will arrive in those days that won't be like anything that has happened since the earliest creation by God until then, or should ever happen again. ²⁰ And if Jehovah hadn't shortened those days, it's likely that no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elected ones whom He's chosen, He will shorten those days.

²¹ 'Then if anyone says to you, *Look; here's the Anointed One*, or, *Look; there he is*; don't believe it! ²² For false anointed and false prophets will arise with signs and omens that could possibly mislead even the elected! ²³ Now, you must be careful, because I've warned you!

²⁴ 'Then, in the days that follow this difficult time...

The sun will be dark and the moon will not shine,

²⁵ *The stars will fall from the skies,*

And the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶ For they'll see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he'll send his messengers off to gather his elected from the four winds... from the ends of the lands to the ends of the skies!

²⁸ 'Now, learn from the illustration of the fig tree:

When its branches grow tender

And it starts putting out leaves,

You know that summer is near.

²⁹ So, when you see these things start to happen, know that he's near... at the doors.

³⁰ I tell you the truth; This generation will not pass away until all these things have happened... ³¹ though the lands and the skies should pass away, my words will not pass away.

³² Yet, no one knows the day or the hour... not the messengers in heaven or the Son, just the Father. ³³ So stay awake and keep watching, because you don't know the time when he will arrive!

³⁴ 'It's like a man who (before leaving his house and traveling abroad) instructed each of his slaves to just go on doing their jobs... but he commanded his doorkeeper to stay awake! ³⁵ So, this is why you must stay awake, for you don't know when the Master of the house will be returning... whether it's in the evening, at midnight, at rooster crowing, or early in the morning. ³⁶ When he suddenly arrives, make sure that he doesn't find you sleeping. ³⁷ And what I'm saying to you, I'm saying to everyone: Stay awake!'

Chapter 14

¹ Now, it was just two days before Passover and the festival of No fermentation, and the chief priests and the scribes were trying to come up with devious ways to grab [Jesus] and kill him. ² But they said, 'Not at the festival... not at any time when it will create a commotion!'

³ Well, [Jesus] happened to be reclining at a meal in the house of Simon the leper (in BethAny) when a woman came in carrying a very expensive alabaster jar of perfumed oil (genuine nard). And after breaking open the alabaster, she poured it over his head. ⁴ But some [of his Apostles] were grumbling among themselves, asking, 'Why [is she] wasting this perfume?' ⁵ We could have sold the ointment for as much as three-hundred silver coins and given it to the poor!' So, they were very displeased with her.

⁶ But Jesus said: 'Leave her alone... why are you making trouble for her? She just did a good thing for me! ⁷ You'll always have the poor with you, and you can do good things for them whenever you wish... but you won't always have me. ⁸ She did what she could by pouring perfumed ointment on my body ahead of time for my burial. ⁹ And I tell you the truth: Wherever the Good News is preached anywhere in the world, what this woman did will be told in memory of her.'

¹⁰ [However after that], Judas Iscariot (one of the twelve) went to see the chief priests in order to betray him. ¹¹ And when they heard [his offer], they were delighted and they promised to pay him in silver. So he started looking for an opportunity to betray [Jesus].

¹² Then, toward the first day of No Fermentation (when the Passover sacrifices are offered), [Jesus'] disciples asked him: 'Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?'

¹³ So he sent two of his disciples off, telling them: 'Go into the city, and there you will meet a man who is carrying an amphora of water... follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he goes inside, tell the master of the house that the Teacher asks, *Where is my guest room where I can eat the Passover with my disciples?*' ¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room that's already furnished... make the preparations there.'

¹⁶ So the disciples left and went into the city, and there they found everything just as he said; and they prepared for the Passover. ¹⁷ Then that evening, [Jesus] came in with the twelve, ¹⁸ and as they were reclining and eating at the table, Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; One of you who is eating with me will betray me!'

¹⁹ Well at this, they were all deeply saddened and asked, 'I'm not the one, am I?' ²⁰ And he answered: 'It's one of the twelve who is dipping into the common bowl with me. ²¹ It's a fact that the Son of Man is going to be taken away, just as it was written about him... but woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man, for it would be better had he never been born!'

²² Well, as they were eating, [Jesus] took a loaf and offered a blessing over it. Then he broke it and gave it to [his Apostles] saying, 'Take it, for this is my body.'

²³ Then he took a cup, and after offering thanks for it, he handed it to them and they all drank from it.

²⁴ And he said to them: 'This is my blood of the Sacred Agreement, which is being poured out [on behalf of] many. ²⁵ I tell you the truth; I definitely won't drink of the fruit of the vine again until the Day when I drink it anew in the Kingdom of The God.'

²⁶ And finally, after singing songs of praise, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ It was there that Jesus said to them, 'All of you will be stumbled over me tonight, because it is written:

I will strike down the shepherd,

And all the sheep will be scattered.

²⁸ But after I wake up, I'll go ahead of you into GaliLee.'

²⁹ Then Peter said to him: 'Even if all the others are stumbled, I won't be!'

³⁰ And Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; Today... tonight... before a rooster crows twice, you will deny knowing me three times.'

³¹ Yet [Peter] insisted, saying, 'Even if I have to die with you, I definitely won't deny you.' And all the others were saying the same thing.

³² Then later, when they got to a place called GethSemane, he said to his disciples: 'Sit down here while I [go over there] to pray.'

³³ So he took Peter, James, and John along with him, and he became deeply upset and bothered. ³⁴ For he said to them: 'My soul is grieved to the point of death... so wait here and stay awake!' ³⁵ Then he went a little way forward and fell to the ground, praying that, if it was possible, he could be freed from that hour. ³⁶ And he said: 'Papa! Father! Everything is possible for You, so remove this cup from me! Yet, not as I wish, but as You wish.'

³⁷ But when he returned, he found them all sleeping. And he said to Peter: 'Simon, are you sleeping... didn't you have enough strength to stay awake for just one hour?' ³⁸ Now, stay awake and keep praying that you won't be put to the test! But indeed; although the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.' ³⁹ Then he went off and prayed once more, saying the same things.

⁴⁰ Well, when he came back, he found them all sleeping again, because their eyes were heavy... and they just didn't know what to say to him. ⁴¹ [And finally], he returned a third time and told them: 'Here you are resting and sleeping. That's enough! The time has arrived! Look! The Son of Man has now been betrayed into the hands of sinners!' ⁴² Get up and let's go! Look! My betrayer is nearby!'

⁴³ Well immediately (while he was still talking), Judas (one of the twelve) arrived with a mob, which included the chief priests, scribes, and elders, all of whom were carrying swords and clubs.

⁴⁴ Then the betrayer gave the sign that they had agreed on when he said, 'The one that I kiss is him... grab him and arrest him!' ⁴⁵ So he went up [to Jesus] straight away and said, 'Rabbi!', and then he kissed him tenderly.

⁴⁶ Well at that, they grabbed [Jesus] and arrested him. ⁴⁷ However, one of those who was standing nearby drew his sword and struck the chief priest's slave, cutting off his ear.

⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to [the mob]: 'Did you come here with swords and clubs to arrest me like some robber?' ⁴⁹ Why, I was with you in the Temple where I taught for days, but you didn't grab me then. However, this has happened so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.'

⁵⁰ Then [the Apostles] all abandoned him and ran away. ⁵¹ But a certain young man (who had slipped a linen nightgown over his naked body) started following close behind... and then [the mob] tried to grab him too, ⁵² so he ran away naked, leaving his covering behind.

⁵³ From there they led Jesus to the [house of the] High Priest, where all the chief priests, elders, and scribes had assembled. ⁵⁴ Then Peter (who had been following him at some distance) went into the courtyard of the High Priest and sat there among the building supervisors, warming himself in front of the fire.

⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the chief priests and those of the Jewish religious court were trying to find witnesses against Jesus, so they could have him executed... but they couldn't find any. ⁵⁶ Many did come forward to give false testimony against him, but their stories just didn't agree. ⁵⁷ Then some stood up and perjured themselves with the words, ⁵⁸ 'We heard him say that he will tear down this Most Holy Place that was made with hands and build another that isn't made with hands in just three days.' ⁵⁹ Yet, even these witnesses couldn't agree.

⁶⁰ So finally, the High Priest stood up in their midst and questioned Jesus, asking, 'Don't you have an answer... what is it that they're accusing you of?'

⁶¹ But [Jesus] remained silent and didn't reply to anything he asked.

Then the High Priest questioned him again, asking, 'Are you the Anointed One... the Son of the Praised One?'

⁶² And Jesus replied: 'I am... and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of the skies!'

⁶³ Well at this, the High Priest ripped his clothes and said, 'Why do we need any more witnesses? ⁶⁴ You've heard the blasphemy! So, what's your opinion?'

Then they all [voted to] condemn him and hold him for execution. ⁶⁵ Some also started spitting on him, as they covered his face and hit him with their fists, shouting, 'Prophecy!' [And finally], the building supervisors (after slapping him in the face) took him into custody.

⁶⁶ Now, while Peter was in the courtyard below, one of the High Priest's servant girls ⁶⁷ noticed him [standing there and] warming himself. She looked at him very hard, and then she said, 'You were also with the Nazarene... this Jesus!' ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, 'I don't know him and I don't know what you're talking about!'

Then, when he went outside to the courtyard entrance, ⁶⁹ the servant girl (when she saw him again) said to those who were around her: 'He's one of them!' ⁷⁰ And once more, he denied it. Then some who were standing around him said to Peter: 'Sure you're one of them, because you're also a Galilean!' ⁷¹ But Peter started cursing and swore, 'I don't know this man that you're talking about!' ⁷² And immediately a rooster crowed a second time... and that's when Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: 'Before a rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.' And he broke down and cried.

Chapter 15

¹ Well, at dawn, the chief priests sat down with the elders and scribes to consult with the complete Jewish religious court; and thereafter, they bound Jesus and handed him over to Pilate.

² So Pilate asked him: 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

And he replied: 'You said it yourself!'

³ Then the chief priests started accusing him of many other things.

⁴ So Pilate questioned him again and asked, 'Don't you have any reply? Look at all the charges they're bringing against you!'

⁵ But Jesus wouldn't say anything more, which amazed Pilate.

⁶ Well, it was [Pilate's] custom to release any prisoner that they asked for at the festivals. ⁷ And at the time, there was one man in jail called BarAbbas, who was with a group of rebels that had committed murder during a rebellion. ⁸ So when the crowd came [to Pilate] to petition him to release a prisoner (as it was their custom), ⁹ Pilate asked, 'Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?' ¹⁰ (because he knew that the chief priests had only handed him over because they were envious of him).

¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd and had them demand the release BarAbbas instead.

¹² So Pilate asked: 'Then, what shall I do with this one whom you call, *the King of the Jews*?'

¹³ And once again, they shouted: 'Impale him!'

¹⁴ But Pilate asked: 'Why? What bad thing did he do?'

However, they just kept shouting louder and louder, 'Impale him!'

¹⁵ So to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released BarAbbas to them. Then after having Jesus whipped, he handed him over to be impaled.

¹⁶ Well, the soldiers took him out into the courtyard of the Governor's Palace and assembled all the troops. ¹⁷ There they covered him with purple [cloth] and braided a crown of thorns, which they slipped over [his head], ¹⁸ and they started greeting him saying, 'Rejoice, O you King of the Jews,' ¹⁹ as they were hitting him on the head with a measuring rod and spitting on him... then they got down on their knees and bowed to their faces before him.

²⁰ Finally (after they'd had their fun), they stripped him of the purple [cloth], put his clothes back on, and took him out to be hung on the pole. ²¹ But they drafted a man named Simon (a Cyrenian who was coming in from the fields... the father of Alexander and Rufus) to carry the pole.

²² So from there, they took him to GolGotha (which translates as, *Skull Place*). ²³ And then they tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh; but he wouldn't take it. ²⁴ And finally, they hung him on the pole and threw dice to see who would get his clothes.

²⁵ It was the third hour when they hung him on the pole, ²⁶ and they put a sign over him that showed the charge against him: 'The King of the Jews.'

²⁷ There were also two robbers who were hung on poles along with him... one on his right and the other on his left. ²⁸ – –

²⁹ Then those who were passing by started saying terrible things to him, shaking their heads and shouting, 'Bah! O you who would tear down the Temple and rebuild it in three days. ³⁰ Now, save yourself... come down from the pole!'

³¹ And that's also the way that the chief priests and scribes were joking about him, saying, 'He saved others, but now he can't save himself! ³² Let the Anointed One who is the King of IsraEl come down off his pole, so we can witness it and believe in him!' And even those who were hanging with him mocked him.

³³ Then [a great] darkness came over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hours. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour, Jesus shouted in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' (which translates as, 'My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?').

³⁵ And when some of those standing there heard it, they said, 'Look; He's calling for EliJah!'

³⁶ So someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine and held it on a reed to give him something to drink. But the rest said, 'Leave him alone... let's see if EliJah comes to take him down.' ³⁷ And then Jesus let out a loud groan and died.

³⁸ Well at that, the curtain [that separated] the Most Holy ripped in two from the top to the bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion who was standing across from him saw all the things that happened when he died, he said, 'This man truly was God's Son!'

⁴⁰ However, during that entire time, there were some women who were looking on from a distance. Among them was Mary of Magdala, Mary (the mother of Little James and Joses), Salome, ⁴¹ and many other women who had traveled with Jesus to JeruSalem and who used to serve him back in GaliLee.

⁴² Well, since it was already late in the afternoon, and because it was Preparation (the day before the Sabbath), ⁴³ JoSeph of HariMathea (a well-known member of the Council who was also awaiting God's Kingdom) got up enough courage to go before Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ However, Pilate didn't know if he was dead yet; so he called the centurion to ask if he had died. ⁴⁵ Then, after checking with the centurion, he released the body to JoSeph.

⁴⁶ So JoSeph then went out and bought some fine linen. And after taking Jesus down, he wrapped him in the cloth and laid him in a tomb that had been cut into the bedrock, rolling a stone up to the tomb entrance. ⁴⁷ But Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joses [just sat there], looking at the place where he had been laid.

Chapter 16

¹ Then, after the Sabbath, Mary of Magdala, Mary (the mother of James), and Salome brought spiced ointments with which to grease his body... ² they went to the tomb early the next morning after sunrise. ³ And one asked the other, 'Who can we find that will roll the stone away from the tomb entrance for us?' ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the extremely large stone had already been rolled away. ⁵ So when they entered the tomb, they saw a young man who was sitting on the right, wearing a white robe... and they were shocked! ⁶ But he said to them: 'Don't be surprised; you're looking for Jesus the Nazarene who was impaled... but he isn't here, he arose! Look, here's the place where they laid him! ⁷ Now, go tell his disciples and Peter that he's going ahead of them into Galilee... they'll see him there, just like he said.'

⁸ Well when they came out, they ran from the tomb, because they were shaking with excitement. But they didn't say anything to anyone, because they were too afraid.

NOTE: Neither of the conclusions to Mark have been included, because their authenticity is doubtful.

Luke

*Written in Greek by Paul's traveling companion Luke the Physician about 62-CE,
partially based on the Gospel of Matthew*

Note: Much of Luke's Gospel was written as poetry, for this is apparently how Jesus spoke many of his parables, and Luke in particular told of these parables. As the result, we have attempted to restore the rhythm of his words as closely as possible to the original poetic style, while attempting to maintain their exact meanings. And to those who would object, claiming that exact words are more important than style, we ask: Then why did Jesus put so much effort into style?

The answer is obvious: He wanted at least some of his words to be remembered and quoted as parables or proverbs. Also, this unique teaching style tends to indicate that Jesus was the Lord who spoke the words of God (Jehovah) to many of the ancient Prophets, since most of those messages were also originally transmitted in poetry.

Chapter 1

¹ Since many others have already taken on the job of putting together a statement of the facts regarding the things we believe ² as they were given to us by those who were eyewitnesses from the earliest [times] and by caretakers of the message; ³ it seemed good for me to trace everything accurately from the start, then write it down for you in the order that it happened, O mighty TheoPhilus, ⁴ so you can have confidence in the things you've been taught by word of mouth.

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a Priest named ZechariAh, who was of the division of AbiJah. He had a woman named EliZabeth, who was a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were found righteous by God, because they obeyed all the commandments and requirements of Jehovah. ⁷ However, they never had children, and as they were both well up in years, EliZabeth was [beyond child-bearing age].

⁸ But it was while he was assigned as the Priest before God in his division of Priests that ⁹ (following the custom of the Priesthood) [ZechariAh] had been chosen by lot to enter the Most Holy of Jehovah so as to burn incense there. ¹⁰ And because it was the hour that the incense was to be offered, a large crowd of people had assembled outside to pray. ¹¹ It was then that Jehovah's messenger appeared to [ZechariAh], just to the right of the incense altar.

¹² Well, ZechariAh was very disturbed and frightened by what he saw. ¹³ However, the messenger said to him: 'Don't be afraid ZechariAh, because the things that you've begged for in your prayers have been favorably heard. So your woman EliZabeth will give birth to a son for you, and you must call his name John (gr. *YoHanain*). ¹⁴ This will make you very happy and you'll dance with joy... in fact, many people will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ because he will be great in the eyes of Jehovah.

'[This son] may not drink any wine or liquor at all, and he will be filled with [God's] Holy Breath while he's still in his mother's womb. ¹⁶ Thereafter, he will turn many sons of IsraEl back to their God Jehovah, ¹⁷ and he will travel before the Lord with the power and spirit of EliJah, as he prepares a people for his [coming] by turning the hearts of fathers back to their children, and the [hearts] of those who don't obey to righteous good sense.'

¹⁸ But ZechariAh asked the messenger: 'How can I be sure of this? After all, I'm old and my woman is well up in years.'

¹⁹ Then the messenger replied: 'I am GabriEl – someone who stands before God – and I was sent to bring this good news to you. ²⁰ But because you didn't believe these words (which will come true right on time), {Look!} you will be silent and you won't be able to talk until the day that these things happen.'

²¹ Meanwhile, the people who were waiting [outside] for ZechariAh started wondering why he was taking so much time in the Most Holy. ²² Then when he came out and couldn't speak, they realized that he had just seen something very unusual... he could gesture signs to them, but he couldn't talk.

²³ Well, when the period of his assigned [Temple] service was finished, he went back home, ²⁴ and that's when EliZabeth (his woman) became pregnant. However, she hid herself for five months, because she said: ²⁵ 'It's Jehovah's Will that I do this, so people won't laugh at me.'

²⁶ Then it was in her sixth month that the Messenger GabriEl was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin who was engaged to a man named JoSeph (of the house of [King] David). This virgin's name was Mary (gr. *Mariam*). ²⁸ And when he came to her, he said, 'Rejoice, you most beloved person, because Jehovah is with you!' ²⁹ And those words really bothered her, because she wondered just what type of greeting that was.

³⁰ Then the messenger said: 'Don't be afraid Mary, because you've found God's favor. ³¹ Look! You will conceive in your belly and give birth to a son whom you are to name Jesus (heb. *YehoShuah*). ³² He will be great and he'll be called *the Son of the Most High*, then Jehovah God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will rule over the house of Jacob through the ages, and there will be no end to his Kingdom.'

³⁴ But Mary asked the messenger: 'How can this be possible, since I haven't been with a man?'

³⁵ And the messenger replied: 'The Holy Breath of God will come over you and the Power of the Most High will overshadow you, so what will be born will be called Holy... God's Son. ³⁶ Look! Your relative EliZabeth is also pregnant with a son... even in her old age. And this is the sixth month for this so-called *sterile woman*, ³⁷ because nothing is impossible when God says it will happen.'

³⁸ Then Mary said: 'Look! I'm Jehovah's slave girl! May this thing that you said happen to me!' And at that, the messenger left her.

³⁹ So after that, Mary got up and quickly traveled to a city of Judea in the hill country, where she ⁴⁰ entered the home of ZechariAh to speak to EliZabeth. ⁴¹ And just as EliZabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb jumped, and EliZabeth was filled with the Holy Breath [of God], ⁴² for she shouted aloud: 'You're a blest woman, and the fruit of your womb is blest! ⁴³ So, how is it that the mother of my Lord has come to me? ⁴⁴ Look! When I heard the sound of your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy! ⁴⁵ So the woman who has faith will be blest, and all things that were spoken to her by the Lord will come true.'

⁴⁶ Then Mary said:

'I give glorify to Jehovah with my whole soul,

⁴⁷ And over my God and my Savior,

My body will cry out in joy,

⁴⁸ Because, He's looked down on His lowly slave girl.

'{Look!} By all generations, I'll be called blest,

⁴⁹ For the Almighty One did great things for me...

The One whose Name is Most Holy.

⁵⁰ 'For generations, He has shown mercy

To those who show that they fear Him.

⁵¹ But with His strong arm, He will scatter,

Those who think in their hearts that they're better.

⁵² 'He removes kings from their thrones,
And He puts the humble in charge.

⁵³ He fills the hungry with good things,
And He sent the rich off still hungry.

⁵⁴ 'He sent help to IsraEl, His child,
And He's remembered His mercy,

⁵⁵ As He promised to AbraHam, our father,
And to his seed, through the ages.'

⁵⁶ So Mary stayed there with EliZabeth for about three months, then she went back home.

⁵⁷ Well, it soon came time for EliZabeth to deliver her baby, and she had a son. ⁵⁸ So when her neighbors and relatives heard how Jehovah had shown such magnificent mercy toward her, they were all overjoyed. ⁵⁹ But when they went to circumcise the boy (on the eighth day), they expected that he would be named after his father, ZechariAh. ⁶⁰ However, his mother said: 'Absolutely not! He'll be called John.' ⁶¹ But [the neighbors] said, 'That isn't the name of any of your relatives!' ⁶² So they nodded to the father, to ask what he wanted to call it. ⁶³ And after asking for a tablet, he wrote, 'His name is John'... which really caused them to wonder.

⁶⁴ And at that, [ZechariAh] suddenly he opened his mouth... his tongue came loose, and he started speaking and praising God ⁶⁵ (which frightened all the neighbors). And thereafter, these things were talked about throughout the hills of Judea. ⁶⁶ And everyone who heard about it made a note of it in their hearts, for they were wondering, 'Just what will this boy [grow up to] be, since the hand of Jehovah is upon him?'

⁶⁷ Then ZechariAh ([the boy's] father) became filled with [God's] Holy Breath and he spoke this prophesy:

⁶⁸ 'Praise Jehovah, IsraEl's God,
For He looked down and set free His people.

⁶⁹ He raised the horn of salvation for us,
In the house of David, his servant,

⁷⁰ As He promised through the mouths of the holy,
Back in the age of the Prophets,

⁷¹ To save us from our enemy's hands,
And from the hands of all those who hate us,

⁷² To fulfill [His] mercy to our fathers,
By remembering His Holy Sacred Agreement,

⁷³ And His oath to AbraHam, our father,

⁷⁴ That we shouldn't fear our enemy's hands,
And He will save us, so that we can serve Him,

⁷⁵ And loyally stand here before Him,
As those who are righteous, through [the rest of] our days.

⁷⁶ 'But, as for you, little boy;
A Prophet of the Most High, you will be called.
For, you will travel in front of the Lord,
And prepare the road that's before him.

⁷⁷ 'You'll tell his people how [they can] be saved,
By seeking forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ Through the tender mercies of God,
Who looks down on us from above,
As though it were a new day,
⁷⁹ Which is shining upon those in the darkness,
And those who are sitting in the shadow of death.
For he'll straighten [the paths for] our feet,
And guide us in the ways that are leading to peace.'

⁸⁰ Well, the little boy thereafter grew and he kept getting stronger in the Breath [of God]. And thereafter, he lived in the desert until the day that he presented himself to IsraEl.

Chapter 2

¹ Back in those days, Caesar Augustus had decreed that everyone in the land had to be registered, ² and this first registration took place when QuiRinius was the governor of Syria. ³ So, everyone had to return to his hometown to be registered. ⁴ And as the result, JoSeph had to travel from Nazareth in Galilee to David's city of BethLehem in Judea (because he was from the house and family of David) ⁵ to be registered with Mary, whom he married as he promised, and who was pregnant.

⁶ It was while they were there that it became time for her to have her baby. ⁷ So she gave birth to her first son and wrapped him tightly in a cloth, then laid him in a feed trough, because there wasn't any room for them in the lodge.

⁸ At that time, there were some shepherds staying outdoors in the surrounding countryside, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ Then a messenger of Jehovah [appeared] to them and the glory of the Lord started shining around them, which frightened them. ¹⁰ But the messenger told them: 'Don't be afraid. Look! I'm bringing you good news of great joy for everyone. ¹¹ Because, a Savior – the chosen Lord – has been born to you today in David's city. ¹² This is the sign to look for: You'll find an infant wrapped tightly in a cloth and lying in a feed trough.'

¹³ Then suddenly, a large heavenly army appeared with the messenger, praising God and saying:

¹⁴ 'Glory in the highest to God,
And on the earth, [may there be] peace
For the people with whom He is pleased.'

¹⁵ So, after the messengers [of God] went back into the sky, the shepherds said to each other: 'Let's go to BethLehem and see this thing that Jehovah has revealed to us.' ¹⁶ And at that, they went and quickly found Mary and JoSeph, along with the infant who was lying in the feed trough. ¹⁷ So when they saw this, they explained the things that they had been told about the little boy.

¹⁸ Well, all those who heard of it were amazed by the things that the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary started preserving all these words, drawing conclusions in her heart. ²⁰ However, the shepherds kept on glorifying and praising God for all the things that they saw and the things that they'd heard, just as it had been spoken to them.

²¹ Then in eight days, it came time to circumcise [the boy]; and he was given the name Jesus (gr. *YaySous*, heb. *YehoShua*), the name that [God's] messenger said he should be called before he was conceived in [Mary's] womb.

²² Then at the end of the [seven] days of purification that were required by the Law of Moses, they took him to JeruSalem to present him to the Lord, ²³ exactly as it was written in Jehovah's Law, 'Every male that opens a womb must be called holy to Jehovah.' ²⁴ So they offered the sacrifice that was specified in [God's] Law; a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

²⁵ {Look!} [At the time], there was a man in JeruSalem named SimeOn... a righteous and devout person who had been awaiting IsraEl's comforter, and [God's] Holy Breath was in him. ²⁶ For it had been divinely shown to him by the Holy Breath that he wouldn't die before he saw the Anointed of Jehovah. ²⁷ And it was because [God's] Breath was leading him that he had come to the Temple that day.

So as the parents were bringing the boy (Jesus) in to do what the Law customarily required, ²⁸ [SimeOn] took him in his arms and praised God saying:

²⁹ 'Now, O Sovereign Lord,
You can set Your slave free in peace, as You said,
³⁰ For my eyes have seen the one who will save;
³¹ The one You provided for all men to see;
³² The light of revelation to all nations,
And a glory to IsraEl, Your people.'

³³ Well, [Jesus'] father and mother were amazed by all the things that he said about him.

³⁴ SimeOn also blest them... but he said this his mother (Mary):
'Look! This child is appointed to raise and put down,
Many within IsraEl.
For he'll serve as a sign that is spoken spoken against,
³⁵ And your soul will be pierced by a sword,
To show the thoughts many have in their hearts.'

³⁶ There was also the Prophetess AnNa (a daughter of the tribe of Asher). This woman was well up in years and had only been married for seven years from her virginity. ³⁷ She was now an eighty-four-year-old widow who was always at the Temple, serving there day and night, fasting, and praying. ³⁸ And in that same hour, she stood up and gave thanks to God, as she talked about [the child] to all those who were awaiting JeruSalem's release by ransom.

³⁹ Then, after [JoSeph and Mary] did everything that Jehovah's Law required, they went back to their home in Nazareth of Galilee. ⁴⁰ So the little boy grew to become strong and filled with wisdom, as God continued to show favor upon him.

⁴¹ Well each year, his parents thereafter traveled to JeruSalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they again followed the custom of going to the festival. ⁴³ But after the festival days were over and as they were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in JeruSalem... and his parents didn't notice it. ⁴⁴ So, assuming that he was somewhere in the company of the people traveling together, they were a day's journey away before they finally started searching for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ And when they couldn't find him, they returned to JeruSalem to look for him.

⁴⁶ It took them three days, but they finally found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking questions... ⁴⁷ and his understanding and answers amazed everyone who heard him.

⁴⁸ Well, they had been in a panic as they searched for him. So his mother said: 'Child; Why did you treat us this way? For your father and I have been worried to death searching for you!'

⁴⁹ But he replied: 'Why did you have to search for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in the House of my Father?' ⁵⁰ However, they really didn't understand what he was saying.

⁵¹ Then he returned home to Nazareth with them and he always obeyed them... as his mother carefully kept all these things that were said in her heart. ⁵² So Jesus continued to progress in wisdom, physical growth, and in the favor of God and men.

Chapter 3

¹ It was in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea and Herod was district ruler of Galilee (but Philip his brother was district ruler of the countries of Ituraea and Trachonitis), and Lysanias was district ruler of Abilene, ² in the days of High Priests AnNas and CaiAphas, that God's words came to John, the son of ZechariAh, [while he was] in the desert. ³ So he traveled throughout the country circling the Jordan preaching a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins, ⁴ just as it was written about him in the book of the Prophet IsaiAh:

'Listen!

Someone calls out in the desert:

Prepare the way for the Lord.

Straighten out all of his roads;

⁵ *Fill the gullies and level the mountains and hills;*

Straighten the curves and smooth-out the ruts,

⁶ *So all flesh will be able to see,*

What God has provided to save them.'

⁷ And as he saw the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, he said: 'Children of vipers; Who has frightened you into running from the coming rage?' ⁸ Produce the type of fruit that shows you're ready for repentance. And don't say of yourselves, *We have AbraHam as our father*, because I tell you that God has the power to raise children of AbraHam from these stones! ⁹ Why, the ax is now lying at the roots of the trees and every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire!'

¹⁰ And the crowds started asking him: 'So, what is it that we must do?'

¹¹ And he replied: 'Those who have two suits of clothes, should share them with those who have none. And those who have something to eat, should do that very same thing.'

¹² Why, even tax collectors came to be baptized. And they asked him: 'Teacher, what should we do?'

¹³ And he replied: 'Just collect a fair tax.'

¹⁴ Then when those in the military asked him, 'What should we do?' he said, 'Don't harass or falsely accuse. Just be happy with the things you're provided.'

¹⁵ And because the people were looking for [the coming of the Messiah], they were all wondering in their hearts whether John was the Anointed One. ¹⁶ But John told them this: 'My part is to baptize in water. But, someone who's greater is coming behind me, whose sandals I'm unfit to untie, and he'll

baptize you people with Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ For his shovel is now in his hand, and he'll sweep his threshing floor clean. Then he'll carry the wheat to his barn, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.' ¹⁸ He said many encouraging things as he preached the good news to the people.

¹⁹ However, Herod (the district ruler) had been scolded [by John] because of Herodias (his brother's woman), and because of all the other bad things that he was doing. ²⁰ And [eventually] Herod added to this [badness] by locking John in jail.

²¹ Well, it was after all the [other] people had been baptized that [John] also baptized Jesus. And as he was praying, the sky opened up ²² and the Holy Breath came down upon [Jesus] in the shape of a dove. Then a voice came out of the sky [that said]: 'You're My beloved Son and I approve of you.'

²³ Well, Jesus came into his power when he was about thirty years old, being the son (as the opinion was) of JoSeph, of Heli, ²⁴ of MatThat, of Levi, of Melchi, of JanNai, of JoSeph, ²⁵ of MatTathias, of Amos, of Nahum, of Esli, of NagGai, ²⁶ of MaAth, of MatTathias, of Semein, of JoSech, of Joda, ²⁷ of JoAnan, of Rhesa, of ZerubBabel, of ShealthiEl, of Neri, ²⁸ of Melchi, of Addi, of Cosam, of ElMadam, of Er, ²⁹ of JoShua, of EliEzer, of JoRim, of MatThat, of Levi, ³⁰ of Symeon, of Judas, of JoSeph, of JoNam, of EliAkim, ³¹ of Melea, of MenNa, of MatTatha, of Nathan, of David, ³² of Jesse, of Obed, of Boaz, of Salmon, of NahShon, ³³ of AmiNadab, of Arni, of HezRon, of Perez, of Judah, ³⁴ of Jacob, of IsaAc, of AbraHam, of Terah, of Nahor, ³⁵ of Serug, of Reu, of Peleg, of Heber, of SheLah, ³⁶ of Kainan, of ArPachShad, of Shem, of Noah, of Lamech, ³⁷ of MethuSelah, of Enoch, of Jared, of MaHalaleEl, of Kainan, ³⁸ of Enosh, of Seth, of Adam, of God.

Chapter 4

¹ [This is the time when] Jesus became filled with the Holy Breath, so he left the Jordan, and [God's] Breath led him into the desert, ² where he was tempted by the Slanderer for forty days. But because he hadn't eaten anything during that entire period, he became very hungry. ³ So the Slanderer came to him and said: 'If you are a son of The God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread!'

⁴ But Jesus replied: 'It's written, *Man doesn't live by just bread alone.*'

⁵ So [the Slanderer] took him up on a mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the habitation [of mankind] in an instant of time, ⁶ and he said: 'I will give you glory and power over all of these, for they've all been given to me and I can give them to whomever I wish. ⁷ They will all be yours if you'll just bow to your face before me.'

⁸ But Jesus replied: 'It's written:
*You should bow before Jehovah, your God;
And Him alone, should you serve.*'

⁹ Then [the Slanderer] took him into JeruSalem and put him on one of the Temple's highest towers, and said: 'If you're a son of The God, jump down from here; ¹⁰ for it is written:

*He'll order His messengers to protect you;
¹¹ So they'll lift you up on their hands,
And you won't bump your foot on a stone.'*

¹² But Jesus replied: 'It is also said, *You must not put Jehovah your God to the test.*'

¹³ So after the Slanderer finished his tempting, he left him until the appointed time.

¹⁴ Then the Power of [God's] Breath moved Jesus to return to Galilee, and his fame spread throughout all that area. ¹⁵ He also started teaching in the synagogues, where he was honored by everyone.

¹⁶ Well, when he got to Nazareth (where he was brought up); as was his custom on the Sabbaths, he went into the synagogue and stood up to read. ¹⁷ Then someone handed the scroll of the Prophet IsaiAh, so he opened it and found the place where it said:

¹⁸ 'Jehovah's Breath is upon me,
And I've been anointed by Him
To teach good news to the poor.

'He sent me to heal broken hearts;
To proclaim a release to the captives;
A regaining of sight to the blind;
Deliverance to those who have been oppressed;

¹⁹ And to announce a year of [God's] favor.'

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant and sat back down, as everyone in the synagogue was staring at him. ²¹ And he said: 'Today, this scripture that you just heard, has been fulfilled!'

²² Well after that, everyone started praising him as they marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. But they were also asking: 'Isn't this JoSeph's son?'

²³ So he told them: 'You would undoubtedly like to apply the words to me, *Heal yourself, doctor!* And, *Do all the things that we heard you did in CapharNaum here in your own hometown!*'

²⁴ Then he said, 'I tell you the truth: No Prophet is ever accepted in his own hometown. ²⁵ Therefore, though it's a fact that there were many widows in IsraEl back in the days of EliJah – back when the skies were closed up for three-and-a-half years, causing a terrible famine in the land – ²⁶ EliJah wasn't sent to any of them; he was just sent to a widow in the land of Sidon. ²⁷ And though there were many lepers in IsraEl during the time of the Prophet EliSha; the only one who was cleansed was NaAman, a Syrian.'

²⁸ Well, this made everyone who heard him say this in the synagogue very angry, ²⁹ so they got up and pushed him outside to the edge of the mountain upon which the city was built, and they wanted to throw him down headfirst. ³⁰ But he just walked through their midst and continued on his way.

³¹ From there, he went on to CapharNaum (a city in Galilee), where he again taught on the Sabbath. ³² And those [people] were amazed by his way of teaching, because he spoke with such great authority.

³³ There he found a man in that synagogue [who was possessed by] an unclean demon. And [the demon] shouted at him: ³⁴ 'Ah! What dealings do we have with you, Jesus... you Nazarene? Did you come here to destroy us? I know exactly who you are; [You're] the Holy One of God!'

³⁵ But Jesus scolded it saying, 'Put a muzzle on it and come out of him!' So the demon threw the man down in their midst, then it came out without hurting him.

³⁶ Well, everyone was astonished and they all started speaking to each other and asking, 'What kind of talk is this? He gives orders to unclean spirits with authority and power, and out they come!' ³⁷ So the news about him was echoed everywhere throughout that entire region.

³⁸ Then, after he left that synagogue, he went to Simon's house. And there, Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, so they asked him to help her. ³⁹ Then he stood over her, scolded the fever, and it left her. So she got right up and started serving him.

⁴⁰ Well at sunset, all those who had people that were sick with various infirmities brought them to him, and he laid his hands on each one and cured them. ⁴¹ Demons also came out of many of them, shouting, 'You're the Son of The God!' But because they knew that he was the Anointed One, he scolded them and he wouldn't allow them to speak.

⁴² Then the next day, he left and walked out to an isolated place. But the crowds started searching for him, and when they finally found him, they tried to prevent him from leaving. ⁴³ But he told them: 'I have to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to other cities... for that's the reason why I was sent here.'

⁴⁴ So thereafter, he preached in the synagogues throughout all of Galilee.

Chapter 5

¹ Well, there was an occasion when people were crowded very close to [Jesus], listening to the word of God, while he was standing beside Lake GenNesaret. ² So, noticing two boats that were docked at the lakeside where the fishermen had gotten out and were washing off their nets, ³ [Jesus] got into one of the boats that belonged to Simon, and he asked him to pull a short distance from the land. Then he sat down and he started teaching the crowds from the boat. ⁴ And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon: 'Now, pull out to where it's deep and let down your nets for a catch.'

⁵ But Simon replied: 'Lord; We worked all night long and we didn't catch anything. However, because you asked, I'll lower the nets.'

⁶ Well, when they did this, they netted a huge number of fish. In fact, their nets started to rip, ⁷ so they waved to their partners in another boat to come help them. And when they got there, they filled both boats to the point where they were about to sink!

⁸ And at seeing this, Simon (Peter) fell down at Jesus' knees and said, 'Get away from me, because I'm a sinful man, O Lord!' ⁹ [He said this] because, when they brought in so many fish, Simon and those who were with him were amazed and overwhelmed... ¹⁰ as were his partners James and John (the sons of Zebedaiou).

But Jesus said to Simon: 'Stop being afraid! For from now on, you're going to be catching men!' ¹¹ So then they rowed their boats back to land and they just walked away from everything to follow him.

¹² On another occasion, while he was in one of the cities, {Look!} there was a man who was full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell to his face and begged: 'Lord; If you just want to, you can make me clean!'

¹³ So [Jesus] stuck out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I want to... be clean.' And immediately, the leprosy left the man. ¹⁴ Then he ordered the man not to tell anyone about this, saying, 'Go and show yourself to the Priests and give an offering for your cleansing as a witness to them, just as Moses commanded.'

¹⁵ However, word about him kept spreading, and huge crowds would assemble to listen and to be cured of their illnesses. ¹⁶ As the result, [Jesus] had to go off into the desert even to pray.

¹⁷ Well, several days later (as he was teaching), some Pharisees and teachers of the Law were there [sitting among a crowd] of people who had come from every village of Galilee, Judea, and from JeruSalem, because [Jesus] was healing by the power of Jehovah. ¹⁸ Then {Look!} some men arrived who were carrying a paralyzed man that was lying on a cot, and they were trying to find a way to bring the man to [Jesus], ¹⁹ but they couldn't get through the crowd. So they climbed up on the roof and lowered the little cot through the tiles, down in front of Jesus. ²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said: 'Man; Your sins are forgiven!'

²¹ Well at that, the scribes and Pharisees started asking each other, 'Just who is this that talks so blasphemously? Who can forgive sins other than The God?'

²² But Jesus recognized what they were thinking and he asked them: 'What are you concluding in your hearts?' ²³ Which is easier to say, *Your sins are forgiven*, or, *Get up and walk*? ²⁴ But, just so you'll know that the Son of Man has been given the authority to forgive sins on the earth,' he then said to the paralyzed man: 'I tell you; Get up, pick up your little cot, and go home!' ²⁵ And at that, the man stood right up before them all, then he picked up the [cot] that he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ Well, everyone was delighted and they too started glorifying God. But they were also frightened and said, 'We've seen some very strange things today!'

²⁷ Well after that, [Jesus] went out and he noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax office, and said, 'Come be my follower!' ²⁸ Well, [Levi] got right up (leaving everything behind), and started following him.

²⁹ And thereafter, Levi held a big reception feast for [Jesus] in his home, where a large crowd of tax collectors and others were reclining with him at the meal. ³⁰ So the Pharisees and their scribes started complaining to the disciples, asking, 'Why is he eating and drinking with the tax collectors and sinners?'

³¹ But Jesus told them: 'Those who are healthy don't need a doctor, only the sick do. ³² So I came to call sinners to repentance, not righteous people.'

³³ Then later on, they also said: 'John's disciples and those of the Pharisees fast frequently in order to make requests [of God]. But your [disciples] just go on eating and drinking!'

³⁴ And Jesus told them: 'Friends of the bridegroom can't be expected to fast while the groom is with them, can they? ³⁵ But the days will surely come when the groom will be taken away; and in those days, they will fast.'

³⁶ Then he gave them this illustration:
'No one cuts a patch from new clothes
So as to repair a hole in the old;
For, if they do, the patch will rip out...
And the new patch won't match the old anyhow.'

³⁷ 'And they don't put new wine in old wineskins.
For new wine will burst the old skins,
Breaking the skins and spilling the wine.'

³⁸ So, new wine is put in new wineskins.

³⁹ And all who have tasted the old wine,

Don't want the new, anyhow;
For they say that the old [wine] is better!

Chapter 6

¹ Now, [Jesus] happened to be walking through some grain fields on a Sabbath and his disciples had been picking the grain, rubbing it in their hands, and eating it. ² So some of the Pharisees asked him, 'Why are they doing something that isn't legal on the Sabbath?'

³ And Jesus replied: 'Haven't you ever read how David did the same thing when he and his men got hungry... ⁴ how he went into the Temple of God and ate the presentation bread, sharing some with his men... something that isn't legal for anyone to eat other than the Priests?' ⁵ Then he added, 'The Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath!'

⁶ And on another Sabbath, he again went into the synagogue and started teaching. Well, there he found a man whose right hand was withered, ⁷ and the scribes and Pharisees were watching [Jesus] closely to see if he would cure him on the Sabbath, so they could find something for which they could make an accusation against him. ⁸ However, because [Jesus] knew what they were thinking, and just he said to the man with the withered hand: 'Get up and go stand in the center [of the room].' So [the man went over there] and stood.

⁹ Then Jesus asked them all: 'Is it legal to do good or bad, or to save a life or destroy it on the Sabbath?' ¹⁰ And after looking around at everyone, he said to the man: 'Now stretch out your hand.' And when he did, his hand was healed! ¹¹ Nevertheless, [the scribes and Pharisees] went out of their minds and they started talking to each other about what they could do to Jesus.

¹² It was around this same time that Jesus went up a mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God. ¹³ Then the next day, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he started calling Apostles (Sent Ones). ¹⁴ There was Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, BarTholomew ([NathaniEl]), ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James ([the son] of AlphaEus), Simon (who is called the zealous one), ¹⁶ Judas ([ThadDaeus]) [the son] of James, and Judas IsCariot (who turned traitor).

¹⁷ Well, after they came down [the mountain], he found a level spot where a large group of his disciples (as well as a huge crowd of people from Judea, JeruSalem, and the seaside areas of Tyre and Sidon) came to listen to him and to be healed of their illnesses. ¹⁸ And there, as people who had been bothered by unclean spirits were being healed, ¹⁹ everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him; so power flowed from him, and he healed them all.

²⁰ Then he looked at his disciples and he said this to them:

'Blest are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of God;

²¹ Blest are the hungry, for they will be filled;

And blest are those who are crying,

For they will find reasons to laugh.

²² 'You are blest whenever men hate you,

And do not wish to be with you;

Or when they say bad things about you,

And call you wicked for the Son of Man's sake.

²³ In that day, you should be happy,

And you should jump for joy,

For look...your reward in the heavens is great,
Since these are the very same things,
That their fathers used to say of the Prophets.

²⁴ 'But, woe to you who are rich,
For you [will not] have all the comfort you want.

²⁵ And woe to you with full [stomachs],
For you will be going hungry.
Woe to you who are laughing,
Because, you will cry out and mourn.

²⁶ 'And woe when they're saying nice things about you,
For, that's what their fathers said of false prophets.

²⁷ 'I say this to you who will listen:
You should love all those who oppose you,
And do good to all those who hate you.

²⁸ Yes, Praise the ones who would curse you,
And pray for those who insult you.

²⁹ 'If someone should slap you on [the right] cheek,
Offer the other to him also.
And if someone should take all your clothes,
Give him your underwear too.

³⁰ 'To each one who asks, you should give,
And don't tell them that they must repay you...

³¹ Treat others as you wish to be treated.

³² 'If you love just those who love you,
What kind of good are you doing...
Even sinners love those who love them.

³³ 'And if you're good to just those who do good for you,
What kindness are you really showing...
Even sinners will do the same thing.

³⁴ 'And if you should lend without interest,
To those whom you expect to repay,
What kind of good deed are you doing...
For, sinners lend to sinners without interest,
When they know that they'll be repaid.

³⁵ 'So, love those [who hate you] and do what is good,
And lend without hope of return;
Then, you will receive a better reward...
You'll be sons of the Most High,
Who is kind to even the bad and ungrateful.

³⁶ So, show mercy as your Father shows mercy.

³⁷ 'Do not judge [others], so you won't be judged;
Don't condemn, and you won't be condemned...
Set free, and you'll be free.

³⁸ 'Give to others and they'll give to you...
They'll give you a generous portion,
Overflowing and tightly packed down.
For the amount that you measure [to others],
Is the amount that they'll measure to you.

³⁹ Then he gave them some illustrations:

'If a blind man serves as guide to another, won't they both fall into a pit?

⁴⁰ 'A disciple isn't over his teacher, but one who learns [from his teacher] will become like his teacher.

⁴¹ 'Why look for chaff in the eye of your brother, when you can't see the rafter in your own eye? ⁴² For, how can you say to your brother, *Let me remove that [chaff] from your eye*, when you can't see the rafter in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the rafter from your own eye, and then you'll be able to clearly see how you can remove the [chaff] from your brother's eye.

⁴³ 'A good tree doesn't produce rotten fruit and a rotten tree doesn't produce good fruit... ⁴⁴ so all trees are known by their fruit. As you don't pick figs from briars, and you don't cut grapes from thorn bushes; ⁴⁵ a good man brings good things from the good that he's treasured in his heart, while the wicked just bring bad things, because their mouths speak from the wickedness that they've treasured in their hearts.

⁴⁶ 'And why is it that you call out to me and say, *Lord, Lord*, when you don't do the things that I tell you to do? ⁴⁷ Those who come here to listen to me and then do what I say, ⁴⁸ are like the man who dug down to solid rock to lay the foundation for his house. So when the floods came and the river washed against it, his house wasn't shaken because it had a strong foundation. ⁴⁹ But those who listen to me and don't do what I say are like the man who built his house on the ground without a foundation. So when the river washed against it, it collapsed, resulting in great damage.'

Chapter 7

¹ Well, when he finished saying all these things within earshot of the people, he entered Capharnaum. ² And there, a [Roman] centurion who had a valued servant that was sick and near death, ³ sent some Judean elders to ask him to come and save his slave's life (for he'd heard about Jesus). ⁴ So they quickly went to Jesus and begged him, saying: '[The centurion] is worthy of your doing this for him, ⁵ because he loves our nation and he built a synagogue for us!' ⁶ So Jesus went off with them. However, he wasn't very far from the house when the centurion sent his friends to say, 'Sir, don't bother [to come here], because I'm unfit to have you under my roof. ⁷ It's only because I considered myself unworthy that I didn't come to you personally. So, just say the word and [I know that] my servant will be healed. ⁸ For I'm also a man who has been given authority and I have soldiers that are under me. So if I tell this one to leave, he leaves; if I tell that one to come, he comes... yes, whatever I tell my servants to do, they do.'

⁹ Well, when Jesus heard him say this, he was amazed. So he turned to the crowd that was following him and said: 'I tell you; I haven't found this much faith even in IsraEl!' ¹⁰ And after they returned to the man's house, [the elders] who had been sent found his slave in good health.

¹¹ Thereafter, he traveled with his disciples (there was quite a crowd of them) to a city called Nain. ¹² And as he was approaching the city gate, {Look!} it so happened that they were carrying out [the body] of a man who had just died, the only son of a woman who was a widow, and she being was followed by a large crowd [of mourners]. ¹³ So when the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity and he said to her, 'Stop crying.' ¹⁴ Then he went over and touched the open casket, so the pallbearers stopped. And he said: 'Young man; I tell you to get up!'

¹⁵ Well at that, the dead man sat straight up and started talking... and then [Jesus] gave him to his mother.

¹⁶ Of course, everyone was startled by this, and they all started glorifying God, saying, 'A great Prophet has been raised among us,' and, 'God has started paying attention to His people!' ¹⁷ So thereafter, the news about him was spread throughout all of Judea and all the lands roundabout.

¹⁸ Meanwhile, John's disciples had been reporting back to him about the things that were happening. ¹⁹ So John called two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask: 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' ²⁰ And when they got to [Jesus], the men said: 'John the Baptist sent us to ask if you're the Anointed One, or if we are to expect someone else.'

²¹ Well, during that hour, he cured many people who were ill or in great pain, or who had wicked spirits, and he granted many blind people the gift of vision. ²² And after that, he told them: 'Now, go back and report what you've seen and heard to John. [Tell him that] the blind are seeing, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised, and the poor are hearing the good news... ²³ so the one who isn't stumbled by me will be blest.'

²⁴ Well, after John's messengers left, he asked the crowd this about John:
'What did you go to the desert to see...
Reeds being blown in the wind?

²⁵ Yes, what did you go out to see...
A man who is dressed in soft clothes?
Those who dress and live well,
Are those who are living in mansions.

²⁶ 'So, what did you go out to see... a Prophet? Yes, and I say, much more than a Prophet, ²⁷ for he's the one of whom it was written:
*{Look!} I'm sending My messenger before you,
To prepare the road that you'll travel.*

²⁸ 'I tell you this: Of those born of women, no one is greater than John. Yet, the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than him.'

²⁹ Well, when all the common people and the tax collectors heard this, they praised God's righteousness, because they had been baptized with John's baptism. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and those who were trained in the Law disregarded this counsel from God, because they hadn't gone out to be baptized by John.

³¹ [So, Jesus said]: 'To whom should I compare this generation... who are they really like? ³² They're like children in the markets that shout at each other and say:
We played the flute, but you didn't dance...

We wailed, but you didn't cry.

³³ 'For when John the Baptist arrived, he didn't feast and he didn't drink any wine... so you said that he has a demon! ³⁴ But when the Son of Man came eating and drinking, you called him an alcoholic and a glutton... a friend to tax collectors and sinners! ³⁵ But wisdom is proven righteous by her children.'

³⁶ Well, one of the Pharisees had urged [Jesus] to dine with him, so he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at his table. ³⁷ And there, {Look!} a woman of the city (a known sinner), when she learned that [Jesus] was going to recline for a meal in the house of the Pharisee, came there with an alabaster jar of perfumed ointment. ³⁸ Then she reclined behind him at his feet and wept, wetting his feet with her tears as she wiped them dry with her hair. Then she kissed his feet tenderly and greased them with the perfumed ointment.

³⁹ However, when the Pharisee who invited him saw this, he thought to himself: 'If this man was truly a Prophet, he'd know who it is and just what kind of woman is touching him... she's a sinner!'

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said: 'Simon, I have something to tell you.'

And [Simon] replied: 'Go ahead and tell it, Teacher!'

⁴¹ 'Two men each owed money to a certain lender; one was in debt for five hundred silver coins and the other for fifty. ⁴² Well, when they couldn't pay him back, he freely forgave them both. So, which one will love him more?'

⁴³ Then Simon answered: 'I guess it's the one for whom he forgave the most.'

And [Jesus] said: 'You judged correctly.'

⁴⁴ Then he turned toward the woman, and he said to Simon: 'Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you didn't give me any water for my feet... yet this woman wet my feet with her tears and wiped them dry with her hair. ⁴⁵ And you didn't greet me with a kiss... yet from the time that I entered, this woman has been tenderly kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You didn't grease my head with oil either... yet this woman greased my feet with perfumed ointment. ⁴⁷ So I tell you: Although she has many sins, they are forgiven, because she showed a lot of love. However, someone who hasn't been forgiven much, doesn't love much.'

⁴⁸ Then he told her: 'Your sins are forgiven.'

⁴⁹ Well at that, those who were reclining at the table with him started wondering within themselves, 'Just who is this man that even forgives sins?'

⁵⁰ But he said to the woman: 'Your faith has saved you. Go your own way in peace.'

Chapter 8

¹ Shortly thereafter, [Jesus] started traveling from city to city and village to village with the twelve, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God.

² Now, [traveling with him] were some women whom [he had] cured of wicked spirits and illnesses. There was Mary (who is called the Magdalen), from whom seven demons had come out, ³ and Joanna, the woman of Chuza (Herod's top aid), as well as Susanna and many others who were serving

his needs from the things they owned.

⁴ Well, when a large crowd had gathered with those who had traveled with him from city to city, he spoke to them using this illustration:

⁵ 'A farmer went out to plant seeds.

And as he was planting, some fell by the road,
Which were walked on, and birds came to eat them.

⁶ Others fell among rocks,
Where they dried up after they sprouted,
Because there was too little water.

⁷ Still others fell among thorns,
Which grew and then choked them out.

⁸ But, some fell upon the good soil and grew,
Producing fruit a hundred times more.'

And as he told them this, he shouted: 'Let those who have ears to hear, listen to me!'

⁹ Well, his disciples later asked him what this illustration meant. ¹⁰ So he said: 'While you've been allowed to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, the rest just hear the stories. So when they look, they look in vain, and when they hear, they don't understand.

¹¹ 'Now, the illustration means this: The seeds are the word of God. ¹² Those [that fall] by the road are the ones that hear, but the Slanderer comes and snatches the word from their hearts, so they don't believe and get saved.

¹³ 'Those that fall on the rocks are the ones that hear and welcome the word with joy; but because they don't have any roots, they only believe for a season. For when a season of testing comes along, they fall away.

¹⁴ 'As for those that fall among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard, but because of their daily concerns (such as [seeking] wealth and the pleasures of living), they are choked out and fail to produce.

¹⁵ 'However, [those that fall] on the good soil have good and pure hearts; and after hearing the word, they remember and keep bearing fruit. ¹⁶ For, no one who lights a lamp covers it with a pot or hides it under a bed. Rather, they put it on a lampstand, so those who step in can see by the light.

¹⁷ 'So there's nothing that's hidden, which will not be shown, or anything covered that will not be known, and then be brought into the open.

¹⁸ So, pay attention to the way that you listen; for those who have will be given more. But, as for those who have none; what they think they have will be taken from them.'

¹⁹ It was then that [Jesus'] mother and brothers came to see him, but they were unable to reach him because of the crowd. ²⁰ So someone came and told him: 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside and [they] want to see you.'

²¹ But he replied: 'My mother and brothers are these who hear the word of God and obey it.'

²² Well, some days later, [Jesus] and his disciples got into a boat, and he told them: 'Let's cross over to

the other side of the lake.' So they set off,²³ and as they were sailing, he fell asleep. But soon a violent windstorm came down on the lake and the boat started taking on water, putting them in a dangerous situation.²⁴ So [the disciples] went over and woke Jesus up and said, 'Master... Master... We're about to drown!' Then when he awoke, he scolded the wind and the raging water, which made them become very calm and peaceful.²⁵ And he asked them: 'Where is your faith?'

Well, they were frightened and awestruck [by what had happened], and they started asking each other, 'Who really is this? For he even orders the wind and waves and they obey him!'

²⁶ Then they sailed on to the country of the Gerasenes, which is on the shore directly across from Galilee.²⁷ And when he stepped out on land, a demonized man from the city came to meet him. This man hadn't worn clothing for some time, and he didn't live in a house, for he stayed among the tombs.²⁸ And when he saw Jesus, he screamed and fell down in front of him, shouting: 'What dealings do I have with you Jesus, you Son of the Most High God? I beg you... Don't torment me!' ²⁹ ([He said this, because Jesus] had ordered the unclean spirit to come out of the man).

[This man had been] arrested repeatedly, then bound with chains and leg irons, and put under guard. But he would break the chains, and the demons forced him to [live in] such isolated places.

³⁰ So Jesus asked him: 'What is your name?'

And they replied: 'Legion' (because many demons had entered him).³¹ And they kept begging him not to order them to go away into the abyss.

³² Now, a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the mountain; so they begged [Jesus] to allow them to go into [the pigs]... and he gave them permission.³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the whole herd ran down a steep drop-off into the lake and drowned.

³⁴ Well, when the herders saw what had happened, they ran and reported it throughout the city and countryside.³⁵ So the people came out to see what had happened; and when they got to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had come out wearing clothes and in his right mind there at Jesus' feet... and this frightened them.³⁶ Then those who saw all that had happened told them of how the demon-possessed man had been cured.³⁷ And the huge number who came from the surrounding area begged [Jesus] to leave them, because they were so frightened. Therefore, he stepped into the boat to return.

³⁸ Then the man from whom the demons had come out started begging [Jesus] to let him go with him. But he sent the man away, saying,³⁹ 'Go back home and tell them about all the things that God has done for you.' So the man went away and spread the word about what Jesus had done throughout the whole city.

⁴⁰ Well, a crowd was waiting for Jesus when he got back, because they were all expecting him.⁴¹ And {Look!} a man named Jairus (who was a presiding officer of the [local] synagogue) came to him and fell at Jesus' feet, begging him to come to his home,⁴² because his only daughter (who was about twelve years old) was dying.

Then, as he was on his way [to the man's house], the people were all crowded around him.⁴³ And a woman who had [been experiencing] a blood flow for some twelve years (and whom no one had been able to cure)⁴⁴ came up behind him and touched the fringe of his robe... and her flow of blood stopped instantly.

⁴⁵ So Jesus asked, 'Who touched me?'

Well, everyone denied it. And Peter said: 'Master; there's a whole crowd of people around you [and they're all] touching you!'

⁴⁶ But Jesus said: 'Someone else touched me, because I felt the power leaving me.'

⁴⁷ So, seeing that [what she did] didn't go unnoticed, the woman came up trembling and fell down in front of Jesus, then she told everyone why she touched him and of how she had been healed instantly.

⁴⁸ So [Jesus] said to her: 'Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go your own way in peace.'

⁴⁹ Then, as he was still talking, someone came up beside the presiding officer of the synagogue and said, 'Your daughter has died, so don't bother the teacher anymore.'

⁵⁰ But when he heard this, Jesus said to the man: 'Don't be afraid; just have faith and she'll be saved.'

⁵¹ Well, when he got to the man's house, he wouldn't let anyone go inside with him other than Peter, John, James, and the girl's father and mother. ⁵² Meanwhile, the people were all crying and beating themselves in grief over her, so he said to them: 'Stop crying! She isn't dead, she's just sleeping.'

⁵³ Well, they all started laughing at him, because they all knew that she had died. ⁵⁴ But then he went and took her by the hand and called her, saying, 'Child, get up!' ⁵⁵ and she started breathing and she stood up. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

⁵⁶ Well, her parents were beside themselves [with joy]; but he warned them not to tell anyone about how this had happened.

Chapter 9

¹ Thereafter, he assembled the twelve and he gave them power and authority over the demons and [the power] to cure illnesses. ² And then he sent them off to preach about the Kingdom of God and to do healing. ³ He told them: 'Don't carry anything with you... not a staff, or a food pouch, or bread, or silver, or even two pairs of underwear. ⁴ But wherever you enter a home, lodge there and go out [to preach]. ⁵ And wherever people fail to welcome you, shake the dust off your feet as you are leaving that city, as a witness against them.'

⁶ So they left and traveled throughout all the villages, declaring the good news and curing people everywhere.

⁷ Now, Herod (the district ruler) had heard about everything that was happening, and he was bothered by doubts. For, some were saying that he was John, who had been raised from the dead, ⁸ while others were saying that EliJah had appeared, and still others were saying that he was one of the ancient Prophets who had arisen. ⁹ And Herod said: 'I beheaded John. So, just who is this that I'm hearing such things about?' And he looked for an opportunity to see [Jesus].

¹⁰ Well, after the Apostles had returned {from their preaching}, they told [Jesus] about everything that they had done. Then he took them along with him to a place where they could all be alone, close to a city called BethSaida. ¹¹ However, when the crowds learned of it, they followed him, and he kindly welcomed them and started speaking to them about the Kingdom of God, as he healed those who needed a cure.

¹² Well, as the day was drawing to a close, the twelve came to him and said: 'You should dismiss the crowd so they can go into the villages and surrounding countryside to find provisions and a place to rest, because this is a very desolate place.'

¹³ But he said: 'Why don't you give them something to eat?'

And they replied: 'We don't have anything... other than five loaves [of bread] and two fish. Should we go out and buy food for all these people... ¹⁴ for there are about five thousand of them!'

But he told his disciples: 'Have them recline as they do at meals in rows of about fifty each.'

¹⁵ So [the Apostles] did this, and everyone reclined on the ground. ¹⁶ Then he took the five [loaves of] bread and the two fish, and after looking up to the heavens, he spoke a blessing over them, broke them up, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ Then everyone ate until they were satisfied... and [afterward], they picked up twelve baskets of leftovers!

¹⁸ Well later, as he was praying in a quiet spot, his disciples came to him and he asked them: 'Who are the crowds saying that I am?'

¹⁹ And they replied: 'Some say you're John the Baptist or EliJah, while others are saying that you're one of the ancient Prophets who has been raised.'

²⁰ Then he asked: 'You though; Who do you say that I am?'

And Peter replied: '[You're] the Anointed of God.'

²¹ And at that, he firmly instructed them not to say this to anyone. ²² Then he told them: 'The Son of Man must suffer many things... he will be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and he will be killed. But on the third day, he will awaken.'

²³ And after that, he said this to everyone: 'If anyone wishes to follow me, he must forego all his wants, then pick up his impaling pole each day and just keep following me. ²⁴ For, those who wish to save their lives will lose them, while those who lose their lives for my sake will save them. ²⁵ Indeed, what profit is there for a man who gains the whole world just to lose it or to be destroyed? ²⁶ But if anyone is ashamed of me and what I'm saying; the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he arrives in his glory and the glory of the Father and His holy messengers. ²⁷ And I tell you the truth; Some [of you who are] standing here will not taste death until you've seen the Kingdom of God!'

²⁸ Well, just as he said, this is what happened about eight days later. For he'd taken Peter, John, and James up on a mountain to pray; ²⁹ and as he was praying, his face changed and his clothes started to glow. ³⁰ Then {Look!} two men appeared and started talking to him... it was Moses and EliJah... ³¹ for they recognized them! And these men started talking [to Jesus] about his departure, which was about to be fulfilled in JeruSalem.

³² Well, Peter and the others had been very sleepy. But when they saw his glory and the two men standing with him, they were suddenly wide-awake. ³³ And through the separation between them, Peter said to Jesus: 'Master; It's good for us to be here, so let us erect three tents... one for you, one for Moses, and one for EliJah' (but he really didn't know what he was saying). ³⁴ And just as he said that, a cloud formed and started to cover them. Then [Moses and EliJah] disappeared into the cloud,

which frightened [the Apostles].³⁵ And a voice came from the cloud that said, 'This is My Son... the one whom I've chosen. Listen to him!'

³⁶ Well, after they heard the voice, they suddenly saw Jesus standing all by himself. But back then, they didn't say anything or tell anyone about the things that they saw.

³⁷ Then the next day, as they were coming down the mountain, they were met by a huge crowd.³⁸ And {Look!} a man shouted from the crowd: 'Teacher! I beg you to take a look at my son, for he's the only one that I have!³⁹ Look! A spirit comes over him and he screams; then it throws him into convulsions and he foams [at the mouth]. And though it stops after that, it leaves him all bruised.⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to throw it out, but they couldn't do it!'

⁴¹ So Jesus said: 'O faithless and twisted generation; How much longer must I stay among you and put up with you? Bring your son over here!'

⁴² However, just as [the son] was approaching, the demon threw him to the ground and forced him into a violent convulsion. But Jesus scolded the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father... and everyone was astonished by the majestic Power of God.

⁴³ Now, his disciples were stunned by all the things that [Jesus] was doing, but he said to them: ⁴⁴ 'Let these words live in your ears: *The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.*'⁴⁵ However, they still didn't understand what he was saying. In fact, it was hidden from them so they couldn't understand, and they were afraid to ask him anything more.

⁴⁶ It was then that they started wondering which of them would be the greatest.⁴⁷ But Jesus knew what they were thinking in their hearts; so he took a little boy and sat him down next to him,⁴⁸ then he said: 'Whoever welcomes this young child in my name, welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me, welcomes the One who sent me. Therefore, the one who acts as the least one among you will be the greatest.'

⁴⁹ Well later, John said: 'Master, we saw a man casting out demons by using your name and we tried to stop him, because he isn't one of us!'

⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him: 'Don't try to stop him, because those who aren't against you are for you!'

⁵¹ Now, since the number of days before he was going to be taken were about to be fulfilled, he became firm in his resolve to go up to JeruSalem.⁵² So he sent messengers ahead of him, and they entered a Samaritan village in order to prepare [for his arrival].⁵³ However, [the people there told them] that he wasn't welcome if he was headed toward JeruSalem.⁵⁴ And when the Disciples James and John [heard about] this, they asked Jesus, 'Lord, do you want us to call fire down from the sky to wipe them out?'⁵⁵ But he turned and scolded them,⁵⁶ and they traveled on to another village.

⁵⁷ Well, as they were traveling along the road, someone said to [Jesus]: 'Lord, I'll follow you wherever you go!'

⁵⁸ And Jesus told him: 'Foxes have burrows, and [birds] in the skies have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'

⁵⁹ And after that, he said to someone else, 'Become my follower.'

But the man replied: 'First let me go and bury my father.'

⁶⁰ And [Jesus] told him: 'Let the dead bury their own dead. You should go out and preach about the Kingdom of God!'

⁶¹ Then another one said, 'I'll follow you Lord. But first let me say goodbye to those in my home.'

⁶² And Jesus told him: 'No man who looks back after he puts his hands to a plow is well suited for the Kingdom of God.'

Chapter 10

¹ Well after that, the Lord appointed seventy others whom he sent out ahead of him in pairs into every city and place that he was about to go. ² And he told them: 'There's a huge harvest, but there aren't enough workers. So, beg the Master of the harvest to force more workers to do the harvesting. ³ Now, get going! Look; I'm sending you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴ Therefore, don't carry a bag of money, a food pouch, or sandals, and don't [stop to] greet people along the road. ⁵ Then, as you enter each house you should say, *May this house have peace.* ⁶ And if a son of peace lives there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷ So, stay in that house and eat and drink the things they provide, because a worker deserves his wages... don't keep moving from one house to another.

⁸ 'Also, whenever you enter a city and they welcome you, eat whatever they set before you, ⁹ then cure their sick and tell them that the Kingdom of God is near! ¹⁰ But whenever you enter a city and they fail to welcome you, go into its main streets and say, ¹¹ *We're wiping off the dust that got stuck on our feet in this city and giving it all back to you!*

'Remember this: The Kingdom of God is in fact near! ¹² And I tell you; It will be easier for Sodom to endure [the Judgment] day than for that city.

¹³ 'So, woe to you ChoraZin, and woe to you BethSaida; for if the powerful things that happened in you had also happened in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes a long time ago. ¹⁴ This is why it will be easier for Tyre and Sidon to endure the Judgment Day than for you. ¹⁵ And you, O Capharnaum; Will you be lifted into the heavens? [No]! You will go down to the place of the dead!

¹⁶ 'Those who listen to you are also listening to me, but those who ignore you are also ignoring me; and those who are ignoring me are ignoring the One who sent me.'

¹⁷ Well, when the seventy who had been sent out in pairs finally returned, they joyfully said: 'Lord, even the demons obeyed us when we used your name!'

¹⁸ And he replied: {Look!} 'I saw the Opposer falling like lightning from the sky. ¹⁹ For I've given you the authority to walk on serpents, scorpions, and on the power of the enemy... and nothing will harm you! ²⁰ However, don't be happy because [evil] spirits obeyed you; be happy because your names have been written in the heavens!'

²¹ Then the Holy Breath caused him to shout joyfully: 'I publicly praise You Father, Lord of the heavens and the earth, because You've hidden these things from the wise and understanding and uncovered them to babies. Yes Father; this is why such clear reasoning was approved by You.

²² 'My Father has given me everything! Yet, no one knows the Son but the Father, [and no one knows]

the Father but the Son... and those to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him.'

²³ Then with that, he turned to his disciples and said to them privately: 'The eyes that are seeing the things you're seeing, are blest; ²⁴ for I tell you that many prophets and kings wished to see the things that you're seeing, and didn't see them, and to hear the things you're hearing, but didn't hear them.'

²⁵ {Look!} Then a man who knew the Law very well stood up, and to test [Jesus], he asked: 'Teacher, what must I do to inherit age-long life?'

²⁶ And [Jesus] replied: 'What is written in the Law... what have you read there?'

²⁷ Then the man said: 'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart, soul, strength, and mind, and your neighbor as yourself.'

²⁸ And [Jesus] replied: 'That's the right answer. Keep on doing that and you'll live.'

²⁹ But [the man] wanted to show how righteous he was, so he asked Jesus: 'Well then, just who really is my neighbor?'

³⁰ And this is how Jesus replied: 'A man was traveling from JeruSalem to JeriCho when he was jumped by some robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and left him for dead. ³¹ Well, it so happened that a Priest was traveling along the same road. But when he saw [the injured man], he passed on the opposite side. ³² In the same way, when a Levite reached that place and saw him, he too passed on the opposite side. ³³ However, when a Samaritan came along and saw him, he felt pity for him. ³⁴ So he got down and poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them. Then he mounted the man on his own animal and carried him to an inn, where he cared for him. ³⁵ And the next day, he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, and told him, *Attend to this man and I'll repay you for all that you spend beyond this when I return.*

³⁶ 'Now, which of the three men seems to have made himself a neighbor to the person who had been jumped by the robbers?'

³⁷ And the [young man] answered: 'The one who showed mercy to him.'

Then Jesus said: 'Go on your way and do the same thing.'

³⁸ Now, as they were traveling along, they entered a certain village where there was a woman named Martha, who welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ This woman had a sister named Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and kept listening to all that he was saying, ⁴⁰ while Martha was distracted, because she was busy preparing [a meal]. So she came to him and said: 'Lord, doesn't it bother you that my sister has left me to do all the preparing by myself? Tell her to give me a hand!'

⁴¹ But the Lord replied: 'Martha, Martha; You're worried and upset about [preparing] many things, ⁴² when all we need is just a few things... or just one. Mary has chosen the best part... something that they can't take away.'

Chapter 11

¹ Now, he was in a certain place praying; and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him: 'Lord, teach us how to pray... as John taught his disciples.'

² Then he told them, 'When you pray, you should say:

*Our Father who is in the heavens,
May Your Name be treated as Holy;
And may Your Kingdom arrive.
May Your Will be done on the earth,
As it is done in the heavens.*

³ *Give us the bread that we need for each day,*

⁴ *And [please] forgive us our sins,
As we forgive those indebted to us.
Into temptation, don't let us be led,
And from the evil one, save us.'*

⁵ Then he asked: 'Which of you has a friend to whom you could go at midnight and say, *Friend, loan me three loaves [of bread],* ⁶ *because another friend of mine has arrived after a long journey, and I don't have anything [to feed him]?* ⁷ Wouldn't he call to you from inside [his house] and say, *Don't give me any trouble; my door is already locked and my kids are here in bed with me, so I can't get up and give you anything!* ⁸ But I tell you the truth; Although he won't get up to give you anything because he's your friend, he will get up and give you what you need if you keep on bothering him.

⁹ 'Therefore,

If you keep asking, you will receive;
If you keep searching, you'll find;
And if you keep knocking, it will be opened.

¹⁰ For, those who keep asking, will [get what they ask];
Those who keep searching will find [what they want];
And for all who keep knocking, the door will be opened.

¹¹ 'Now, which father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, who would hand him a scorpion? ¹³ Therefore, if you in your wicked condition know to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give Holy Breath to those who keep asking Him!'

¹⁴ Well, [Jesus] had once cast out a demon that was causing a man to be unable to talk. And after the demon came out, the man spoke, which amazed the crowds. ¹⁵ But some of [the Pharisees] said: 'He's throwing out the demons with the help of BeElZebub, the ruler of the demons.' ¹⁶ And at the same time, others were trying to tempt him by asking him to give them a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But, knowing what they were thinking, he said this:

'A kingdom that's divided can be conquered,
And a house that's [divided] can fall.

¹⁸ So if the Opposer is opposing himself,
How can his kingdom survive?

'Now, you say that I'm casting out demons by the power of BeElZebub. ¹⁹ But if I'm casting out demons by BeElZebub; whose [power] are your sons using when they do the same? It's over things such as this that you're going to be condemned. ²⁰ For if I'm really casting out demons by the finger of God, you've been overrun by His Kingdom!

²¹ 'When a strong, well-armed man guards his mansion,
All of his things will be safe.

²² But if someone who's stronger should come there,

And take the weapons in which he put trusted;
He will divide up the loot.

²³ 'Now, those who aren't with me are against me, and those who don't gather with me are scattering!

²⁴ 'When an unclean spirit comes out of a man,
It travels through [many] dry places,
In search of a [good] place to rest.
And when it doesn't find one, it says:
I'll go back to the house that I moved from.

²⁵ 'Then, when he sees it swept and arranged,
²⁶ He goes back with seven more spirits,
That are even more wicked than he.
And after they get back inside,
They'll all continue to live there.
And so, the end result for that man,
Is worse than it was at the start.'

²⁷ Now, as he was saying these things, a certain woman in the crowd shouted, 'Blest is the womb that carried you and the breasts that you sucked!'

²⁸ But he replied: 'No, blest are those who hear the word of God and obey it!'

²⁹ Well, a crowd was starting to form, so he said: 'This is a wicked generation that is always looking for signs. But no sign will be given to it other than the sign of Jonah... ³⁰ for as Jonah was a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be to this generation.

³¹ 'Why, the Queen of the South will be raised in the Judgment along with this generation, and she will condemn it. For she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom. But look! Something more than Solomon is here!

³² 'The people of Nineveh will be raised in the Judgment along with this generation, and they will also condemn it. For they repented at what Jonah preached. But look! Something more than Jonah is here!

³³ 'No one lights a lamp and then hides it,
Nor do they put it under a basket.
They set it on a lampstand instead,
So people can see where they're going.

³⁴ 'Now, the body's lamps are your eyes.
And when you keep your eyes simple,
They'll make your whole body bright;
But, if you have eyes that are wicked,
They'll make your whole body dark.

³⁵ 'So be sure that your light isn't darkness.

³⁶ For if your body is bright, containing no dark parts,
It will serve a lamp to shine on your way.'

³⁷ Well, after he said this, a Pharisee asked [Jesus] to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at his table. ³⁸ However, the Pharisee was surprised to see that Jesus hadn't washed up before dinner. ³⁹ But the Lord said to him: 'You Pharisees like to wash the outsides of dishes and cups, while their insides are still filled with wickedness and things that are stolen. ⁴⁰ Unreasonable people; Didn't the same One who made the insides also make the outsides? ⁴¹ However, if you give freely to those who are in need, {Look!} not just your outsides, but everything about you will be clean!

⁴² 'But, woe to you Pharisees; for though you may offer even your mint and your rue when you tithe, you keep overlooking justice and the love of God! Yes, you do all that [the Law] requires of you... but then you bypass all the rest.

⁴³ 'Yes, woe to you Pharisees; for you love [to sit in the] front seats in the synagogues and [to receive] all the greetings in the markets... ⁴⁴ yes, woe to you, for you're like the hidden graves that men unwittingly walk on.'

⁴⁵ Well, in reply, someone who was trained in the Law said to him: 'Teacher; you know that when you say things like this, you're insulting us!'

⁴⁶ But [Jesus] replied: 'Woe to you who are trained in the Law, for you pile loads upon men so high that they can't be carried and which you wouldn't touch with even a finger! ⁴⁷ Yes, woe to you; for you build tombs for the Prophets that were murdered by your fathers! ⁴⁸ And in so doing, you're testifying against yourselves, since you're approving of these very same things that were done by your fathers when they murdered those Prophets... those whose tombs you're now building.

⁴⁹ 'It was concerning such things that the Wisdom of God said this:

*I'm sending Apostles and Prophets to you,
Whom you'll persecute and you'll kill.*

⁵⁰ And this is why the blood of all the Prophets that's been spilled since this system was founded will be laid upon this generation... ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel that of Zechariah, who [was murdered] between the [Temple] and Altar. Yes I tell you; it will all be laid upon this generation!

⁵² 'So, woe to you who are trained in the Law, for though you accept the key to [great] knowledge, you fail to pass through [the door]... and then you block the way for the rest who are trying to enter!' ⁵³ And after that, he got up and left.

Well, the scribes and Pharisees were always trying to pin him down, constantly asking him questions about things, ⁵⁴ because they were just lying in wait and trying to trap him in things that he might say.

Chapter 12

¹ Well, a huge crowd had gathered... there were so many thousands that they were literally stepping on each other. Then [Jesus gave this warning to] his disciples. He said: 'Watch out for the fermentation of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

² For there's nothing hidden that won't be exposed,
And no secret that will not be known.

³ So the things that you say in the darkness,
Will be all heard in the light;
And whatever is whispered within private rooms,
Will be shouted aloud from the rooftops!

⁴ 'I tell you this, my friends;

Fear not those who can kill the body,
But who can do no more than that.

⁵ Let me show you whom you must fear:
Fear the One, who after killing [the body],
Can throw it into the garbage... Yes, He's the One you must fear!

⁶ 'Though you can buy five sparrows with just two small coins,
In the eyes of God, they're not overlooked...

⁷ And He's numbered the hairs on your head.
So, you have no reason for fear,
Since, more than many sparrows is your value!

⁸ 'I tell you this:
For those who'll admit before others,
That they are united with me;
The Son of Man will also admit,
That they're one with him before angels.

⁹ But for those who deny me to others,
I'll deny knowing them before angels.

¹⁰ 'Now, those who speak against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but those who blaspheme [God's]
Holy Breath will not be forgiven. ¹¹ So when they drag you up before synagogues, or authorities, or
government officials; don't worry about what you must do or what you must say in your defense, ¹² for
you will be taught what to say by [God's] Holy Breath in that hour.'

¹³ Then, someone in the crowd said: 'Teacher; tell my brother to share his inheritance with me!'

¹⁴ And [Jesus] said: 'Man, who appointed me as the judge or arbitrator between the two of you?'

¹⁵ Then he [went on] to say this:
'Keep your eyes open and guard against greed;
For the things that you own will not give you life.'

¹⁶ And then he gave them this illustration:
'A rich man's fields produced well,

¹⁷ So he thought about this and then asked himself:
*What should I do, since there's not enough room,
In which to store all my crops?*

¹⁸ 'Then he said:
*Ah, I will do this:
I'll tear down my barns and build larger,
And that's where I'll put all my wheat,
As well as my other good things.*

¹⁹ 'Then I will say to myself:
You now have many good things
Saved away [to last] many years.
So, you can just take it easy...
Yes, eat, drink, and enjoy!

²⁰ 'But God said:
*O foolish man;
Tonight, they're demanding your life.
So, who will now own all these things?*

²¹ 'You see; this is what happens to a man who lays away treasures for himself, but fails to gain wealth with God.'

²² Then he said to his disciples: 'This is why I've told you not to worry about your lives and about what you will eat, or about your bodies and what you will wear. ²³ For your life is worth so much more than food, and your body is worth [so much more] than clothes.

²⁴ 'Notice the ravens; for they don't plant or harvest, and they don't have barns or storage sheds, since they are fed by God... and [think about] how much more are you worth than those birds!

²⁵ 'And which of you through worry add even a smidgen to your life? ²⁶ So if [worry] is unable fix little things, why be concerned about all the rest?

²⁷ 'Also notice how the lilies grow. For although they don't work or spin cloth; I tell you that even Solomon in all of his glory wasn't as well-dressed as they are. ²⁸ So if God so well clothes the plants in the fields that are here today and thrown into an oven tomorrow; how much more would He rather clothe you... you with so little faith?

²⁹ 'Therefore, stop searching for things to eat and drink, and don't worry about how you're going to get them. ³⁰ For these are the kinds of things that the gentiles are pursuing. However, your Father already knows that you need all these things. ³¹ And if you'll keep seeking His Kingdom first, you'll receive all the rest.

³² 'Don't be afraid, little flock; for it is the delight of your Father to give you the Kingdom. ³³ Therefore, sell everything that you own and give it to those who really need it, and make purses for yourselves that won't wear out... the unfailing treasures in the heavens, which can't be consumed by thieves or by moths. ³⁴ For where your treasures are, is where your hearts will be.

³⁵ 'Therefore, wrap on your sashes and light up your lamps, ³⁶ then act like men who are awaiting their master's return from his wedding banquet, so that when he arrives and starts knocking, you can open [the door] to him right away.

³⁷ 'Blest are those slaves that are watching,
When their master arrives!
For I tell you this as the truth:
He will then put on his apron,
And make them recline at his table;
And he will come there and serve them!

³⁸ 'If it's in the second watch that he should arrive...
Or even if it's during the third;
You'll be blest if he finds you doing these things!

³⁹ 'Recognize this:

If the master of the house would have known
The time when the thieves would arrive,
He would have been keeping watch
And not let them break into his house.

⁴⁰ Likewise, you must also be ready; For the Son of Man will arrive
At a time you consider unlikely.'

⁴¹ Then Peter asked: 'Lord, are you giving this illustration to just us, or to everyone?'

⁴² And the Lord said:

'Who is the faithful house steward...
The sensible one, assigned by his lord,
To be in charge of [serving] his faithful friends,
And to provide their meals at the right times?

⁴³ Such a slave will be blest if he's found doing that,
When his master arrives...

⁴⁴ I tell you the truth...

He'll put him in charge of all that he owns!

⁴⁵ 'But, if that slave should say in his heart:

My master's delayed in returning;

And then he starts beating [the Lord's] boys and girls,
and he feasts and drinks, then gets drunk...

⁴⁶ His master will arrive on an hour and day

That he has not been expected,

And he'll whip him and count him among the unfaithful.

⁴⁷ 'So the slave who knows what his master expects,

And doesn't prepare or do what he wants,

Will be lashed with a whip many times.

⁴⁸ But the one who does not understand,

And does things for which he deserves to be whipped,

Will be beaten with [just a] few [strokes].

'For, from those to whom much is given,

Much is also expected.

And from those who've been put in charge over much,

Much is also required.

⁴⁹ 'I came here to start a fire on the earth; so what more could I possibly wish than to see it already lit?

⁵⁰ However, there's a baptism coming that I will have to endure... and I'm under great pressure until it arrives.

⁵¹ 'Do you think that I came to bring peace on earth? No, I've come here to create divisions! ⁵² So if there are five in a house, they'll be divided three against two and two against three. ⁵³ Fathers will be against their own sons, and sons [will be] against their own fathers... mothers will be against their own daughters, and daughters will be against their own mothers. It will be mothers-in-law against daughters-in-law, and daughters-in-law against mothers-in-law!'

⁵⁴ Then he told the crowd:

'When you see a cloud arise in the west,
You say that a storm is approaching... and it happens.
⁵⁵ And when you see the wind blow in from the south,
You say that a heat wave is coming... and it happens.
⁵⁶ Hypocrites!
You know how to read the land and the sky,
So, why can't you read the [signs of the] times?

⁵⁷ 'Why not decide what is righteous for yourselves?
⁵⁸ For, rather than taking a case to a ruler,
You should try to resolve it as you're on the way,
So you won't be dragged in front of the judge,
Who will hand you over to the bailiff,
Who will then throw you in jail.
⁵⁹ I tell you;
If that happens, you won't be set free,
Until you've paid your last cent.'

Chapter 13

¹ Well at the time, some people who were there told him about certain Galileans whose blood had mixed with their sacrifices by [Pontius] Pilate. ² Then [Jesus] asked them: 'Do you think those Galileans suffered such things because they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?' ³ No! For I tell you this: If you don't repent, you'll be destroyed that same way!

⁴ 'And what about those eighteen people upon whom the tower at SiloAm fell and killed; Do you think they were worse sinners than all the others who live in JeruSalem?' ⁵ No! I tell you this: If you don't repent, you'll all be destroyed that same way!

⁶ Then he gave them this illustration:
'There was a man who had a fig tree in his vineyard,
And when he looked for fruit, he found none.
⁷ So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard:
*For the past three years, I've been looking for fruit on this tree,
But so far, I haven't found any.
So I tell you to just cut it down!
For, why should it just take up space?*

⁸ 'But [the vinedresser] gave this reply: *Master,
Leave it alone for just one more year,
For I'll cultivate and fertilize it,
And it might bear fruit in the future...
But if not, I'll just cut it down.'*

¹⁰ Well, [on another occasion], he happened to be teaching in one of the synagogues on a Sabbath ¹¹ where {Look!} there was a woman who'd endured a spirit of weakness for some eighteen years... she was bent over and unable to straighten herself. ¹² And when Jesus saw this, he called to her and said: 'Woman, you're now free from this weakness.' ¹³ Then he laid his hands on her and she straightened up instantly and started glorifying God.

¹⁴ However, the chief of the synagogue resented this because Jesus had performed the cure on the

Sabbath. So he said to the crowd: 'There are SIX DAYS when work should be done. Come to be cured on THOSE DAYS, not on the Sabbath!'

¹⁵ But the Lord replied: 'Hypocrite! Don't you untie your bulls and burros from their stalls and lead them out to drink on the Sabbath?' ¹⁶ Yet, this is a daughter of Abraham whom the Opposer has held tied {Look!} for some eighteen years! So, isn't it appropriate for her to be untied from this type of bondage on the Sabbath?'

¹⁷ Well after he said that, all those who opposed him were ashamed; and the crowd started rejoicing over all the glorious things that he was doing.

¹⁸ Then he went on to say:
'To what can the Kingdom of God be compared...
To what can it really be likened?

¹⁹ 'It's like the seed of the mustard,
That a man had planted in his garden.
For it grew and became as tall as a tree,
In whose branches, the birds of the skies came to roost.'

²⁰ And once again, he said:
'To what can the Kingdom of God be compared?

²¹ It's like a little fermentation
That a woman hid in three scoops of flour,
Until the mass rose and became filled with [yeast].'

²² Well, he traveled through city after city and village after village teaching, as he continued on his way to JeruSalem.

²³ Then someone asked: 'Lord, will only a few be saved?'

And he said to him:

²⁴ 'You must strive to enter through the gate that is narrow,
For I tell you that many will try to get in,
But they won't have enough strength.

²⁵ So when the Lord arises and closes the lock;
If you're on the outside knocking and shouting,
Lord, please open to us!
He'll say, *I don't know where you're from!*

²⁶ 'Then, if you should say,
Before you, we ate and we drank,
And you taught us in our main streets!
Then, He will give this reply:

²⁷ *I do not know where you're from...*
Get away from me, you unrighteous men!

'Then there, you'll be crying and grinding your teeth
When Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are seen,
With all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God,

As you are standing outside.

²⁹ 'For they'll come from the east, west, north, and the south
To recline at the table in the Kingdom of God.

³⁰ But {Look!} those who are last will be first,
And the first will be last.'

³¹ Well, it was in that very same hour that some Pharisees came and said to him: 'You'd better get out of here and go, because Herod is looking to kill you!'

³² But he replied: 'Go tell the old fox that I'll keep on casting out demons and healing today and tomorrow, and I'll be finished on the third day. ³³ And I'll also keep on moving [on toward JeruSalem] today, tomorrow, and the next day, since it wouldn't be fitting for a Prophet to be destroyed outside of [that city].

³⁴ 'O JeruSalem, JeruSalem... you murderer of the Prophets and stoner of those who've been sent to you; how often I've wanted to gather your young as a hen brings her chicks under her wings. But that isn't what you've wanted, ³⁵ so {Look!} your house has been taken from you! And now I'm telling you that won't see me after that until [you are ready to] proclaim, *Praise this one who has come in the Name of Jehovah!*'

Chapter 14

¹ Well, there was a time when [Jesus] went to eat a meal at the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a Sabbath... and everyone was watching him closely. ² Then {Look!} a man came to him who had [a fluid-buildup condition called] dropsy. ³ So Jesus asked those students of the Law and the Pharisees this: 'Is it legal to cure on the Sabbath or not?' ⁴ However, they wouldn't answer.

So he took hold of [the man], healed him, and then sent him away. ⁵ And he asked them: 'If your son or your bull were to fall into a well on the Sabbath, which of you wouldn't immediately go and pull him out?'

⁶ Well, they were unable to come up with a reply.

⁷ Then, after noticing how the guests were choosing the best spots at the table, he gave them this illustration:

⁸ 'If you are invited to a wedding reception,
Don't go and recline in the very best place.

For if someone more honored arrives,

⁹ The host must then come there and say:

Let this man have that spot.

And you'll be shamed when you're sent to the least honored place.

¹⁰ 'So, whenever you're invited [to a banquet],
Go and recline in the very last spot.

Then, when the host arrives, he will say:

Friend, take a better position!

And you'll be honored before all his guests.

¹¹ For the self-exalting will be humbled,

And the humble will be elevated.'

¹² Then Jesus said to the man who invited him:

'When you spread a dinner or a supper,
Don't call your friends and your brothers,
Nor your kin or your rich neighbors;
For, you will then be rewarded,
When they, in turn, invite you.

¹³ 'But whenever you hold a banquet,
Invite the crippled and poor,
As well as the lame and the blind...

¹⁴ Those who cannot repay you;
For then you'll receive your reward
In the resurrection of the righteous.'

¹⁵ Well, when one of the guests heard this, he shouted: 'Aren't those who [are invited to] dine in the Kingdom of God the ones that will be blest?'

¹⁶ And [Jesus] said:

'There was a man who prepared a large supper,
And he invited many [friends] to come there and dine.

¹⁷ So, after the meal was prepared,
He sent his slave out to tell them:
Come on, for [the banquet] is ready!

¹⁸ 'But, each then gave an excuse.
Said the first, *I must look at a field that I've bought;*
So, please let me be excused.

¹⁹ 'And then another said this:
I've purchased five pairs of oxen,
And I must now go to inspect them;
So, please let me be excused.

²⁰ 'Still another replied:
Because I'm about to get married,
I'm unable to come at this time.

²¹ 'Well, when the slave returned and reported these things,
The master of the house became angry,
And this is what he said to his slave:

*'Go quickly to the main streets and alleys,
And bring the crippled and poor,
As well as the blind and the lame.*

²² 'And when he returned, the slave told him:
*I've done all that you said I must do,
But, there is still plenty of room!*

²³ 'So the master then gave this instruction:

*Go out to the roads and backyards,
And make people come, so my house will be filled!*

²⁴ *For I tell you that none I invited,
Will get even a taste of my supper.'*

²⁵ Well, there was a large crowd that had come there with him. So he then turned to them and said: ²⁶ 'Unless those who come to me care less for their fathers, mothers, wives, children, brothers, and sisters – yes, even for their own lives – they cannot become my disciples, ²⁷ nor can anyone follow me who's unwilling to carry his own impaling pole!

²⁸ Now, which of you who might choose to build a tower for himself, wouldn't first sit down to calculate the costs, so as to be sure that he'd have enough [funds] to complete it? ²⁹ For if you lay the foundation and then find out that you're unable to finish the project, everyone who sees it will make fun of you and say, ³⁰ *This man started the job, but then he couldn't complete it!*

³¹ 'Or, what king, when he's marching [to battle], doesn't first sit down and ask his advisors if his ten thousand troops can possibly beat the one who is coming with twenty thousand? ³² For if he's unable to do that; while [his enemy] is still far away, he'll send his ambassadors to sue for peace.

³³ 'So, you too must be sure! For, those who aren't willing to give up everything that they own are qualified to be my disciples!

³⁴ 'Yes, salt is good; but if salt should lose all its strength, what value will it have to season your food?

³⁵ If it isn't good for soil or manure, people will just throw it away. Now, let those with hearing ears pay attention!'

Chapter 15

¹ Well, tax collectors and sinners kept coming to [Jesus] to listen to the things he was saying. ² And because of this, the Pharisees and scribes started murmuring, 'This man welcomes sinners... and look, he even eats with them!'

³ So he told used this illustration: ⁴ 'Which of you who owns a hundred sheep and loses just one, wouldn't leave the ninety-nine out in the fields to search for the one that was lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when you find it, you'll rejoice and [carry it home] on your shoulders. ⁶ Then when you get back home, you'll call your friends and neighbors and say: *Come and rejoice with me, because I've found my sheep that was lost!*

⁷ 'So in the same way, I tell you:
There's more rejoicing in heaven,
Over just one sinner who's turned from bad ways,
Than over ninety-nine of the righteous,
Who have no need of repentance.

⁸ 'Or when a woman with ten silver coins finds that she has lost one, she'll light [all her] lamps and carefully sweep her whole house to search for it until she finds it. ⁹ And then when she finds it, she'll call her friends and neighbors to say: *Come and rejoice with me, for I've found the silver coin that I lost!*

¹⁰ 'So I tell you:
There is joy among the angels of God

Over the repentance of each sinner.'

¹¹ Then he said: 'There once was a man who had two sons. ¹² And the youngest of them came to him and said: *Father, give me my share of the things that I'll inherit!* So he gave him the portion that was his.

¹³ 'Well, just a few days after that, this younger son gathered his things and traveled to a far away land, where he quickly squandered all that he had.

¹⁴ 'Then, after he'd spent [all his money], a famine came to that land, which left him in a very bad spot.

¹⁵ So he went to work for a man in that country, who sent him out into the field to take care of his pigs.

¹⁶ And soon he even started longing for those carob pods that he was feeding the animals, because people wouldn't give him anything.

¹⁷ 'Then, when he finally came to his senses, he asked himself this: *Since my father's hired-hands have plenty of bread, why am I here, dying from hunger?* ¹⁸ *Now, I'm going to get up and return to my father and tell him that since I've sinned against heaven and him,* ¹⁹ *I'm unworthy to be called his son anymore, and all I want to do is to work for him as one of his hired hands.* ²⁰ So thereafter, he got up and returned to his father.

'However, while he was still far way, his father recognized him in the distance, and in pity, he ran and fell on his neck and tenderly kissed him. ²¹ But the son said: *Father, I've sinned against both heaven and you, so I'm unworthy to be called your son... just let me be one of your hired hands.*

²² 'But the father said this to his slaves: *Quickly bring him a robe... bring the very best one, then put a ring on his hand and put some shoes on his feet.* ²³ *Also, slaughter the calf that we've fattened with wheat, then let's hold [a feast] and have a good time!* ²⁴ *For my son who was dead, is alive again... he was lost, but now he's been found!* So thereafter, they started a party.

²⁵ 'Meanwhile, the older son had been out in the fields. And as he returned and got close to his home, he could hear [the sounds] of music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called to one of the servants and asked, *What's going on?*

²⁷ 'And in reply, [the servant] told him: *Your brother has just returned, so your father had us slaughter the calf that we've fattened, because [your brother] has returned in good health!*

²⁸ 'Well at that, [the son] became very angry and he wouldn't go inside. So his father came outside to beg him to come on in. ²⁹ But this is what he said to his father: *Though I've slaved for you all these years and I've never broken your rules, you've never given me so much as a kid goat to enjoy with my friends.* ³⁰ *But as soon as this son who spent all his money on whores returns, you slaughtered the fattened calf!*

³¹ 'But this is what his father told him: *Child, you have always been with me, and everything I have is yours also.* ³² *But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because your brother who was as one of the dead, has now been brought back to life... the one who was lost has been found!*

Chapter 16

¹ Then [Jesus] went on to tell his disciples: 'There was a rich man who had a house manager that was accused of mishandling his belongings. ² So [the rich man] called him in and asked, *What is this that I'm hearing about you? Turn in your things, for you'll no longer manage [my] house!*

³ 'Then the [man] thought to himself: *Now, what should I do, since my master is taking away my position? I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'd be ashamed to beg. ' Ah! I know what I'll do when I lose my job... I'll do something to cause people to welcome me into their homes!*

⁵ So he called in all those who owed debts to his master, and he asked the first one: *How much do you owe my master?*

⁶ 'He replied: *Nine hundred gallons of olive oil.*

'Then he told him: *Here, take your contract; then sit down and quickly write four hundred and fifty.*

⁷ 'He also asked the next: *How much do you owe?*

'And he replied: *Thirty-six thousand quarts of wheat.*

'Then he told him: *Take your contract and write twenty-nine thousand.*

⁸ 'Well, although he was unrighteous, his master spoke in praise of [the servant], for he showed very good sense. As you can see; the sons of this age are better than the sons of the light when it comes to understanding how to deal with this generation. ⁹ Therefore, I'm telling you to make friends for yourselves with unrighteous wealth, so that when all else fails, they'll welcome you into their tents through the ages.

¹⁰ 'For the one who is faithful in small things,
Will also be faithful in much.
But the one who's unrighteous in small things,
Will also be unrighteous in much.

¹¹ So if you fail to prove yourselves faithful
With the unrighteous wealth [of this world];
Who will entrust you with things that are true?

¹² And if you fail to prove yourself faithful
With things belonging to others;
Which of us will trust you with things that are ours?

¹³ 'Nor can you slave for two masters;
For one you'll dislike, but the other you'll love,
So you'll stick to the one and despise the other...
No you can't slave for God and for wealth.'

¹⁴ Now, the Pharisees (who loved silver) were listening to him as he was saying these things, and they were looking at him with contempt. ¹⁵ So he said to them: 'You claim to be righteous before men, but God knows what's really in your hearts... and the things that are important to men are disgusting in the eyes of God.

¹⁶ 'Until John, there was the Law and the Prophets; but since then, the Kingdom of God is what has been preached, and everyone is trying to force their way into it. ¹⁷ However, it would be easier for the lands and skies to pass away than for a single stroke on one of the Law's letters to fail. ¹⁸ So, whoever releases his woman and marries another has committed adultery. And whoever marries a released woman has also committed adultery.

¹⁹ 'Now, there once was a very rich man who dressed himself in purple and linen, and he enjoyed the very best things each day. ²⁰ There was also a poor man named Lazarus, who used to be put at his gate. This [poor] man was covered with sores, ²¹ and all he wanted was to eat some of the things that fell from the rich man's table. Also, he had dogs come to lick his sores.

²² 'Well, the poor man [eventually] died, and [God's] messengers carried him off to the most-favored position of AbraHam. Then the rich man also died and was buried. ²³ And from the place of the dead he raised his eyes, and he was tormented when he saw AbraHam off in the distance, and Lazarus lying there before him. ²⁴ So [the rich man] called out and said, *Father AbraHam, have mercy on me! Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool off my tongue, for I'm suffering in these flames!*

²⁵ 'But AbraHam replied: *Child; remember that you had all the good things in life, as Lazarus [had just] the bad. So now he's here [receiving my] comfort, while you are there suffering.* ²⁶ *Also, an abyss has been placed here between us, so that those who are here can't go there, and those who are there can't come here.*

²⁷ 'Well at that, [the rich man] said: *Then I beg you... please father! Send him to the house of my father,* ²⁸ *for I have five brothers... have him testify to them, so they don't end up in this place of torment!*

²⁹ 'But AbraHam replied: *They already have the Prophets and Moses... [your brothers] should listen to them!*

³⁰ 'Then [the rich man] said: *No indeed, Father AbraHam; for they would surely repent if someone were to come to them from the dead!*

³¹ 'But [AbraHam] said: *No, if they won't listen to the Prophets or Moses, they wouldn't be persuaded even if someone should arise from the dead!*

Chapter 17

¹ And after that, [Jesus] said to his disciples: 'It's unavoidable that there will be snares. However, woe to those who set them! ² It would be better if a millstone were hung around [such a man's] neck and he was thrown into the sea, than to stumble one of these least ones. ³ So, pay attention to yourselves!

'If your brother sins [against you], go to him and discuss it. Then if he repents, forgive him! ⁴ Why, even if he sins against you seven times a day; if he comes back seven times to say, *I'm sorry*; you should forgive him!

⁵ Then the Apostles said to the Lord: 'Give us more faith!'

⁶ And he told them: 'If you had faith [the size of] a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, *Pull out of the ground and then plant yourself in the sea...* and it would likely obey you.

⁷ 'Which of you has a slave who, after he's been plowing or tending a flock, would say to him when he returns: *Come over here and recline at my table?* ⁸ No, it's more likely that you'd tell him: *Put on an apron and prepare my supper, then serve it to me. [You can wait] until I'm done eating and drinking, and thereafter you can get yourself something to eat and drink.* ⁹ You won't be grateful to that slave because he did what he was assigned, will you? ¹⁰ So you too... after you've done all that you've been

assigned, say: *We are just worthless slaves, and all we are doing is what we are obliged to do.*'

¹¹ Well, as [Jesus] was on his way to JeruSalem, he traveled through the midst of Samaria and then into Galilee. ¹² And as he entered a certain village, ten men with leprosy -- ¹³ started shouting: 'Jesus! Master! Have mercy on us!'

¹⁴ And when [Jesus] saw them, he said: 'Go and present yourselves to the Priests.' Then, as they were leaving, each one was made clean. ¹⁵ And one of them, when he realized that he had been healed, came back glorifying God in a loud voice ¹⁶ and fell to his face at [Jesus'] feet to thank him (this one was a Samaritan).

¹⁷ So Jesus asked: 'Weren't there ten who were cleansed? So where are the other nine?' ¹⁸ Was this man of another race the only one who returned to glorify God?'

¹⁹ Then he told him: 'Get up and go, for your faith has saved you!'

²⁰ Well [later], there was a Pharisee who asked [Jesus] when the Kingdom of God was coming. And this is the reply that he gave: 'The coming of the Kingdom of God won't be easily noticed, ²¹ so people won't be saying, *Look, it's here*, or, *Look, it's over there!* Rather, the Kingdom of God is within you!'

²² Then he went on to say to his disciples: 'The time is coming when you'll wish that you could see just one these days of the Son of Man... but you'll no longer be able to see them. ²³ And though people will be saying, *Look, it's here*, or, *See, it's there;* don't follow them. ²⁴ For when the Son of Man arrives, it will be like lightning that flashes across the whole sky.

²⁵ 'However, before that he will have to endure many things, and then he'll be rejected by this generation. ²⁶ For as it was in Noah's day is how it will be in the day of the Son of Man. ²⁷ For then they were eating and drinking, getting married and being taken in marriage, right up to the day that Noah entered the chest, and the Downpour arrived destroying them all.

²⁸ 'The same thing happened in Lot's day; for they were also eating and drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building, ²⁹ right up to the day that Lot [fled from] Sodom. Then fire and sulfur rained from the sky, destroying them all. ³⁰ Yes, this is how it will be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed.

³¹ 'In that day, the man [who is] on his roof must not go back into his house to retrieve the things that he owns, and the person who is out in a field shouldn't return for the things he's left behind ³² (remember [what happened to] Lot's woman). ³³ For those who try to save their lives will lose them, while those who lose them will live.

³⁴ 'I tell you this:
In that night, there'll be two in one bed;
One will be taken along,
And the other will be left behind.

³⁵ Two will be grinding at [the same] mill;
One will be taken along,
And the other will be left behind.' ³⁶ —

³⁷ So then they asked him: 'When [is this going to happen], Lord?'

And he replied: 'When the vultures gather at the carcass.'

Chapter 18

¹ Then he gave them an illustration to show them why they should keep praying and never give up. ² He said:

'There once was a judge in a city,
Who had no fear of God,
And who couldn't be shamed before other men.

³ 'But a widow in that city kept coming and saying:
I want justice from the man that I [sued].

⁴ 'Well at first, [the judge] did nothing at all,
But then, he started to reason:
*Although I do not fear God,
Nor can any man shame me;*

⁵ *Since this widow keeps coming and making more work,
I will see that she receives justice,
So she doesn't just nag me to death.'*

⁶ Then the Lord asked, 'Now, did you hear what this unrighteous judge said? ⁷ So won't God, who is patient, also give justice to His chosen ones who keep calling out to Him all day and all night long? ⁸ Yes, I tell you; He'll bring speedy justice for you! Yet, when the Son of Man arrives, will he really find the faith on earth?'

⁹ Then he gave this illustration to some who were trusting in themselves, believing that they were righteous, while everyone else was just nothing. He said:

¹⁰ 'Two men went up to the Temple to pray... one was a tax collector and the other was a Pharisee. ¹¹ Now, the Pharisee stood up and said this concerning himself in his prayer: *I thank You O God, that I'm not like all the rest, who are robbers, unrighteous, and adulterers... or like that tax collector [over there].* ¹² *Why, I fast twice each week and I contribute a tenth of everything that I receive.*

¹³ 'But the tax collector, who stood at some distance, wouldn't raise his eyes up toward heaven. He just beat on himself as he said: *God, please don't be angry with this sinner!* ¹⁴ I tell you that this man returned to his home as the more righteous one, because the self-promoters will be humbled, and the humble will be promoted.'

¹⁵ Well thereafter, people started bringing their young children for [Jesus] to touch them. But when the disciples saw this, they started scolding them. ¹⁶ However, Jesus called [the disciples] to him and said: 'Let the young children come to me... don't try to stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to people like this. ¹⁷ I tell you the truth: Those who don't welcome the Kingdom of God like a little child, won't enter it at all.'

¹⁸ Then a certain ruler asked him: 'Good teacher; What must I do to inherit age-long life?'

¹⁹ And Jesus asked him: 'Why are you calling me good? No one is good except One... The God! ²⁰ You know the Commandments: *Don't commit adultery, don't murder, don't steal, don't provide false testimony, honor your father and mother...*'

²¹ Then [the ruler] replied, 'Well, I've guarded these [things] since my youth!'

²² And Jesus said: 'But there's still one thing that you're lacking... go sell all that you have and give to the poor, then come be my follower, and you'll have your treasures in the heavens.'

²³ Well when he heard this, [the ruler] became very sad, because he was extremely rich.

²⁴ So Jesus looked at him and said:
'How hard it will be for those who are rich,
To find their way into the Kingdom!

²⁵ It's easier to thread a rope through a needle,
Than for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God.'

²⁶ Well at that, those who heard him say this, asked: 'Then, who can possibly be saved?'

²⁷ And he replied: 'Things that are impossible for men are still possible with God.'

²⁸ But Peter said: 'Look, we've left everything to follow you!'

²⁹ And [Jesus] said to him: 'I tell you the truth;
There's no one who loses a house or a woman,
Or brothers, parents, or children,
For the sake of the Kingdom of God,

³⁰ Who won't receive much more in this age,
And life in the age that is coming.'

³¹ Then he took the twelve aside and said to this them: 'Look! We're on our way up to JeruSalem, where everything that the Prophets wrote about the Son of Man is now going to be fulfilled. ³² He'll be handed over to the gentiles and made fun of; he'll be treated shamefully and spit on; ³³ and then after flaying him with a whip, they'll kill him... but on the third day, he'll be resurrected.'

³⁴ However, they just didn't grasp the meaning of any of these things, because what he said was hidden from them and they couldn't understand it.

³⁵ Well later, as he was approaching Jericho, there happened to be a blind man who was sitting alongside the road begging. ³⁶ Then, as he heard the crowd moving past, he asked what was happening, ³⁷ and he was told: 'Jesus the Nazarene is coming!' ³⁸ So he started shouting: 'Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!'

³⁹ Well, those who were walking in front [of Jesus] told him to be quiet, but he just shouted louder: 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' ⁴⁰ So Jesus stopped and gave orders to have him brought over. And when [the blind man] got to him, [Jesus] asked: ⁴¹ 'What is it that you want me to do for you?'

And he answered: 'Lord, let me see again!'

⁴² So Jesus said: 'Then, see again... for your faith has saved you!' ⁴³ And instantly, his sight returned... then he started following [Jesus], glorifying God, and the people were also praising God after they saw this.

Chapter 19

¹ Well after that, as [Jesus] was continuing on through Jericho, ² {Look!} there was a rich man called

ZacChaeUs (he was the chief tax collector) ³ and he wanted to see just who this Jesus was... but he couldn't because of the crowd. since he was too short. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a fig-sycamore tree [on the street] where [Jesus] was walking, so he could see him.

⁵ Well, when Jesus reached that spot, he looked up and said: 'ZacChaeUs, hurry and get down from there, because I'll be staying at your house today.' ⁶ So he quickly got down, rejoicing that he could welcome him as his guest. ⁷ But when [the crowds] saw this, they all started grumbling: 'Is he going to spend the night at the home of a man who's a sinner?'

⁸ But then ZacChaeUs stood up and said this to the Lord: 'Lord, I will give half of my belongings to the poor, and whatever I got from anyone by extortion and false accusations, I'll repay four times over!'

⁹ So Jesus said: 'Salvation has come to this house today, for he's also a son of AbraHam! ¹⁰ And the reason why the Son of Man came was to search for and save those who are lost.'

¹¹ Then as they were listening to him say these things, Jesus gave them this illustration (because he was getting close to JeruSalem and they all thought that the Kingdom of God was coming right away). ¹² So he said:

'A certain man of noble birth,
Traveled to a far-away land,
To be appointed as king.

¹³ 'So he called for ten of his slaves,
And he gave them each a large silver coin,
Saying,
Do business [with this], until my return.

¹⁴ 'But he was hated by some of his subjects,
Who sent envoys ahead to say this about him:
We don't want this man as our ruler!

¹⁵ 'Well, when he returned, appointed as king;
He summoned all of those slaves
To whom he'd entrusted his silver,
To find out how much they had gained.

¹⁶ 'So the first one came up and said this:
Lord;
With your coin, I've earned ten silver coins!

¹⁷ 'And [the king] said this in reply:
Well-done, my good [faithful] slave!
Since you have proved faithful in small things,
I'll appoint you over ten cities.

¹⁸ 'Then the second [slave] came up and said this:
Lord;
With your coin, I have earned five silver coins!

¹⁹ 'So [the king] said this in reply:
I'll appoint you over five cities.

²⁰ 'But the last came up and told him:
Lord;
Here's the silver coin that you gave me,
Which I wrapped up in a bandanna.
²¹ *I feared, for I know you're a very harsh man...*
One who picks up what he hasn't put down,
And harvests where he hasn't planted.

²² 'Then [the master] replied:
O wicked slave;
From the words of your mouth, I have judged you.
So you know that I am a very harsh man,
Who picks up what he doesn't put down,
And harvests what he hasn't planted?
²³ *Why didn't you put my coin in a bank,*
So it likely would have added some interest?

²⁴ 'And with that, he said this to those standing nearby:
Take away the coin that I gave him,
And give it to the one who has ten!

²⁵ 'And they said, *But Lord, he already has ten!*

²⁶ '[Then the master said this]:
More will be given to those who have much,
But all will be taken from those who have none.

²⁷ 'Now, bring all my enemies here...
Those who didn't want me to serve as their king,
And before me, slaughter them all!'

²⁸ Then after he said all these things, he went on and started leading the way up to JeruSalem. ²⁹ And when he got close to BethPhage and BethAny (near the hill called the Mount of Olives), he sent two of the disciples ahead, ³⁰ telling them: 'Go into that village opposite us; and as you're entering it, you'll find a colt that is tied, which no one has ridden before. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹ And if anyone asks why you're untying it, just tell him that the Lord needs it.'

³² Well, those who were sent ahead found things exactly as he said they would be. ³³ So when the owners asked why they were untying the colt, ³⁴ they just replied, 'The Lord needs it.' ³⁵ So they led it to Jesus, threw their robes over the colt, and set Jesus on [top of it]. ³⁶ And as he traveled along, they were all spreading their robes over the road.

³⁷ Then, as soon as he got close to the road that comes down the Mount of Olives [into JeruSalem], huge crowds of his disciples started rejoicing and praising God, shouting about all the powerful things that they had seen, ³⁸ and saying, 'Praise this one who comes as King in the Name of Jehovah! Peace in the heavens and glory in the highest places!'

³⁹ However, some of the Pharisees among the crowd came up to him and said, 'Teacher! Scold your disciples!'

⁴⁰ But Jesus replied, 'I tell you this: If they were to remain silent, these stones would be doing the shouting!'

⁴¹ Well, as he was approaching the city, he looked at it and shed tears over it, saying:

⁴² 'If you just knew this today...

The things that [would lead you] to peace...

But now, they've been hidden from your eyes.

⁴³ 'For the days are coming when your enemies will arrive,

And build around you a fort of pointed stakes.

Yes, they will completely surround you...

They'll come at you in force from all sides,

⁴⁴ And toss you and your young to the ground.

They won't leave a stone on top of a stone,

Because you've failed to recognize,

The time of your being inspected.'

⁴⁵ Then from there, he entered the Temple and started throwing out the vendors, ⁴⁶ saying to them, 'Though it's written, *My house will be a house of prayer*, you've made it a den of thieves!'

⁴⁷ So he taught in the Temple every day after that; and although the chief priests, scribes, and prominent people were looking to destroy him, ⁴⁸ they couldn't come up with a just reason for doing this, since all the people were gathering around him and listening to him.

Chapter 20

¹ Then one day, while he was teaching the people in the Temple and preaching the Good News; the chief priests, scribes, and elders came up ² to him and said, 'Tell us where you got the authority to do these things... who told you that you could this?'

³ So he replied: 'Let me ask you a question... tell me this: ⁴ Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?'

⁵ Then they got together and reasoned among themselves, saying: 'If we say, *From heaven*, he'll ask, *Then, why didn't you believe him?*' ⁶ But if we say, *From men*, all the people will stone us, because they believe that John was a Prophet.' ⁷ So they came back and told him that they didn't know where it came from.

⁸ And Jesus said: 'Then I'm not telling you where I got the authority to do these things.'

⁹ Well after that, he gave the people this illustration:

'A man once planted a vineyard,

And contracted it out to some farmers,

Then he traveled abroad for a very long time.

¹⁰ 'So, when it came time for the harvest,

He sent a slave to the farmers,

To ask for some fruit from his vineyard.

But the farmers then had [that slave] whipped,
And sent him away empty-handed.

¹¹ 'Thereafter, [the man] did the same thing again...
But he sent a different slave.
This one, they whipped and dishonored,
And they sent him away empty-handed.

¹² 'Thereafter, he sent them a third one,
Whom they wounded and then threw him out.

¹³ 'So the owner asked this of himself:
What else can I do?
Ah, I'll send my dearly-loved son...
For I'm sure that they will show him respect.

¹⁴ 'But when the farmers saw him [about to arrive],
They discussed it, and then they said this:
He's the heir, so let us put him to death,
And his inheritance will then become ours!

¹⁵ 'So they threw him out of the vineyard,
And thereafter, they put him to death.

'So now, what do you think the owner will do? ¹⁶ Won't he come and destroy those [bad] farmers, then entrust his vineyard to others?'

Well when they heard this, the [Pharisees] said: 'Something like that will never happen!'

¹⁷ But he looked at them and said: 'Then, what is the meaning of the thing that was written, which says:
The stone that the builders rejected,
Has become the chief cornerstone?

¹⁸ I tell you that all who fall on that stone will be broken, and it will smash all those upon whom it falls.'

¹⁹ Well after that, the scribes and chief priests started looking for ways to arrest him, for they realized that his illustration was about them. However, they were still afraid of the people, ²⁰ so they just watched him closely.

Then they sent men who pretended to be righteous so as to trick him into saying something that would give them a reason to hand him over to the government and to the power of its governor. ²¹ So they came to him and said: 'Teacher, we know that what you say and teach is right, and that you aren't swayed by a man's appearance... for you truthfully teach the ways of God. ²² So now, tell us; should we pay the taxes to Caesar or shouldn't we?'

²³ Well, recognizing what they were up to, he said: ²⁴ 'Show me a coin... whose image and inscription is on it?'

And they replied, 'Caesar's.'

²⁵ Then he said: 'So then, pay Caesar's things to Caesar and pay God's things to God.'

²⁶ As the result, they weren't able to catch him in anything that he said there in front of the people... they were just amazed by his answers so they didn't say anything more.

²⁷ However, some of the Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came up and asked him this: ²⁸ 'Teacher; Moses wrote that if a man dies leaving his woman childless, his brother should take the brother's woman and sire offspring for him.

²⁹ 'Now, let's say there were seven brothers. The first took a woman and then he died childless. ³⁰ So the second one and then ³¹ the third took her, and the same thing happened to all seven... they all died before siring children. ³² Finally, the woman also died. ³³ So, whose woman will she be in the resurrection, since all seven had her as theirs?'

³⁴ And Jesus replied: 'Though the sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; ³⁵ those who have been found worthy of that age and the resurrection from the dead won't marry or be given in marriage, ³⁶ nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels. Since, as sons of the resurrection, they are also sons of God.

³⁷ 'Why, even Moses showed that the dead will be raised. For when [he was] at the [burning] bush, he called Jehovah the God of AbRAHAM, the God of IsaAC, and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ So He isn't a God of the dead but of the living, since they're all living to Him!'

³⁹ Then some of the scribes said: 'Teacher, that was a fine answer.' ⁴⁰ And they didn't have the courage to ask him anything more after that.

⁴¹ So [Jesus] then asked them: 'Why do they say that the Anointed One is David's son? ⁴² For David himself said (in the scroll of the Psalms):

Jehovah said this to my lord:

Sit here at My right hand,

Til I set your enemies as a stool for you feet.

⁴⁴ 'So if David called him Lord, how could he be his son?'

⁴⁵ Meanwhile, all the people were there listening to him. So he turned and said this to his disciples: ⁴⁶ 'Watch out for the scribes who like to walk around in robes, to be greeted in the markets, to have the front seats in the synagogues, and to have the most prominent places at the suppers. ⁴⁷ For they swallow down the homes of widows and then hide their [misdeeds] by saying long prayers. This is why they'll receive a heavier judgment.'

Chapter 21

¹ Well, as he looked up, he saw the rich dropping their gifts into the [Temple] treasury chests. ² Then he saw a poor widow drop in two small copper coins, ³ and he said: 'I tell you the truth; although this widow is poor, she dropped in more than they all did, ⁴ since they dropped in gifts from their surplus, while this needy person dropped in her whole means of living!'

⁵ Then, as certain ones were discussing the Temple (how fine its stonework was and how nicely it was adorned) ⁶ he said: 'When it comes to these things that you see; the days are coming when there won't be a stone on top of a stone that won't be thrown down here.'

⁷ So they asked him: 'Teacher, when will these things take place... what will be the signs when they're about to happen?'

⁸ And he replied: 'Be careful that no one misleads you, for many will come in my name and say, *I'm the one*, and *The time has arrived*, but don't follow them!

⁹ 'You'll also hear about wars and disorders, but don't be frightened by this, for all those things must happen first. However, the end doesn't come right away.'

¹⁰ And he told them: 'Then nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, ¹¹ there'll be many great rumblings, and there'll be famines and plagues everywhere, as well as fearful sights and signs in the skies. ¹² However, before all these things happen, they're going to persecute you and arrest you, then lead you up before synagogues and put you in jail. Yes, because of my name, they'll drag you before governors and kings... ¹³ and that will be your sign!

¹⁴ '[But when this happens], resolve not to plan your defense; ¹⁵ for I'll give you a mouth and enough wisdom so that anyone who lies about you will be unable to resist or contradict you.

¹⁶ 'However, your own parents and brothers... yes, even your own families and friends will betray you and kill some of you.¹⁷ And although everyone will dislike you because of my name, ¹⁸ not a hair on your heads will be harmed. ¹⁹ So by your endurance, you'll gain your lives!

²⁰ 'Now, when you see armies camped around JeruSalem, know that her destruction is near. ²¹ Then those in Judea should run to the mountains... yes, everyone in her midst should flee, and those who are in [fields] must not enter her. ²² For these will be days of avenging and accomplishing all that has been written about her.

²³ 'Woe to those who are pregnant and nursing babies in those days, for there'll be great distress in the land as [God's] wrath comes upon these people. ²⁴ They'll either be cut down with swords or be carried to the nations as captives. For JeruSalem will be trampled by the gentiles until the times of the nations are filled.

²⁵ 'At that time there'll be signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and on the earth, the nations will all be in distress, for they'll be confused by the roaring and the rolling surges of the seas. ²⁶ Then men's hearts will become weak with fear in expectation of the things that will be coming upon the habitation of mankind, as [they see] the powers in the heavens being shaken. ²⁷ For that's when they'll see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with great power and glory. ²⁸ But as [you see] these things starting to happen, you should stand erect and raise your heads high, for your time of deliverance is drawing near!'

²⁹ Then he gave them this illustration:

'Consider the figs and all other trees;

³⁰ For, when they start putting out buds,

You can see that summer is near.

³¹ 'Thus, when you see all these things start to happen,

You should know that the Kingdom of God has drawn near.

³² 'I tell you the truth; this generation will not pass away until all these things have been fulfilled... ³³

though the lands and the skies may all pass away, my words will not pass away!

³⁴ 'So, pay close attention to yourselves that your hearts don't become overburdened... don't allow the worries of life to make your hearts reel and get drunk, and let that day sneak up on you. ³⁵ For it will arrive like a snare upon everyone who is sitting on the face of the earth. ³⁶ Therefore, you must keep watch in every season and pray that you'll have the strength to escape all of these things that are going to happen, and that you'll be able to stand before the Son of Man.'

³⁷ Well, [Jesus] taught in the Temple during the daytime, and during the night he would go and camp on the hill called the Mount of Olives. ³⁸ Then all the people would come to the Temple early each morning to listen to him.

Chapter 22

¹ Now, the Festival of Passover was getting near, ² and the chief priests and scribes were looking for a way to get rid of Jesus. However, they were still afraid of the people. ³ Then the Opposer entered Judas (the one called IsCariot, who was one of the twelve), ⁴ and he went off and talked to the chief priests and [Temple] captains about ways that he could betray [Jesus] to them.

⁵ Well, they were delighted by this, and they agreed to pay him in silver coins, ⁶ which he accepted. So he started looking for opportunities to betray [Jesus] when there were no crowds around.

⁷ Then, [just before] the day of No Fermentation (which is when the Passover was sacrificed), ⁸ [Jesus] sent Peter and John ahead of him, saying: Go and prepare for us to eat the Passover.'

⁹ And when they asked, 'Where do you want us to prepare it?' ¹⁰ he told them: '{Look!} When you go into the city, you'll be met by a man who is carrying a clay jar of water. Follow him into the house that he enters. ¹¹ Then tell the master of the house that the Teacher wants to know where the guest room is in which he can eat the Passover with his disciples. ¹² And he will show you a large furnished upstairs room. Prepare it there.'

¹³ So they left and found things just as he said; and they prepared for the Passover.

¹⁴ Then when it was time, he reclined at the table with his Apostles, ¹⁵ and he said to them: 'I really wanted to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you that I won't eat it again until it's fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.' ¹⁷ And at that, he took a cup, gave thanks for it, and said, 'Take this and pass it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you; from this point on, I definitely will not be drinking the fruit of the vine again until after the Kingdom of God has arrived.'

¹⁹ Then he took a loaf [of bread], gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, 'This is my body, which is being handed over for you. Continue to do this in memory of me.' ²⁰ And he did the same thing with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the New Sacred Agreement of my blood that is being poured out on your behalf. ²¹ But look... the hand of my betrayer is with me here at this table! ²² So the Son (who indeed is from among mankind) will be going the way that has been marked out for him... yet, woe to that man through whom he's being betrayed!'

²³ Well at that, they started discussing among themselves which one could possibly do such a thing.

²⁴ But then, a friendly dispute also arose between them as to which one seemed to be the greatest. ²⁵ So [Jesus] said to them: 'The kings of the gentiles rule over them, and those with power wish to be called benefactors. ²⁶ However, you shouldn't be like them. Rather, the greatest among you should be like the

youngest, and the one taking the lead as the servant of all the others. ²⁷ For which is truly the greatest... the one who reclines at the table, or the one who does the serving? Isn't it the one who reclines at the table? Yet, here among you, I'm the one who has been doing the serving.

²⁸ 'Now, because you're the ones who have stuck with me during my trials, ²⁹ I'm giving this appointment to you, as my Father has given the appointment to me, for a Kingdom: ³⁰ In my Kingdom, you'll eat and drink at my table, and you'll sit on thrones, from which you'll judge the twelve tribes of IsraEl.

³¹ 'Simon, Simon {Look!}... the Opposer has demanded to have each of you so [he can] sift you like wheat! ³² However, I've pleaded with [God] on your behalf, so that your faith doesn't give out... and then after you return, you can strengthen your brothers.'

³³ But [Peter] said to him: 'Why Lord; I'm ready to go with you to prison and even into death!'

³⁴ But [Jesus] said: 'I tell you this Peter; a rooster won't crow today until you've denied knowing me three times.'

³⁵ Then he went on to say this to them: 'When I sent you out before without a money bag, or a food pouch, or extra sandals, you really didn't need anything more, did you?'

And they replied, 'No!'

³⁶ But then he warned: 'But now; if you have a money bag, you must carry it along, as well as a pouch for your food. And if you don't have a sword, you should go sell your coat and buy one. ³⁷ For I'm telling you that this thing that was written about me must now be fulfilled: *He was counted among the law breakers*. Yes, this scripture is now going to be fulfilled in me.'

³⁸ Then they said: 'Look, Lord... here are two swords!'

And He said to them: 'That's enough.'

³⁹ Then he left, and as was his custom, he went to the Mount of Olives... and the disciples followed along. ⁴⁰ Then when he got there, he told them this: 'Now, pray that you won't be tried!'

⁴¹ So he walked away from them about a stone's throw, then he bent down and started to pray, saying:

⁴² 'Father; If You are willing, take this cup away from me... but may Your will, not mine, take place.'

⁴³ Then he saw an angel from heaven who gave him strength. ⁴⁴ Yet, because he was still in agony, he prayed even harder; and his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.

⁴⁵ Well after he prayed, he got up and returned to the disciples and found them sleeping (because they were all very grieved). ⁴⁶ So he asked them: 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you won't be tried!'

⁴⁷ But while he was still talking, {Look!} a mob approached with one of the twelve (the one called Judas) leading them, and he walked right up to Jesus and kissed him! ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said: 'Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?'

⁴⁹ Well, when those who were around [Jesus] saw what was about to happen, they asked him: 'Lord,

shall we fight them off with the sword?' ⁵⁰ And that's when one of them struck the slave of the high priest, taking off his right ear.

⁵¹ Well when that happened, Jesus said: 'It has gone far enough!' Then he touched the [man's] ear and healed him.

⁵² And thereafter, Jesus asked the chief priests, the Temple captains, and the elders who had come for him: 'Are you coming here with swords and clubs [as though I were] some thief?' ⁵³ Why, I was with you in the Temple every day, and you didn't try to grab me then... but this is your hour and the power of darkness.'

⁵⁴ So they arrested him and led him off to the house of the High Priest, as Peter followed along at some distance. ⁵⁵ There they lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard, where they all sat down together, and Peter went and sat down among them. ⁵⁶ But then a servant girl noticed him sitting there in the light of the fire... she looked at him very hard and said, '[This man] was with him also!'

⁵⁷ But [Peter] denied it, saying, 'I don't know him, woman!'

⁵⁸ And a little while later, someone else saw him and said, 'You're also one of them!'

But Peter said: 'Man, I'm not!'

⁵⁹ Then, after standing around for another hour, someone started insisting, saying, 'It's true; this man was with him, because he's also a Galilean!'

⁶⁰ But Peter said: 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' And just as he was speaking, a rooster crowed.

⁶¹ Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the words that the Lord had said to him: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny knowing me three times.' ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly.

⁶³ Well after that, the men who had taken [Jesus] in custody started making fun of him and they whipped him, ⁶⁴ as they covered [his head] and were shouting, 'Now prophesy... tell us who's disciplining you!' ⁶⁵ They were also saying all sorts of slanderous things about him.

⁶⁶ Well, as the day was dawning, the people's body of elders assembled with the chief priests and scribes, and then they brought him before the Jewish High Court, where they said to him: ⁶⁷ 'If you really are the Anointed One, then say so!'

But he replied: 'If I told you, you wouldn't even start to believe it! ⁶⁸ And if I asked you any questions, you wouldn't answer at all! ⁶⁹ But from now on, the Son of Man will be sitting at the powerful right hand of The God!'

⁷⁰ Well at that, they all asked, 'So, are you the Son of God?'

And he replied: 'You're the ones who are saying that I am!'

⁷¹ And then they said: 'So, why do we need any more witnesses, for now we've heard it from his own mouth!'

Chapter 23

¹ Then the whole assembly got up and took [Jesus] before Pilate. ² And there they accused him, saying: 'We found this man trying to undermine the principles of our nation by forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar, and by saying that he's the Anointed One... a king!'

³ So Pilate asked him: 'Are you the king of the Jews?'

And he replied: 'You're the one who is saying this.'

⁴ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds: 'I can't find anything wrong with this man.'

⁵ But they insisted, saying: 'He's been stirring up the people ---- throughout all of Judea... that's why he came here from Galilee!'

⁶ And on hearing that, Pilate asked whether [Jesus] was in fact a Galilean. ⁷ Then, after learning that he was from Herod's realm, he sent him on to Herod (who was also in JeruSalem at the time [for the Passover]).

⁸ Well, when Herod saw Jesus, he was overjoyed, because he'd been wanting to see him for a long time (since he'd heard so much about him), and he hoped to see Jesus perform some sign. ⁹ So he asked many questions, but [Jesus] wouldn't answer him. ¹⁰ [And all the while], the chief priests and scribes kept standing up and accusing him.

¹¹ But not knowing what to make of him, Herod and his troops made fun of Jesus by dressing him in bright clothes, before they sent him back to Pilate. ¹² And this is why Herod and Pilate became friends that day, for they really hadn't liked each other prior to that.

¹³ Then Pilate assembled the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴ and he told them: 'You brought this man to me as someone who was inciting the people to revolt. And look! I've examined him before you and I can't find any basis for the charges that you're bringing against him. ¹⁵ In fact, Herod didn't either, because he returned him to us. So, since he's done nothing deserving of death, ¹⁶ I'm just going to discipline him and then release him.' ¹⁷ —

¹⁸ But with that, the entire crowd started shouting, 'Impale him and release BarAbbas to us!' ¹⁹ ([BarAbbas] was in prison because of [his involvement in] a revolt in the city, and for murder).

²⁰ Well, Pilate called out to them once again, because he wanted to release Jesus. ²¹ But they started yelling, 'Impale him! Impale him!'

²² So he asked them a third time: 'Why? What bad thing has he done? I haven't found anything that he's done to deserve death, so I'll discipline him and then let him go!'

²³ But they started shouting impatiently, demanding to have him hung on a pole... and their voices began to win out. ²⁴ So Pilate gave in ²⁵ and he released [BarAbbas] (who was in prison for rebellion and murder) to meet their demands, then he did what they wanted [him to do] to Jesus.

²⁶ Now, as they were leading him away, they grabbed Simon (a Cyrenian who happened to be coming in from the fields) and laid the pole on him, so that he could carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ Well, a huge crowd of people (including many women) followed behind, beating themselves in grief and wailing over him. ²⁸ Then Jesus turned to the women and said, 'Daughters of JeruSalem; Stop crying for me... cry instead for yourselves and for your children! ²⁹ Because, {Look!} the days are coming when people will say: *Those without any children and whose wombs have not given birth, and those whose breasts didn't nurse, are the blest!* ³⁰ For they will then say to the mountains, *Come and fall over us!* and to the hills, *Come and cover us over!* ³¹ Because, if they are willing to do these things when the tree is still moist, what will they do after it has withered?'

³² Well, two criminals were also being led out to be impaled with [Jesus]. ³³ And when they got to the place that was referred to as 'The Skull,' they hung him and the criminals on poles there (one on his right and the other on his left). ³⁴ --- Then [the soldiers] threw dice for his clothes, ³⁵ as the people just stood there watching. However, their rulers were looking on angrily and saying, 'He saved others, so let him save himself now if he's truly the Anointed of God... His chosen one!'

³⁶ Why, even the soldiers made fun of him, coming up and to him and offering him soured wine ³⁷ and saying, 'If you're the king of the Jews, save yourself!'

³⁸ There was also a sign placed above him [that said], 'This is the king of the Jews.'

³⁹ Then one of the criminals who was hanging there started speaking badly to him, saying: 'If you're the Anointed One, save yourself... and save us too!'

⁴⁰ But the other scolded him saying, 'Aren't you at all afraid of God, since you've received the same judgment? ⁴¹ And this is only right, because we're getting what we deserve in full measure for the bad things that we've done. However, he hasn't done anything wrong!'

⁴² Then he said to Jesus: 'Remember me when you come into your Kingdom.'

⁴³ And [Jesus] replied, 'I tell you this today: You will be with me in the Paradise.'

⁴⁴ Well, it was already about the sixth hour... and then the whole land became covered by a darkness [that lasted] until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ for the sunlight had failed. Then the Temple curtain split down the middle, ⁴⁶ and Jesus called out in a loud voice, saying: 'Father, I leave my breath in Your hands.' And after saying that, he died.

⁴⁷ Well, when the centurion saw [all of this] happening, he glorified God and said: 'This truly was a righteous man!' ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had come to watch this spectacle (after seeing all these things) started beating themselves [in grief] once again.

⁴⁹ Meanwhile, all those who knew him (including the women who had followed him from Galilee) were standing at some distance and paying attention to all that was happening.

⁵⁰ Then {Look!} JoSeph (a man from HariMathea, a city in Judea), who was a good and righteous man and one of the Council members ⁵¹ (one who didn't go along with what the [others] said or did, and who was also awaiting the Kingdom of God), ⁵² went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁵³ So he took it down, wrapped it in fine linen, and laid it in a tomb that had been cut into the rock, and into which no one had ever been put before.

⁵⁴ Well, it was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was coming. ⁵⁵ So the women who had come from Galilee with him followed along to look at the tomb and to see how his body was laid out. ⁵⁶ Then

they went back to prepare spices and perfumed ointments... but of course, they followed the Commandments and they rested on the Sabbath.

Chapter 24

¹ It was on the first day of the week, at early dawn, that they went to the tomb carrying the spices they had prepared. ² But then they found that the stone had been rolled away; ³ and when they entered, they couldn't find the Lord Jesus' body.

⁴ And as they stood there confused, {Look!} two men in glowing clothes appeared beside them, ⁵ which frightened them, and they hung their heads to the ground.

Then [the men] asked: 'Why are you looking for the living among the dead? ⁶ He isn't here; he got up! Don't you remember? When he spoke to you in Galilee, ⁷ he said that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, then he would be hung on a pole, and [he would be] resurrected on the third day.'

⁸ So, that's when they remembered what he had told them, ⁹ and they left the tomb to report these things to the eleven and all the others.

¹⁰ It was Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary (the [mother] of James), and the rest of the women, who reported these things to the Apostles. ¹¹ However, what they said sounded like nonsense, so nobody believed them.

¹² But then Peter got up and ran to the tomb. And when he leaned in, all he found was the wrappings. So he left, wondering what had happened.

¹³ {Look!} Then that very same day, as two of them were on their way to a village named EmMaus (which is about seven miles from JeruSalem), ¹⁴ they were still discussing all the things that had happened. ¹⁵ And as they were talking and reasoning, Jesus himself came up and started walking along with them... ¹⁶ however, their eyes refused to recognize him. ¹⁷ So he asked: 'What is the subject that you're debating as you're walking along?'

Then they stopped and looked very sad. ¹⁸ And the one named CleoPas answered: 'Are you living as a recluse in JeruSalem so that you don't know what has happened over the past few days?'

¹⁹ And [Jesus] asked, 'What things?'

Then they replied: 'The things [that happened to] Jesus the Nazarene... a Prophet who came with powerful words and deeds before God and all the people! ²⁰ For our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death and hung on a pole. ²¹ However, we were hoping that he was the one who would set IsraEl free... it has only been three days since these things happened! ²² Then some women among us really shocked us. For they went to the tomb early [this morning] ²³ and they said that they couldn't find his body. Then as they were returning, they told us that they had a vision of messengers [from God] who told them that he's still alive! ²⁴ So, some from among us went to the tomb and found it was just as the women said... they didn't see him.'

²⁵ Well at that, [Jesus] said to them: 'O senseless ones whose hearts are slow when it comes to believing all the things that the Prophets said. ²⁶ Wasn't it necessary for the Anointed One to suffer these things and then enter his glory?'

²⁷ So, starting from Moses and the Prophets, he explained all the scriptures that talked about him.

²⁸ Well, when they reached the village where they were headed, he acted as though he was going on. ²⁹ But they pressured him, saying: 'Stay with us, because it's getting late and most of the day is already gone!' So he stayed with them.

³⁰ Then, as he was reclining with them for a meal, he took a loaf, spoke a blessing over it, broke it, and started handing it to them. ³¹ Well, that's when their eyes were fully opened and they recognized him... but then he disappeared. ³² And they said to each other: 'Weren't our hearts burning as he talked to us along the road, completely explaining the Scriptures to us?'

³³ So they got up right away and returned to JeruSalem. And there they found the eleven gathered with the rest, ³⁴ who told them: 'The Lord was in fact raised, because he appeared to Simon!'

³⁵ Then the [two men] also told [the group] what had happened [to them] on the road and of how he became recognizable when he broke the loaf.

³⁶ Well, while they were still talking about these things, [they suddenly saw] Jesus standing there in their midst. And he said, 'May you have peace.'³⁷ But this frightened and terrified them, because they thought they were seeing a [wicked] spirit.

³⁸ So he asked them: 'Why are you so worried, and what sort of conclusions are you reaching in your hearts?' ³⁹ Look... my hands and my feet... it's me! Touch me and see, because a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones as you see that I have!' ⁴⁰ And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

⁴¹ But because they still didn't believe (due to both joy and confusion), he asked: 'Do you have something to eat?'

⁴² So they handed him a piece of broiled fish; ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in front of them.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them: 'These are the things that I spoke to you about while I was still with you; for everything that was written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, had to be fulfilled.'⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to fully understand the meanings of the Scriptures.

⁴⁶ He said to them: 'It was written that the Anointed One would suffer this way and then rise from the dead on the third day. ⁴⁷ Then in his name, [the message of] repentance for the forgiveness of sins is to be preached among all the nations, starting from JeruSalem... ⁴⁸ and you [are the ones] who are to serve as the witnesses to these things!

⁴⁹ 'So look! I will [soon] be sending you [something] that was promised by my Father. Therefore, you must stay in the city until after you've become clothed with the power from above.'

⁵⁰ And with that, he led them out along the road to BethAny... then he raised his hands and blest them.

⁵¹ And as he was blessing them, he was taken away from them into the sky.

⁵² Then, after bowing to their faces before him, they returned to JeruSalem filled with joy. ⁵³ And thereafter, they were always found in the Temple, praising God.

John

Written for Jesus' Apostle John, possibly in Aramaic, sometime late in the 1st Century CE.

Chapter 1

¹ In the beginning there was the Word. The Word was with The God (gr. *Ton Theon*) and the Word was a powerful one (gr. *theos* or *god-like*). ² This one was with The God in the beginning, ³ and through him it all came to be. ⁴ Life was in him, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵ This light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it.

⁶ Then a man named John arrived who had been sent by God. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He wasn't the light, but he was to testify about the light; ⁹ for the true light that enlightens all mankind was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and although the world came to be through him, the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ For even when he went to [those who were] his own, he wasn't welcomed by them. ¹² Yet he gave all those who did welcome him (all those who put faith in his name) the authority to become the children on God. ¹³ So they weren't born from blood, or from the will of the flesh, or from man's will, but from God.

¹⁴ Thus the Word became flesh and tented among us as we gazed upon his glory, which was the glory of the one-and-only next to the Father... and he was filled with kindness and truth.

¹⁵ Concerning him, John gave this testimony: 'This is the one about whom I said, *Though he is coming behind me, he preceded me and he came before me!*'

¹⁶ We have received loving-kindness after loving-kindness from his great wealth. ¹⁷ And though Moses gave us the Law, loving-kindness and truth came through Jesus the Anointed. ¹⁸ Also, although no one has ever seen God, this one-of-a-kind god (the one in the favored position of the Father) has explained Him.

¹⁹ Now, this is what John testified to when the Judeans sent Priests and Levites from JeruSalem to ask him who he was. ²⁰ [John] confessed... he didn't deny it, he confessed, saying: 'I'm not the Anointed One!'

²¹ Then when they asked, 'So who [are you]... are you EliJah?' He told them, 'No, I'm not.'

[And when they asked], 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No!'

²² So finally they said, '[Then tell us] who are you, so we can give a reply to those who sent us... what are you saying about yourself?'

²³ And he told them: 'I'm just the voice of someone who is calling out in the desert (as was said by the Prophet IsaiAh): *Straighten the way for the Lord.*'

²⁴ Now, those who had come to him were sent by the Pharisees, ²⁵ and they asked him: 'Then, why are you baptizing if you aren't the Anointed One, or EliJah, or the Prophet?'

²⁶ And John replied: 'I baptize in water; but there's someone standing in your midst whom you don't know. ²⁷ He's the one that is coming behind me, the laces of whose sandals I'm unworthy to untie.'

²⁸ Well, all these things happened in BethAny-Behind-the-JorDan, which is where John was doing the

baptizing.

²⁹ Then the next day, as [John] saw Jesus coming toward him, he said: 'Look! The Lamb of God who lifts away the sins of the world! ³⁰ This is the one about whom I said, *There's a man coming behind me who preceded me and who came before me!* ³¹ Yet, even I didn't recognize him, though the reason why I came baptizing in water was so that I might reveal him to IsraEl.'

³² Then John gave this testimony: 'I saw the Breath [of God] coming down from the sky like a dove and it settled upon him! ³³ And though I didn't know who he was, the One who sent me to baptize in water told me this: *Whoever you see the Breath [of God] coming down and resting upon is the one who baptizes in Holy Breath.* ³⁴ And I have seen and can testify to the fact that this is the Son of The God!'

³⁵ Then the next day, as John was standing there with two of his disciples ³⁶ and he noticed Jesus walking by, he again said: 'Look, the Lamb of God!' ³⁷ So the two disciples who heard him say this started following Jesus. ³⁸ And when Jesus turned around and saw them following him, he asked, 'What are you looking for?'

And they replied: 'Rabbi (Teacher), where are you staying?'

³⁹ Then he said: 'Come with me and see.' So they went and saw where he was staying and spent the day with him (until about the tenth hour).

⁴⁰ Then Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter (one of the two who'd heard what John said and who followed [Jesus]) ⁴¹ went and found his brother Simon and told him: 'We've found the Messiah (which translates as, *the Anointed One*).' ⁴² Then he led him to Jesus. And when Jesus saw him, he said: 'You're Simon, the son of Jonah... you will be called Cephas (gr. *Peter*).'

⁴³ Then the next day, Jesus he was wanting to leave for Galilee, he found Philip. And he said to him, 'Be my follower' ⁴⁴ (Philip was from BethSaida, the same city as Andrew and Peter). ⁴⁵ Then after that, Philip [went and] found NathaniEl (BarTholomew) and told him: 'We've found the one about whom Moses wrote in the Law and the Prophets... Jesus the son of JoSeph from Nazareth!'

⁴⁶ But NathaniEl asked: 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?'

And Philip replied: 'Well, come and see!'

⁴⁷ Then when Jesus saw NathaniEl coming, he said: 'Look; An IsraElite who really speaks his mind!'

⁴⁸ So NathaniEl asked, 'How do you know me?'

And Jesus replied: 'Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you.'

⁴⁹ Then NathaniEl said: 'Rabbi; you're the Son of The God... you're the King of IsraEl!'

⁵⁰ And Jesus asked, 'Do you believe this because I said that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see even greater things than that.' ⁵¹ Then he said: 'I tell you men the truth; you will see the heavens opening up and the messengers of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man!'

Chapter 2

¹ Well, three days later, there was a wedding banquet in Cana of Galilee. And because Jesus' mother was there, ² Jesus and his disciples were also invited. ³ Then, when the wine started to run out, Jesus' mother said to him: 'They don't have any more wine.'

⁴ And Jesus said to her: 'Why is this any of my business, woman? My hour hasn't come yet.'

⁵ Then his mother told the waiters: 'Do whatever he tells you to do.'

⁶ Well, there were six stone water jars sitting there, which the Judeans required for washing, each one of which held about fifteen gallons. ⁷ Then Jesus told them to fill the jars to the brim with water. ⁸ And he said, 'Now, dip some out and take it to the banquet director.'

So they took it to the banquet director, ⁹ and when he tasted the water that had been turned into wine (he didn't know where it came from, but the waiters who drew the water knew), the director called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him: 'Everyone else puts out the finest wine first, and after people are intoxicated, the inferior. However, you've kept the best wine for now!'

¹¹ So, there in Cana of Galilee was where Jesus first showed the signs that revealed his glory, and where his disciples [first started believing] in him.

¹² Well after that; he, his mother, his brothers, and [his] disciples went down to Capharnaum. However, they didn't stay there long ¹³ because it was getting close to the Jewish Passover... so Jesus then went on up to JeruSalem. ¹⁴ And there he found [people] in the Temple selling cattle, sheep, and doves, as well as some currency exchangers who were sitting there. ¹⁵ So, after making a whip out of ropes, he drove all those with the sheep and cattle out of the Temple, and he poured out the currency exchangers' coins, turning their tables over. ¹⁶ Then he said to those who were selling the doves: 'Get these things out of here! Quit turning my Father's House into a marketplace!' ¹⁷ And that's when his disciples remembered that it was written: 'Zeal for Your House will consume me.'

¹⁸ Well after that, the Judeans asked: 'Since you're doing all these things, what sign can you show us?'

¹⁹ And Jesus replied: 'Tear down this Most Holy (gr. *Naon* or, *Dwelling of God*) and I'll rebuild it in three days.'

²⁰ Then the Judeans said: 'It took forty-six years to build this Holy Place... and [you say] you'll rebuild it just in three days?'

²¹ Of course, he was talking about his most holy body (gr. *Naou tou somatos autou* or, *Most/Holy of/the body of/him*) ²² And after he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he used to say this, and they believed the Scriptures and the things that Jesus said.

²³ It was there (while he was in JeruSalem for the Passover and its festival) that many people started believing in his name... that is, after they saw the signs that he was performing. ²⁴ But Jesus didn't trust them, because he knew them... ²⁵ he didn't need anyone to tell him about people, because he knew what they were on the inside.

Chapter 3

¹ Now, there was a man named NicoDemos (he was a Pharisee and a ruler of the Judeans) ² who came

to him one night and said: 'Rabbi, we know that you came as a teacher from God, because nobody can perform signs like you're doing unless God is with him.'

³ Then Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; Unless a person is born from above, he can't see the Kingdom of The God.'

⁴ So NicoDemos asked: 'How can a man be born again after he's old... he can't go back into his mother's womb a second time to be born, can he?'

⁵ And Jesus replied: 'I tell you the truth; Unless a person is born from water and Spirit, he can't enter the Kingdom of God. ⁶ Because, things that have been born from the flesh are fleshly, while things that have been born from the Spirit are spiritual. ⁷ However, don't be surprised because I told you that people have to be born again... ⁸ for the wind blows wherever it wishes. And though you can hear the noise, you don't know where it's coming from or where it's going... and this is how it is for all those who have been born of the Spirit.'

⁹ Then NicoDemos asked, 'How can things like this happen?'

¹⁰ And Jesus replied: 'You're a teacher of IsraEl, and you don't know? ¹¹ I tell you the truth; We tell about the things that we know and testify to things that we've seen... yet, you haven't accepted our testimony. ¹² So if you don't believe the earthly things that I'm telling you, how will you believe the heavenly things?'

¹³ 'No one has gone to heaven other than the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man, who is [from] the heavens. ¹⁴ And as Moses raised the [sign of] snake in the desert; that's how the Son of Man must be raised, ¹⁵ so that all those who believe in him might have age-long life.'

¹⁶ 'This is how [much] The God loved the world: He gave His one-and-only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be destroyed, but have age-long life.'

¹⁷ 'God didn't send His Son into the world to judge it, but so that the world might be saved through him! ¹⁸ Therefore, those who believe in [the Son] won't be condemned, while those who don't believe have already been condemned, because they haven't put faith in the name of God's one-and-only Son. ¹⁹ Indeed, this [is the basis] for their judgment!'

'Though the light has now entered the world, these men love darkness more than the light, because the things that they're doing are evil. ²⁰ For people who are doing what's foul hate the light and they don't come into the light so [they won't] be disciplined for the [bad] things they're doing. ²¹ However, those who are doing what is true will come to the light, so that the things they're doing can be exposed as having been done in God.'

²² Well after that, Jesus and his disciples traveled into the Judean countryside where he spent some time with them, [as they were] baptizing. ²³ John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim (because there's a lot of water there) and people kept going out to be baptized [by him], ²⁴ for John hadn't been thrown into prison yet.

²⁵ Well, there was a discussion that arose between John's disciples and [a certain] Judean concerning purification. ²⁶ So they went to John and said: 'Rabbi; The man who was with you across the Jordan (the one whom you testified about) is also baptizing, and now everyone is going to him!'

²⁷ And John replied: 'A man can have nothing unless he receives it from heaven... ²⁸ and you are witnesses that I said I'm not the Anointed One, but that I've been sent ahead of him. ²⁹ The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. But his friend, when he stands and listens to him, gains much joy from the voice of the bridegroom. So my joy is now complete, ³⁰ and he must increase as I decrease.

³¹ 'This one who came from above is over all, while the one who comes from the earth is earthly and talks about earthly things. Yes, the one who came from heaven is over all, ³² for he speaks of things that he's actually seen and heard... yet, they aren't accepting his testimony. ³³ But those who do welcome his testimony are proving God to be true. ³⁴ And since the one sent by God speaks God's words; he doesn't just measure out [small] portions of [God's] Breath, ³⁵ because the Father loves the Son, and He has entrusted everything into his hands. ³⁶ So those who believe in the Son will have age-long life, while those who disobey him won't see life at all, because the wrath of God remains upon them.'

Chapter 4

¹ Now, when the Lord realized that the Pharisees knew he was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus didn't really do any baptizing, his disciples did), ³ he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

⁴ Well, on the way, he had to travel through Samaria, ⁵ and he stopped at a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was close to the field that Jacob gave to his son JoSeph, ⁶ and it's where Jacob's [well] was located. Then, since Jesus was tired from the journey, he sat down at the edge of the [well] (at about the sixth hour), ⁷ and at the time, a Samaritan woman had come there to draw water. So Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' ⁸ (at the time, his disciples were in the city buying some food.)

⁹ But the Samaritan woman asked him: 'So why are you, a Jew, asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink --?'

¹⁰ And Jesus replied: 'If you knew about the gift of God and who's asking you for a drink, you might have asked him, and he would have given you living water.'

¹¹ Then she said: 'Master, you don't have anything to draw water with... and it's a deep well! So, where will you get this living water?' ¹² You aren't greater than our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well and who drank from it with his sons and cattle, are you?'

¹³ And Jesus replied: 'Whoever drinks this water will just get thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks the water that I give him won't be thirsty again in this age, for the water that I give will become a fountain inside him that bubbles age-long life.'

¹⁵ Then the woman said: 'Lord, give me this water so I won't be thirsty again and have to keep coming to this place to draw water!'

¹⁶ And he said to her: 'Go call your husband [and tell him] to come here.'

¹⁷ But the woman replied: 'I don't have a husband.'

And Jesus said: 'It's good that you say you don't have a husband, ¹⁸ because you've had five husbands; and the one you have now isn't your husband... you've told the truth.'

¹⁹ So the woman said: 'Lord, I see that you're a Prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped here on this

mountain, but you people say that JeruSalem is where we should worship.'

²¹ Then Jesus said to her: 'Believe me, woman; the time is coming when you won't worship the Father on this mountain or in JeruSalem! ²² And though you worship what you haven't known; we worship what we have known, because salvation comes from the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming (and it's now) when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth... because, the Father is searching for such people to worship Him. ²⁴ And since God is spirit; those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.'

²⁵ Then the woman said: 'I know that the Messiah (who is called the Anointed One) is coming, and when he gets here, he will explain it all to us.'

²⁶ And Jesus said: 'I (this one who is speaking to you) am he.'

²⁷ Well, it was then that his disciples arrived and they were puzzled, because he was talking to a woman; and of course, no one asked what she was looking for or why he was talking to her. ²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back into the city, where she told the people: ²⁹ 'Come here and see a man who told me everything I did... this couldn't be the Anointed One could it?' ³⁰ And as the result, they all came to him from the city.

³¹ Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat!'

³² But he told them: 'I have food to eat of which you're unaware.'

³³ So the disciples started asking each other, 'No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?'

³⁴ Then Jesus said: 'Doing the will of the One who sent me and finishing His work is my food. ³⁵ Though you say that there are four more months until the harvest, I tell to you to look up and notices the fields, for they're already white and ready for harvesting! ³⁶ The harvesters are already getting their pay and they're gathering in the fruit of age-long life... so the planters and the harvesters can now rejoice together. ³⁷ The saying is true: 'One does the planting while another does the harvesting,' ³⁸ so I'm sending you out to harvest what you didn't work on. Yes, though others did the work, you're now benefiting from their efforts!'

³⁹ Well, many of the Samaritans from that city started believing in [Jesus] because of what the woman testified to when she said, 'He told me everything that I did.' ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them... and he spent a couple of days there. ⁴¹ But after that, many more started to believe because of the things he was saying. ⁴² So they told the woman: 'We don't believe just because of what you said, but because of what we've heard for ourselves... and now we know that this man is truly the Savior of the world!'

⁴³ Well, two days later, he left for Galilee; ⁴⁴ and there Jesus himself witnessed the fact that a Prophet receives no honor in his hometown. ⁴⁵ Yet, when he [first] arrived in Galilee, the Galileans had welcomed him because they'd seen all the things he did in JeruSalem at the festival (since they'd also been there).

⁴⁶ Then he returned to Cana of Galilee (where he turned the water into wine), and it was there that a man of royalty (who happened to be in CapharNaum at the time) had a son that was ill. ⁴⁷ And when this man heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went and asked him to heal his son (who was about to die). ⁴⁸ However, Jesus said to him: 'You [people] just refuse to believe unless you

see signs and omens.'

⁴⁹ But the man urged him, saying: 'Lord, come on, before my little boy dies!'

⁵⁰ And finally, Jesus said: 'Be on your way! Your son is alive.'

So the man believed what Jesus said and went away. ⁵¹ Then on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy was alive. ⁵² And when he asked them exactly what time he got better, they told him: 'The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.' ⁵³ And the father recognized that it was the same time that Jesus told him, 'Your son is alive.' So he and his whole household became believers. ⁵⁴ This was the second sign that Jesus performed when he came out of Judea into Galilee.

Chapter 5

¹ Later on, because there was a Jewish festival, Jesus [once again] went up to JeruSalem. ² And in JeruSalem, at the Sheep-gate Pool (called BethZatha in Hebrew) where there are five stone columns, ³ he found many people who were sick, blind, lame, and otherwise physically handicapped, and they were all lying down. ⁴ — — ⁵ Among them was a man who had been extremely weak for thirty-eight years. ⁶ So when Jesus saw this man lying there (being aware of the long time he'd had this condition), he asked him: 'Would you like to get well?'

⁷ And the sick man answered: 'Lord, I don't have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is shaking. And while I'm trying to get in, someone else steps in ahead of me!'

⁸ Then Jesus said: 'Get up, pick up your cot, and walk around.' ⁹ And with that, the man immediately became healthy, picked up his cot, and started walking around.

Now, that day was a Sabbath; ¹⁰ so the Judeans started telling the cured man: 'It's the Sabbath, so it's illegal for you to carry the cot!'

¹¹ But he said to them: 'The one who cured me told me to pick up my cot and walk!'

¹² And they asked: 'Which man was it that told you to pick it up and walk?'

¹³ But the healed man didn't know who he was, because Jesus had faded into crowd.

¹⁴ Then later on, Jesus found the man in the Temple and said: 'See... now you're healthy! Don't sin anymore, so that something worse doesn't happen to you.'

¹⁵ And after that, the man went off and told the Judeans that it was Jesus who had cured him. ¹⁶ And this is why the Judeans started persecuting Jesus... because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

¹⁷ But he told them: 'My Father has kept working until now, so I keep working.' ¹⁸ As the result, the Judeans started looking [for ways to] kill him. For, not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he also called God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

¹⁹ Then Jesus said to them: 'I tell you the truth; The Son can do nothing other than what he sees the Father doing... whatever [the Father] does is what the Son does. ²⁰ And because the Father cares about the Son, He shows him everything that He's doing... and [God] will show him greater works than these, just to amaze you.

²¹ 'Therefore, as the Father raises the dead and makes them alive; the Son can also give life to

whomever he wishes. ²² And the Father doesn't judge anyone, for He has left all the judging to the Son, ²³ so that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father. Therefore, whoever doesn't honor the Son, doesn't honor the Father who sent him.

²⁴ 'I tell you the truth; Whoever hears what I say and believes in the One that sent me will have age-long life... he won't have to be judged, for he has come out of *the death* and into *the life*!'

²⁵ 'I also truthfully say that the time is coming -- when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of The God, and those who listen to him will live. ²⁶ For, just as the Father has life in Himself, He has given the Son life in himself ²⁷ and authorized him to do judging... because he is the son of man.

²⁸ 'Now, don't be surprised at this, because the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out... those who did good things to a resurrection of life, and those who practiced what is foul to a resurrection of judgment.

³⁰ 'Why, I can't do anything on my own... I just judge by what I hear, and my judgments are righteous, because I'm not looking to do the things that I want, but to do the Will of the One who sent me.'

³¹ 'Now, if I were to testify about myself, that testimony wouldn't be true. ³² But someone else has already testified about me, and I know that the testimony he gave about me is true. ³³ For you sent [people] to John and he testified to the truth. ³⁴ However, I don't really need the testimony of men... I'm just telling you these things to save you!

³⁵ '[John] was a burning, shining lamp, and you all wished to rejoice in that light during his hour. ³⁶ But now I have a testimony that's even greater than John's, because I'm doing the work that my Father assigned me to finish. And it's these things that will testify about me [and prove] that I was sent by the Father.

³⁷ 'Even the Father who sent me has testified about me... however, you've never heard His voice or seen His shape, ³⁸ and His words don't stick with you, because you don't believe in the one whom He sent. ³⁹ Rather, you keep searching the Scriptures, thinking that they will give you age-long life! And though they actually testify about me, ⁴⁰ you still refuse to come to me so you can live!

⁴¹ 'I don't [need] glory from people, ⁴² and I know that you don't have God's love in you. ⁴³ For though I've come in the Name of my Father; you haven't welcomed me... yet if someone else came in his own name, you would welcome him! ⁴⁴ So how can you believe, when you receive your glory from each other and you don't look to glorify the one who has come here from the one God?

⁴⁵ 'Now, don't think that I'm going to accuse you before the Father, because the one who accuses you is Moses... this person in whom you're putting all your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you'd also believe me, since he wrote about me! ⁴⁷ However, if you don't even believe what he wrote, how can you believe what I have to say?'

Chapter 6

¹ Well after this, Jesus crossed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberius), ² and a large crowd followed along just to see the signs he was performing upon those who were sick. ³ And there, Jesus went up a mountain and sat down with his disciples. ⁴ It was close to the time of the Jewish Passover festival, ⁵ so when Jesus looked up and noticed the huge crowd coming, he asked Philip: 'Where should we buy bread for them all to eat?' ⁶ However, he just said this to test him, because he already knew what he was going to do.

⁷ Then Philip answered: 'Why, two hundred silver coins worth of loaves wouldn't be enough to provide everyone with even a little!'

⁸ And one of his disciples (Andrew the brother of Simon Peter) said to him: ⁹ 'Here's a little boy who has five loaves of barley bread and two small fish. But what good is this when there are so many?'

¹⁰ Then Jesus said: 'Have the people recline as they would at a meal.'

Well, there was a lot of grass there, so they all, about five thousand men (gr. *andres*), got down on the ground. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the bread, and after giving thanks, distributed it to those who were lying there. [He also did the same with] the small fish, [giving them as much] as they wanted. ¹² And when they were all full, he told his disciples: 'Now pick up the leftovers, so nothing is wasted.' ¹³ And when they picked them up, they filled twelve baskets with what remained of the five loaves of barley that those who had eaten had left behind.

¹⁴ So when the people saw the signs he was performing, they started saying, 'This really is the Prophet that was to come into the world!'

¹⁵ And Jesus (because he knew that they were about to come and take him to make him their king) went away again... up on the mountain by himself.

¹⁶ Meanwhile, his disciples went down to the water that evening, ¹⁷ got into their boat, and left for the other side of the Sea to CapharNaum, because it had grown dark and Jesus hadn't returned. ¹⁸ But then a strong wind arose and the sea became very rough.

¹⁹ Well, after they'd rowed out for about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking across the sea toward the boat, and this frightened them. ²⁰ But he said to them: 'Don't be afraid... it is me!' ²¹ And at that, they were finally willing to let him into the boat. Then shortly thereafter, they reached shore at the place where they were going.

²² Then the next morning, the crowd that was back on the opposite side of the sea saw just the single little boat and not the other... and they knew that Jesus hadn't gotten into the boat with his disciples and that [the disciples] had left by themselves. ²³ And later, after some boats had arrived from Tiberias and docked close to the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord gave thanks, ²⁴ the crowd started to realize that Jesus and his disciples were no longer there. So they got into their little boats and traveled to CapharNaum to look for Jesus. ²⁵ And when they found him across the sea, they asked him, 'Rabbi, when did you get here?'

²⁶ Then Jesus said to them: 'I tell you the truth; You aren't looking for me because you saw signs, but because you had a lot of bread to eat. ²⁷ Don't work for food that can spoil. Rather, [work for] for the food of life that lasts through the ages, which the Son of Man (who was sealed by our Father, The God) will give to you.'

²⁸ Then they asked: 'What must we do to perform the works of The God?'

²⁹ And Jesus replied: 'All that The God requires is for you to believe in the one whom He sent.'

³⁰ So they asked: 'Then, what sign will you perform for us so that we can see and believe... what [miracles] can you show us?' ³¹ Why, Moses gave our ancestors manna as bread from heaven when

they were in the desert.'

³² Then Jesus replied: 'I tell you the truth; the bread that Moses gave them didn't [really] come from heaven. However, my Father will give you bread that truly does come from heaven. ³³ For God's bread is the person who came from heaven in order to give life to the world.

³⁴ Then they said: 'Lord, always give us this bread!'

³⁵ And Jesus went on to say: 'Well, I am that bread of life, and those who come to me won't ever be hungry again, nor will those who believe in me ever be thirsty again. ³⁶ However, I tell you this: Though you've seen me, you still don't believe. ³⁷ Only those whom the Father has given to me will come to me... and I won't throw away anyone who comes to me, ³⁸ because I didn't come here from heaven to do my will, but [to do] the Will of the One who sent me. ³⁹ And this is what His Will is: That I shouldn't lose any of those whom He has given to me, but that I should resurrect them [on] the Last Day. ⁴⁰ Yes, it is the Will of my Father that everyone who pays close attention to the Son and believes in him should have age-long life. For I will resurrect him... [yes] me, on the Last Day!'

⁴¹ Well at this, the Judeans started grumbling about him, because he'd said, 'I am the bread that has come down out of heaven.' ⁴² And they started asking each other, 'Isn't this Jesus, the son of JoSeph, whose father and mother we all know? So, how is it that he's saying, *I came down out of heaven?*

⁴³ Then Jesus told them: 'Stop your grumbling! ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me... and then I will resurrect him on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: *They will all be taught by God.* So all those who listen to the Father and learn, will come to me.

⁴⁶ 'Why, no one has seen the Father other than the one who was with The God... yes, he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ And I tell you the truth; those who believe this will have age-long life!

⁴⁸ 'For a fact, I am the bread of life! ⁴⁹ Though your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, they [still] died. ⁵⁰ However, no one who eats this bread that comes from heaven will die, ⁵¹ for I'm the living bread that came from heaven, and all who eat this bread will have age-long life. Now, the bread that I'm offering up is my flesh, and I'm giving it away so as to bring life into the world!'

⁵² Well at that, the Judeans started fighting with each other, asking, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

⁵³ So Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; if you don't eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you won't have life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ For those who chew my flesh and drink my blood will have age-long life... because I will resurrect them on the Last Day. ⁵⁵ Since my flesh is truly food and my blood is truly drink, ⁵⁶ those who chew on my flesh and drink my blood will remain in me, and I in them.

⁵⁷ 'I was sent here by the living Father and I became alive through the Father. So those who chew on me will live because of me! ⁵⁸ Yes, this is the bread that came down from heaven. It's not the same as the bread that your fathers ate and then died; for those who chew on this bread will live though the ages.'

⁵⁹ Now, he said all these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at CapharNaum. ⁶⁰ But after they heard him say these things, many of his disciples said, 'These are tough words... who can listen to them?'

⁶¹ Well, because Jesus knew what his disciples were grumbling about, he asked them: 'Has this become a trap for you?' ⁶² [If so], what will happen when you see the Son of Man going back up to the place from which he came?

⁶³ [Your] breath is what makes you alive, for [without it], the flesh is useless. And these things that I'm telling you are your life and your breath... ⁶⁴ yet, some of you still don't believe.'

Well, Jesus knew from the start who wouldn't believe and who would betray him; ⁶⁵ so he went on to say: 'This is why I told you that none of you can come to me unless you've been given to me by the Father.'

⁶⁶ Well, as the result of [these things that he was saying], many of his disciples went back to what they'd left behind and they wouldn't walk with him anymore. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus asked the twelve: 'Don't you want to turn back also?' ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter replied: 'Lord, whom should we go off to? You're the one who speaks the words [that bring] age-long life... ⁶⁹ for we've known and believed that you're the Holy One of The God!'

⁷⁰ Then Jesus said: 'I chose you twelve, didn't I? Yet, one of you is a slanderer' ⁷¹ (of course, he was talking about Judas, [the son] of Simon IsCariot; because, although he was one of the twelve, he was about to betray [Jesus]).

Chapter 7

¹ Well, after all of these things had happened, Jesus kept his travels close to Galilee... he no longer cared to travel through Judea, because the Judeans were looking to kill him. ² However, the Jewish Festival of Temporary Structures was coming up, ³ so his brothers said to him: 'You should leave here and go to Judea so your disciples there can also see the things that you're doing. ⁴ For no one does things in secret when they want everyone to know what they're saying.' ⁵ (Yes, it's a fact that his brothers didn't believe in him).

⁶ So Jesus told them: 'My time hasn't arrived yet... but it's always your time, ⁷ because the world has no reason to hate you. It hates me, because I testify to the fact that it's ways are wicked. ⁸ So, you go on up to the festival... I won't be going to this festival, because my time hasn't arrived yet.'

⁹ Well, he remained in Galilee [for a while] after telling them this. ¹⁰ However, after his brothers had left for the festival, Jesus also went (not openly, but in secret).

¹¹ Well, the Judeans were all looking for him at the festival, for they were asking, 'Where is that [man]?' ¹² And there was a lot of discussion about him among the crowds. Some were saying, 'He's a good man.' But others were saying, 'No he isn't... he's misleading them all!'

¹³ Of course, nobody would talk about him publicly, because they were all afraid of the Judeans.

¹⁴ Well, when Jesus finally arrived, the festival was half over. But then he went into the Temple, where he started teaching, ¹⁵ which caused the Judeans to wonder and ask, 'How is it that this man understands the scriptures, since he hasn't studied them?'

¹⁶ So Jesus told them: 'Well, what I'm teaching isn't mine... it belongs to the One who sent me. ¹⁷ And all those who want to do His Will already know whether the things I'm teaching come from God, or if I'm speaking on my own. ¹⁸ For those who speak on behalf of themselves are just trying to glorify themselves, while the person whose only wish is to glorify that One who sent him is truthful, and

there isn't any unrighteousness in him. ¹⁹ And though Moses give you the Law, none of you are trying to do what the Law says, for why are you looking to kill me?"

²⁰ Well at that, the crowd started shouting, 'You're demonized! Who's looking to kill you?' ²¹ And Jesus said: 'I did this one thing that really bothers you. ²² However, Moses gave you the circumcision (though it's not really from Moses but from your forefathers), so you circumcise men on the Sabbath. ²³ So if a man can be circumcised on a Sabbath without breaking the Law of Moses, why are you so angry with me because I made an entire man healthy on a Sabbath? ²⁴ Stop judging from the way things look on the surface... judge matters righteously!'

²⁵ Well at that, some who lived in JeruSalem started asking: 'But isn't this the man that they're actually seeking to kill?' ²⁶ Yet look; here he is speaking in public and they haven't said anything to him! Have the rulers come to believe that he really is the Anointed One? ²⁷ Yet, we all know where *this* man came from; and when the [real] Anointed One arrives, no one will know where he's from!'

²⁸ Then (since he was standing in the Temple, teaching at the time), Jesus shouted aloud: 'Yes, you know me and you know where I'm from! But coming here wasn't my idea. Yet, you don't know the One who sent me... ²⁹ I know Him, because I came from Him and He sent me here!'

³⁰ Well after that, they started looking for ways to grab him, but no one was able to lay a hand on him, because his time hadn't come yet.

³¹ Meanwhile, many who were in the crowd started believing in him and were saying: 'When the Anointed One arrives, he surely won't perform more signs than this man has, will he?' ³² And because the Pharisees could hear what the crowd was saying about him, the Chief Priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.

³³ It was then that Jesus said: 'I will be here with you just a little while longer before I go to the One who sent me. ³⁴ Then you will look for me but not find me... and where I'm [going] you can't go.'

³⁵ So the Judeans started asking each other: 'Where does he plan to go that we won't be able to find him? He doesn't intend to go to those scattered among the Greeks and start teaching the Greeks, does he?' ³⁶ What does he mean when he says, *You'll look for me but not find me*, and, *Where I'm going you can't go*?'

³⁷ Well, it was on the last day (the climax of the festival) that Jesus stood up and shouted: 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! ³⁸ For the scriptures say this about those who will put faith in me: *A river of living water will flow from him.*' ³⁹ [Of course] when he said this, [he was talking] about The Spirit, which those who were putting faith in him were about to receive. However, the Spirit hadn't arrived yet, because Jesus hadn't been glorified.

⁴⁰ Then some of the crowd who heard these words started saying, 'This is surely the Prophet!' ⁴¹ while others were saying, 'This is the Anointed One!' However, some also said, 'The Anointed One won't really come from Galilee, will he? ⁴² Didn't the Scriptures say the Anointed One is from the line of David and from BethLehem, the village of David?' ⁴³ So the crowd became divided over him.

⁴⁴ And although some among them had come to arrest him, nobody laid a hand on him. ⁴⁵ So after the officers returned to the Chief Priests and Pharisees and were asked why they didn't bring him in, ⁴⁶ they replied, 'No man has ever spoken like this!'

⁴⁷ So the Pharisees said to them: 'You haven't been misled also, have you? ⁴⁸ Why, none of the rulers or Pharisees believe in him, do they? ⁴⁹ Yet this crowd that doesn't know the Law is cursed!'

⁵⁰ Then Nicodemus (the man who had come to him previously and who was truly one of [Jesus' followers]) said to them: ⁵¹ 'Our Law doesn't allow us to judge a man before we hear what he has to say and get to understand what he's up to, does it?'

⁵² But they said to him: 'Are you also a Galilean? Search [the Scriptures] and you'll see that no Prophet is to come from Galilee!'

Chapter 8

(1-11) ¹² So Jesus spoke to them again, saying: 'I am the light of the world, and whoever follows me won't ever walk in darkness, because he'll have the light of life.'

¹³ Then the Pharisees said to him: 'You're testifying about yourself and what you're testifying to isn't true!'

¹⁴ And Jesus told them: 'Even if I am testifying about myself, my testimony is true, because I know where I came from and where I'll return. But you don't know where I came from or where I'm going, ¹⁵ since your judgment is fleshly. However, I'm not judging anyone! ¹⁶ But if I should judge, my judgment would be true, because I'm not alone... the Father who sent me is with me. ¹⁷ But it's written in your Law that whatever two men testify to is true; ¹⁸ and although I'm testifying about myself, the Father who sent me has also testified about me.'

¹⁹ Then they asked, 'So, where is your Father?'

And Jesus replied: 'You don't know me or my Father; for if you knew me, you would also know my Father.'

²⁰ And although [Jesus] was saying these things right there in [the Temple] Treasury; during the entire time that he was teaching in the Temple, nobody arrested him, because his time hadn't come.

²¹ Then He told them again: 'I am going away and you will look for me. However, you will just die in your sins, because I'm going to a place where you can't go.'

²² So the Judeans started asking, 'Is he saying that he's going to kill himself? For he says, *I'm going to a place where you can't go.*'

²³ But he went on to tell them this: 'You come from the things below and I come from the things above. You're from this world, but I'm not from this world. ²⁴ So as I told you before; You will die in your sins... if you don't believe that I am the one, you will die in your sins!'

²⁵ Then they asked, 'So, who are you?'

And Jesus said: 'Why am I even talking to you? ²⁶ I have so many things to tell you and to judge about you; for the One who sent me is true, and I'm telling the world what I heard from Him.'

²⁷ Well, because they really didn't understand that he was talking to them about the Father, ²⁸ Jesus said: 'After you hang the Son of Man up, you'll know who I am, and that I haven't been doing anything on my own... I've just been saying what I was taught by the Father. ²⁹ For the One who sent

me is with me, and He didn't send me off alone, because I always do the things that please Him.'

³⁰ Well, it was as he was saying these things that many started to believe in him. ³¹ So Jesus then addressed the Judeans who believed in him, and he told them this: 'If you hang onto these things that I'm talking to you about, you're really my disciples... ³² you will know the truth and the truth will set you free!'

³³ But they replied: 'Since we're the seed of AbraHam and we've never been slaves to anyone, why are you saying that we'll be set free?'

³⁴ Then Jesus said: 'I tell you the truth; everyone who sins is a slave to sin, ³⁵ and a slave doesn't live in the house through the age. Only the son lives there through the age. ³⁶ But if the Son sets you free, you'll really be free!'

³⁷ 'I know that you're AbraHam's seed... however, you're looking to kill me, because what I'm saying isn't getting through to you. ³⁸ Though I'm telling you the things that I saw [while I was] with my Father; you're doing the things that you heard from your father.'

³⁹ Then they said: 'Well, our father is AbraHam!'

And Jesus said: 'If you really are AbraHam's children, do what AbraHam did! ⁴⁰ Yet, you still want to kill me... a man who is just telling you the truth that I heard from The God! AbraHam wouldn't do that! ⁴¹ So, you're doing the things that your father wants.'

Then they said: 'We weren't fathered through some immoral relationship... we have one Father, God!'

⁴² And Jesus said to them: 'If God were your Father, you would love me, because I came here from God. I didn't come here on my own, He sent me!'

⁴³ '[Do you know] why it is that you don't understand what I'm saying? Because you aren't listening! ⁴⁴ You're from your father the Slanderer, and you're wanting to do the will of your father, who was a murderer from the start... he didn't stick with the truth, because there isn't any truth in him. So when he tells a lie, he's saying something that's his, since he's a liar and the father of the lie. ⁴⁵ This is why, although I'm telling you the truth, you don't believe me.'

⁴⁶ 'Who among you accuses me of sin? And if I'm telling the truth, why don't you believe me? ⁴⁷ Those who come from The God listen to what He says... and that's why you don't listen; because you aren't from The God!'

⁴⁸ Well at that, the Judeans said: 'Aren't we [telling the truth] when we say that you're a demonized Samaritan?'

⁴⁹ And Jesus answered: 'I don't have a demon; I'm honoring my Father and you're dishonoring me! ⁵⁰ And though I'm not trying to glorify myself, there is someone who's watching and judging. ⁵¹ And I truthfully say that those who obey my words, won't see death through the age.'

⁵² Then the Judeans said to him: 'Now we know that you're demonized! For although even AbraHam and the Prophets died, you're saying, *If anyone obeys my words, he won't see death through the age.* ⁵³ You aren't greater than our father AbraHam or the Prophets who all died, are you? Who are you claiming to be?'

⁵⁴ And Jesus told them: 'If I were just glorifying myself, my glory would be nothing. However, my Father is glorifying me. He's the One whom you say is your God, ⁵⁵ yet you've never known Him! I know Him, and if I should ever say that I don't know Him, I'd be a liar like you. But I do know Him and I'm obeying His instructions.'

⁵⁶ [Then Jesus went on to tell them:] Your father AbraHam shouted in joy over the hope of seeing my day... yes, he saw it and he rejoiced!'

⁵⁷ But the Judeans said: 'You aren't fifty years old yet, and you've seen AbraHam?'

⁵⁸ And Jesus replied: 'I tell you the truth; I existed before AbraHam.'

⁵⁹ And at that, they picked up rocks to throw them at him, but Jesus [went and] hid. Then he left the Temple.

Chapter 9

¹ Well, as they were walking along, [Jesus' disciples] noticed a man who had been blind since birth. ² So they asked [Jesus]: 'Rabbi, Who sinned, this man or his parents, that caused him to be born blind?'

³ And Jesus replied: 'It wasn't because of the sins of this man or his parents... it happened so that the works of God could be demonstrated through him. ⁴ For I must do the work of the One who sent me while it is still day, since the night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ And as long as I'm in the world, I'm its light.'

⁶ Then after he said that, he spit on the ground, made a paste with his saliva, and he put it on the man's eyes. ⁷ Then he told him: 'Go wash in the Pool of SiloAm' (which translates as *The Sent Place*). So he went off and washed, and then he came back seeing.

⁸ Well, when his neighbors (those who knew that he had been a beggar) saw this, they asked, 'Isn't this the same man that used to sit and beg?' ⁹ And though some agreed, saying, 'That's him;' others were saying, 'No, it just looks like him.' But then the man said, 'I'm the one!'

¹⁰ So they asked, 'Then, how were your eyes opened?' ¹¹ And he replied: 'The man called Jesus made a paste and smeared it on my eyes, then he told to me to go to SiloAm and wash. So I went and washed, and then I started seeing.'

¹² Then they asked, 'Where is that man?' And he answered, 'I don't know.'¹³ So they took the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees.

¹⁴ Well, the day that Jesus made the paste and opened his eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees asked him again how he had gained his sight. And he answered: 'He put a paste on my eyes, then I washed it off and I started seeing.'

¹⁶ And some of the Pharisees said, 'This man isn't from God, because he doesn't observe the Sabbath!' Yet others asked, 'If the man's a sinner, how can he perform such signs?' As the result, they were divided.

¹⁷ So they asked the blind man once more: 'Since he opened your eyes, what do you have to say about him?'

And the man said, 'He's a Prophet!'

¹⁸ However, the Judeans didn't believe that he had once been blind and started seeing, so they called his parents in ¹⁹ and asked them: 'Is this your son whom you say was born blind? If so, how is he able to see now?'

²⁰ And his parents replied: 'We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ But we don't know how he started seeing or who opened his eyes... ask him, he's old enough... let him speak for himself!' ²² His parents said this, because they were afraid of the Judeans, since they had already agreed that if anyone would admit that [Jesus] is the Anointed One, they would be expelled from the synagogue. ²³ So that's why his parents said, 'He's old enough, ask him.'

²⁴ Then they asked the man who used to be blind a second time, saying: 'Glorify God! We know that this man is a sinner!'

²⁵ But he answered: 'Whether he's a sinner or not, I don't know. The only thing I do know is that I was blind and now I can see!'

²⁶ So they asked again: 'What did he do to you... how did he open your eyes?'

²⁷ And he replied: 'I've already told you, but you aren't listening! Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?'

²⁸ Well at that, they spoke insultingly to him, saying, 'You're one of that man's disciples, but we're disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses, but we don't know where this man is from!'

³⁰ And the man said: 'It's truly marvelous that you don't know where he's from... yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, He only listens to those who are God-fearing and wish to do His Will. ³² Why, through the ages, no one has ever heard of anyone who could open the eyes of a person that was born blind. ³³ And if this man wasn't from God, he couldn't do such a thing.'

³⁴ Then they replied: 'You were born a complete sinner, and now you're teaching us?' So at that, they threw him out.

³⁵ Well, Jesus heard about them throwing him out, and when he found him, he asked: 'Are you starting to put faith in the Son of Man?'

³⁶ Then the man answered: 'Just who is he Lord, so that I can believe in him?'

³⁷ And Jesus said: 'You've seen him, for this one who is speaking to you is him.'

³⁸ Then he said: 'I do believe in him, Lord,' and he bowed low.

³⁹ And Jesus said, 'The judgment that I'm bringing into this world is helping those who don't see, to see, and to make those who can see blind.'

⁴⁰ But when some of the Pharisees who were there with him heard this, they asked, 'We aren't blind also, are we?'

⁴¹ And Jesus replied: 'If you were blind you wouldn't have any sin. But because you claim to see, your sins remain.'

Chapter 10

¹ 'I tell you the truth; Those who don't enter the sheep pen through the gate, but climb in at some other place, are thieves and robbers, ² while the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of those sheep. ³ He's the gatekeeper who opens to them, and the sheep listen to his voice. So he calls his sheep by their names and he leads them out. ⁴ Then after he has them all out, he leads and the sheep follow, because they recognize his voice. ⁵ They won't follow a stranger... they'll run from him, since they don't recognize the voice of a stranger.'

⁶ Well, because they didn't understand what he meant when Jesus gave them this illustration, ⁷ Jesus again said: 'I tell you the truth; I'm the gateway to the sheep, ⁸ and all those who came ahead of me were thieves and robbers, so the sheep didn't listen to them. ⁹ I'm the gateway, and whoever enters through me will be saved... he can come in or he can go out and find a place to graze. ¹⁰ So while thieves only enter to steal, kill, and destroy, I came here so they can have life... and plenty of it!

¹¹ 'I'm the good shepherd, and a good shepherd will give his life for his sheep. ¹² A hired hand (someone who isn't a shepherd and who doesn't own the sheep) will leave them and run away whenever he sees a wolf coming... so the wolf can scatter them and snatch some away. ¹³ For since he's just a hired hand, he doesn't really care about the sheep. ¹⁴ But I'm the fine shepherd, and I know my sheep and they know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. Therefore, I will lay down my life for my sheep!

¹⁶ 'However, I have other sheep that aren't in this pen, and I must also lead them. They too will listen to my voice and they will all become one flock under one shepherd. ¹⁷ And this is why I'm so loved by the Father... because I'm willing to lay down my life and then take it back again. ¹⁸ Nobody is going to take it from me... I'm giving it away! For I'm authorized to lay it down and I'm authorized to receive it again. Yes, this is the outcome that my Father is providing!'

¹⁹ Well, the Judeans once again became divided over these words. ²⁰ Many were saying, 'He's demonized and crazy, so why are you listening to him?' ²¹ But others were saying, 'These aren't the words of a demonized man, for a demon can't open the eyes of a blind man, can it?'

²² Well at the time, the Festival of Rededication was going on in JeruSalem (it was winter). ²³ And as Jesus was walking in the Temple among the Columns of Solomon, ²⁴ some Judeans gathered around him and asked: 'How long are you going to keep us in suspense? Just tell us if you're the Anointed One!'

²⁵ And Jesus replied: 'I [already] told you, but you don't believe it! Although the things that I'm doing in my Father's Name are all testifying about me, ²⁶ you still don't believe it, because you aren't my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice... I know them all and they follow me, ²⁸ so I'm giving them age-long life! For none of them will be lost in this age, because no one will snatch them out of my hands, ²⁹ since my Father who gave them to me is greater than everyone, and no one can grab them out of His hands... ³⁰ for my Father and I are one!'

³¹ Then once again, the Judeans picked up rocks to stone him. ³² So Jesus said: 'I've shown you so many good things that I did, which came from the Father... for which of these good deeds are you ready to stone me?'

³³ And the Judeans replied: 'We aren't stoning you for good deeds, but for blasphemy! Although you're just a man, you're making yourself a god!'

³⁴ Then Jesus asked: 'Isn't it written in your Law, *I say that you are gods?*' ³⁵ So if God called those who were spoken against in His Word *gods* (and you can't void the Scriptures); ³⁶ how can you tell me (one who was made holy and sent into the world by the Father) that I'm blaspheming because I say that I'm God's Son?

³⁷ 'If what I'm doing isn't my Father's Will, then don't believe me. ³⁸ But if what I am [doing is His Will], then believe in what I'm doing, even if you don't believe in me! For then you will come to know (and keep on knowing) that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.'

³⁹ So at that point they tried to grab him again, but he slipped out of their reach. ⁴⁰ Then he went off and crossed the Jordan [River], and he stayed at the place that John had started his baptizing. ⁴¹ Many people also came to him there, and they were saying, 'John didn't perform a single sign, but everything John said about this man is true!' ⁴² So, many started believing in him there.

Chapter 11

¹ Now, there was a man who was very ill, Lazarus of BethAny (he came from the same village as Mary and her sister Martha). ² This is the Mary who greased the Lord with perfumed ointment and wiped his feet dry with her hair. And Lazarus (who was her brother), was very sick, ³ so his sisters sent word [to Jesus], saying, 'Lord, {Look!} the one whom you care for is very ill!'

⁴ But when Jesus heard this, he said: 'This sickness isn't for death, it's for the glory of God... so that the Son of God will be glorified by it!' ⁵ And though Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus; ⁶ when he heard that [Lazarus] was ill, he actually stayed where he was for two more days. ⁷ And after that, he told the disciples: 'Let's go to Judea again.'

⁸ But the disciples reminded him, saying: 'Rabbi, the Judeans just tried to stone you, so are you going there again?'

⁹ And Jesus replied: 'Aren't there twelve hours of daylight? If a person walks in the daylight he doesn't bump into things, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if someone walks around during the night he'll bump into things, because there isn't any light in him.'

¹¹ Then after he said this, he told them: 'Our friend Lazarus is lying down and I'm going there to wake him up.'

¹² So the disciples said to him: 'Lord, if he's just lying down, he'll survive.' ¹³ However, Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought he was talking about lying down to sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly: 'Lazarus has died... ¹⁵ and I'm happy for your sakes that I wasn't there, so you can believe. Now, let's go to him!'

¹⁶ Then Thomas (who was called the Twin) said to the other disciples: 'Let's go along also, so we can die with [Jesus].'

¹⁷ Well, when Jesus arrived, he found [that Lazarus] had already been in the tomb for four days, ¹⁸ and since BethAny was just about two miles from JeruSalem, ¹⁹ many people had come there from Judah to see Martha and Mary to console them over [the death of] their brother. ²⁰ Then when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹ And Martha said to Jesus:

'Lord, if you had just been here, my brother wouldn't have died. ²² But I know that whatever you ask of God, He'll give to you.'

²³ Then Jesus told her: 'Your brother will stand again!'

²⁴ And Martha said: 'I know that he'll stand again in the resurrection on the Last Day.'

²⁵ But Jesus said to her: 'I am the resurrection and the life; so whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live. ²⁶ And all the living who believe in me won't remain dead through the age. Do you believe this?'

²⁷ And she answered: 'Yes Lord; I have believed that you're the Anointed One, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.'

²⁸ Then after saying this, she went off to call her sister Mary, and she told her secretly: 'The Teacher is here and he's asking for you.' ²⁹ So when [Mary] heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

³⁰ Actually, Jesus hadn't gone into the village yet, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

³¹ And when the Judeans who had come to the house to console her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to cry there. ³² Well, when Mary got to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying: 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died!'

³³ And when Jesus saw her and all the Judeans who came with her crying, he groaned a deep sigh and was visibly upset. ³⁴ Then he asked, 'Where have you laid him?'

And they replied: 'Lord, come and see.'

³⁵ Then Jesus broke into tears, ³⁶ and the Judean [women] said: 'See how much he cared for him!' ³⁷ But some of them asked: 'Wasn't this man who opened the eyes of the blind man able to keep him from dying?'

³⁸ Well, after groaning deeply again, Jesus went to the tomb (it was actually a cave with a [large piece of] stone placed over it). ³⁹ And Jesus said: 'Lift the stone.'

But Martha (the dead man's sister) said: 'Lord, by now he must smell, because it has already been four days!'

⁴⁰ However, Jesus said: 'Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?'

⁴¹ So they lifted the stone. Then Jesus raised his eyes toward heaven and said: 'Father, thank You for listening to me! ⁴² I know that You always listen to me, but I said this for the sake of the crowd that's standing around... so they can believe that You sent me.'

⁴³ And after he said that, he shouted loudly: 'Lazarus, come on out!'

⁴⁴ Then the man who had been dead came out with his hands and feet still bound with wrappings and his face wrapped in a cloth. And Jesus said: 'Now, untie and unwrap him!'

⁴⁵ So, many of the Judeans who came with Mary and saw what he had done started believing in him

then. ⁴⁶ However, others went off to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus was doing.

⁴⁷ Then the Chief Priests and Pharisees assembled the Jewish Court and asked them: 'What should we do... for this man is performing so many signs?' ⁴⁸ If we let him keep on doing this, everyone will believe in him and the Romans will come and take our land and our people!

⁴⁹ Well, one of those in the group, CaiAphas (who was the High Priest that year), said to them: 'You don't know anything ⁵⁰ and you haven't figured it out yet... that it's best for one man to die for the people so the whole nation isn't destroyed!'

⁵¹ However, he didn't come up with this by himself; it was just because he was High Priest that year, that he spoke this prophesy about Jesus having to die for the nation... ⁵² and not just for the nation, but so that he could also bring the scattered children of God together as one.

⁵³ Well, from that day on, these men were meeting and discussing ways to kill him, ⁵⁴ so Jesus no longer traveled openly among the Judeans. He left there and traveled through the countryside near the desert to a city called Ephraim, where he remained with his disciples.

⁵⁵ Now, the Judean Passover was coming, and many people had left the countryside for JeruSalem before the Passover, to undergo ceremonial cleansing. ⁵⁶ And [all the while], people were looking for Jesus, asking each other (as they stood around in the Temple), 'What do you think? Won't he come to the Festival at all?' ⁵⁷ Why, the Chief Priests and Pharisees have given orders that if anyone knows where he is, they should tell it so they can arrest him.'

Chapter 12

¹ Well, six days before the Passover, Jesus finally arrived at BethAny (the place where he had raised Lazarus from the dead), ² and they prepared a supper for him there. Martha was doing the serving and Lazarus was reclining at the table with the others. ³ Then Mary took a pound of perfumed ointment (it was very expensive... genuine nard) and greased Jesus' feet, wiping them dry with her hair and filling the whole house with the scent of the perfume.

⁴ But Judas IsCariot (one of his disciples who was about to betray him) asked, ⁵ 'Why wasn't this ointment sold for three hundred silver coins and given to the poor?' ⁶ However, he didn't say this because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief... he kept the money box, and he used to [steal some of] the money that was put into it.

⁷ But Jesus said: 'Leave her alone... let her keep this observance of the day of my burial. ⁸ You will always have the poor with you, but you won't always have me.'

⁹ Well, a large crowd of Judeans had learned that he was there, and they didn't just come to see Jesus, but also to see Lazarus whom he'd raised from the dead. ¹⁰ As the result, the Chief Priests then met in counsel to kill Lazarus also, ¹¹ since many Judeans were going there and believing in Jesus because of him.

¹² Then the next day, a huge crowd of those who had come to the festival (when they heard that Jesus was coming to JeruSalem) ¹³ took palm fronds and went out to meet him, shouting: '[God] save the Praised One who comes in Jehovah's Name as the King of IsraEl!'

¹⁴ And when Jesus found a young burro, he mounted it, just as it was written,

¹⁵ 'Don't fear, O daughter of Zion;

For look, your king has arrived,
Sitting on the colt of a burro.'

¹⁶ And although his disciples didn't understand this at first; after Jesus was glorified, they realized that all of this had been written about him and that they actually did these things.

¹⁷ Also, the crowd that was with him when he had called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead, started testifying about him. ¹⁸ So, many among the throngs [of people who were there] came to meet him, because they'd heard about his performing this sign. ¹⁹ And as the result, the Pharisees started talking among themselves saying, 'Look, we're getting nowhere! See, the whole world is following him!'

²⁰ Well, there were some Greeks among those who had come to worship at the Festival, ²¹ and they went up to Philip (who was from BethSaida of Galilee) and said: 'Lord, we'd like to see this Jesus.'

²² So Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³ But Jesus replied: 'No, for the time has arrived when the Son of Man is to be glorified. ²⁴ I tell you the truth; Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a kernel. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. ²⁵ So, those who care for their lives will lose them, while those who don't care about their lives in this system of things are grabbing hold of age-long life. ²⁶ Therefore, if someone wants to serve me he must follow me, so that my servants will be wherever I am... for the Father will honor all those who wish to serve me.

²⁷ 'Now, I'm deeply disturbed, so what should I say... *Father, save me from this hour?* No, for this is why I came to this hour! ²⁸ So Father; Glorify Your Name!'

Then a voice came out of the sky that said: 'I glorified it and I will glorify it again!'

²⁹ Well, [many in] the crowd who were standing there heard [the sound] and they said it was thunder; but others said, 'An angel has spoken to him!'

³⁰ Then Jesus said: 'This voice didn't happen for my sake, but for yours, ³¹ since this system of things is now going to be judged and the ruler of this arrangement will be cast out! ³² For when I'm hung high off the ground, I will draw all men toward me.' ³³ (He was really saying this to show what type of death he was about to die).

³⁴ And the crowd started saying: 'Since the Law tells us that the Anointed One will be here through the age, why are you saying that the Son of Man must be hung up... just who is this Son of Man?'

³⁵ And Jesus replied: 'The light will be among you for just a little while longer. Therefore, walk while you have the light so that darkness doesn't overtake you; for those who walk in darkness doesn't know where they're going. ³⁶ But as long as you have the light, put faith in that light so you can become Sons of Light.'

Then after Jesus said these things, he went and hid from them. ³⁷ For although he had performed so many signs before them, they still didn't believe in him. ³⁸ But all of this happened so that the words of the Prophet IsaiAh could be fulfilled, which said,
'O Lord;
Who has believed in the things that we've heard,
And who has shown us the arm of the Lord?'

³⁹ Now, the reason why they couldn't believe is as IsaiAh once again said:

⁴⁰ 'For the hearts of these people have hardened,

So, with their ears, they now listen slowly,

And their eyelids are closed;

Thus, they will not hear with their ears,

Nor will they see with their eyes,

And their hearts just won't comprehend,

To make them turn back so I'd heal them.'

⁴¹ Yes, IsaiAh said this, because he saw and talked about the glory [of Jesus]. ⁴² Why, even many of the rulers believed in him... but they wouldn't admit it because of the Pharisees, so they wouldn't be expelled from the synagogues. ⁴³ For they loved the glory of men even more than the glory of God.

⁴⁴ Then Jesus shouted [to the crowd]: 'Those who believe in me aren't just believing in me alone, but in the One who sent me. ⁴⁵ And whoever sees me also sees the One who sent me! ⁴⁶ For I came as a light to the world so that all those who believe in me won't remain in the darkness.

⁴⁷ Now, if anyone hears what I say and doesn't obey it, I'm not going to judge him, for I didn't come to judge the world, but to save it! ⁴⁸ And those who ignore me and don't welcome what I say already have someone who judges them... for the things that I've said are what will judge them on the last day, ⁴⁹ since the things that I've said didn't come from me... it was the Father who sent me that commanded me what to tell and what to say! ⁵⁰ And since I know that His Commandments mean age-long life, I've told you whatever the Father told me to say... yes, these are the things that I've been telling you!'

Chapter 13

¹ Well, even before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to transfer from this world to the Father. Yet he loved those who were his own in the world to the end. ² So, while they were eating supper (since the Slanderer had already put it into the heart of Judas IsCariot – the son of Simon – to betray him, ³ and because he knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he came from God and was returning to God), ⁴ he got up from the meal and laid his outer clothing aside. Then he took a towel and wrapped it around him; ⁵ and he put water in a bowl and started washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel that he had around him. ⁶ But when he got to Simon Peter, [Peter] asked: 'Lord, why are you washing my feet?'

⁷ And Jesus replied: 'You won't understand what I'm doing right now, but you will understand later.'

⁸ Then Peter said: 'Well, you aren't going to wash my feet any time in this age!'

And Jesus replied: 'If I don't wash you, you will never have a share with me.'

⁹ And at that, Simon Peter said: 'Lord, then not just my feet, but my hands and head also!'

¹⁰ But Jesus told him: 'Someone who has taken a bath is completely clean and doesn't need to have anything more than his feet washed... and you men are clean... but not all.'

¹¹ He knew, of course, which man would betray him. That's why he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

¹² Well, after he'd finished washing their feet, he put his outer clothing back on, reclined at the table again, and then he asked: 'Do you know what I've done for you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and

there's nothing wrong with this, because that's what I am. ¹⁴ But if I as your Lord and Teacher washed your feet, you should also wash the feet of each other. ¹⁵ Now, I've set the pattern for you, so you must do just as I've done to you.

¹⁶ 'I tell you the truth; A slave isn't greater than his master, nor is the one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ So if you understand these things and do them, you will be blest.

¹⁸ 'Now, I'm not talking about all of you, for I know those whom I chose. And the scripture must be fulfilled that says: *The one who used to chew on my bread has lifted his heel against me.* ¹⁹ So from now on, I will be telling you things before they happen. That way, when they do happen, you'll believe that I am the one.

²⁰ 'I tell you the truth; those who welcome anyone that I send are also welcoming me. And those who welcome me, are also welcoming the One who sent me.'

²¹ Well, after he said these things, Jesus became deeply disturbed and he testified to this: 'I tell you the truth; One of you will betray me!'

²² Well, the disciples started looking at each other and they were all at a loss as to which one he was saying this about. ²³ And because the disciple whom Jesus particularly loved was reclining right next to Jesus, ²⁴ Simon Peter nodded to him and said, 'Tell [us] who he's talking about.' ²⁵ So this one leaned back against Jesus' chest and asked: 'Lord, who [are you saying this about]?'

²⁶ And Jesus replied: 'It's the one to whom I'm going to give this piece of bread that I'm dipping.' So he dipped the piece of bread, then he took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon IsCariot.

²⁷ Well, after [Judas ate] the bread, the Opposer entered him. And Jesus said: 'Now, hurry and do all that you've planned to do!' ²⁸ Meanwhile, none of the rest who were reclining at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹ In fact, some thought that since Judas was in charge of the money box, Jesus was telling him to buy whatever was needed for the Festival, or that he should give something to the poor.

³⁰ So [Judas] left immediately after he'd received that piece of bread late that evening.

³¹ Well, it was after [Judas] had left that Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is being glorified, and through him, God will also be glorified. ³² For God Himself will glorify him, and he'll be glorified right away!

³³ 'Little children; I'll be with you just a little while longer. For [soon] you will look for me, and as I told the Judeans, *Where I'm going you can't come...* and I'm saying the same thing to you right now.

³⁴ 'Therefore, now I'm giving you a new commandment... to love each other! Yes, love each other just as I've loved you. ³⁵ For this is how they will know that you are my disciples: By the love that you have for each other.'

³⁶ Then Simon Peter asked, 'Where are you going, Lord?'

And Jesus told him: 'You can't follow where I'm going now... but you will follow later.'

³⁷ And Peter said: 'Lord, why can't I follow you now? I'm [willing to] give my life for you!'

³⁸ But Jesus said: 'Will you give your life for me? I tell you the truth; a rooster won't crow before

you've denied knowing me three times.'

Chapter 14

¹ 'Now, don't let your hearts be troubled... just have faith in God and have faith in me. ² Understand that there are many places [for you] to stay in my Father's house. If this weren't so, I wouldn't have told you that I'm going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I'm going to prepare a place for you, I will also return and take you with me, so you'll be wherever I am... ⁴ and then you'll know the way to where I am going.'

⁵ But Thomas said: 'Lord, since we don't know where you're going, how can we know the way?'

⁶ And Jesus replied: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; so no one can come to the Father unless [he comes] through me. ⁷ If you men had [truly] known me, you would have recognized my Father also... and from now on, you've known Him and you've seen Him.'

⁸ Then Philip said: 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us!'

⁹ And Jesus asked: 'Have I spent so much time with you and you still haven't come to know me Philip? Since those who have seen me have also seen the Father, why are you saying, *Show us the Father?* ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I'm in the Father and the Father is in me? Why, I'm not coming up with the things that I'm saying to you on my own... it's the Father who is in me that is doing His work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I'm in the Father and the Father is in me... or just believe because of the things that I'm doing!

¹² 'I tell you the truth; Whoever believes in me will do the same things that I'm doing. In fact, he will do even greater things than these, because I'm going to the Father... ¹³ and then I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son can glorify the Father. ¹⁴ Yes, whatever you ask in my name, I will do! ¹⁵ And if you truly love me, you'll follow my commandments.

¹⁶ 'Now, I'm going to ask the Father and He will provide you with an advocate that will be with you through the age... ¹⁷ the Spirit of Truth. The world won't receive it, because they can't see it or understand it... but you'll recognize it, for it will stay with you and in you.

¹⁸ 'And I'm not leaving you as orphans, because I'll be coming [back] to you. ¹⁹ Yet, in just a little while, the world won't see me anymore... but you will see me again, because I'll be alive and you'll be alive. ²⁰ And in that day, you'll come to know that I am in my Father, just as you will be in me and I will be in you.

²¹ 'Those who know my commandments and obey them are the ones who truly love me. And because they love me, they will be loved by my Father... and I'll love them and reveal myself to them.'

²² Then Judas (not IsCariot, [but ThadDaeus]) asked: 'Lord, what [is about to] happen so that you'll be showing yourself to us, but not to the world?'

²³ And Jesus replied: 'If anyone loves me, he'll obey my words. Then my Father will love him and we will come to him and dwell in him. ²⁴ But those who don't love me won't obey my words. And the words that you're hearing aren't mine... they belong to the Father who sent me.

²⁵ 'Now, I've told you these things while I was with you, ²⁶ but the Advocate, the Holy Breath that the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I've told

you.

²⁷ So I leave you peace... I'm giving you my peace. I'm not giving it to you in the same way as this system of things offers it. I'm giving it to you so your hearts won't be troubled or fearful. ²⁸ For although you heard me say that I'm going away; believe that I will also return. For if you love me, you'll cry out in joy that I'm going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am!

²⁹ 'Now, I've told you all of these things before they happen, so that when they do happen, you can believe. ³⁰ I won't be saying many more things to you, because the Ruler of this system of things is coming... but he has no hold on me. ³¹ Then the world will know that I love the Father, and that I've [fulfilled] all the commandments that the Father gave to me.

'Now, get up! Let's leave this place!'

Chapter 15

¹ I am the true vine, and since my Father is the cultivator, ² He removes every branch in me that doesn't produce fruit and He cleans up all those that do produce, so they can bear more fruit. ³ Therefore, you've already become clean by the things that I've told you... ⁴ so stick with me and I'll stick with you. For, just as a branch can't produce fruit unless it remains on the vine, you can't either, unless you're in me.

⁵ I am the vine and you are the branches; so those who are in me (and I in them) will produce much fruit. But apart from me, you can't do anything. ⁶ For when someone doesn't remain in me, his branch will be removed and wither. Then men will gather up such branches and throw them into the fire, where they'll be burned. ⁷ But if you remain in me, and if the things that I tell you remain in you; you can ask for anything you wish and it will happen.

⁸ 'My Father is glorified when you keep on producing much fruit and continue to prove that you're my disciples. ⁹ So in the same way that the Father has loved me and I've loved you; remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commandments, you'll remain in my love in the same way that I have obeyed the commandments of the Father and I remain in His love.

¹¹ I've told you these things so that you can share in the joy that I have and so that your joy can grow.

¹² And this is my commandment: Love each other just as I've loved you! ¹³ No one has greater love than a person who will lay down his life for his friends... ¹⁴ and you are my friends as long as you keep on doing what I'm commanding you.

¹⁵ I'm not calling you slaves, because a slave doesn't really know what his master is doing. Rather, I'm calling you friends, because I've told you everything that I heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You didn't choose me, I chose you... yes, I appointed you! So you must now go and produce fruit... fruit that will last, so that whatever you might ask from the Father in my name, He will give to you!

¹⁷ 'Yes, this is what I'm commanding you: Love each other! ¹⁸ And know that if this world dislikes you, it disliked me first. ¹⁹ If you're from this world, the world will be fond of what is its own. But because you're not part of the world (since I chose you out of the world), it won't care much for you.

²⁰ Remember what I told you: A slave isn't greater than his master! So if they've chased me down, they'll also chase you down... but if they've obeyed my words, they'll also obey yours. ²¹ So they're going to do all these things against you because of my name, since they don't know the One who sent me.

²² 'Why, if I hadn't come and spoken to them, they wouldn't be guilty of sin... but now they don't have any excuse for their sins! ²³ Those who dislike me, dislike my Father also; ²⁴ and if I hadn't done things that no one else has ever done among them, they wouldn't be guilty of sin. However, they have [in fact witnessed these things], and they've shown that they don't care for my Father or me. ²⁵ Yet, all of these things have happened so that the words written in [the Psalms] would be fulfilled: *They disliked me for no reason.*

²⁶ 'So when the Advocate that I'm going to send you from the Father arrives (the Spirit of Truth that comes from the Father), that [one] will testify about me. ²⁷ And you are also to testify [about me], because you've been with me since the beginning.'

Chapter 16

¹ 'Now, I'm telling you these things so you won't be stumbled, ² for they're going to expel you from their synagogues... in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he's doing a service to God! ³ However, they'll be doing these things because they don't know the Father, nor do they know me. ⁴ I've told you this so that when their hour arrives, you might remember that I [warned] you about these things.

'I didn't say anything about this in the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I'm going to the One who sent me... and yet, none of you have asked me where I'm going.

⁶ 'I know that because I've told you these things, your hearts are filled with grief. ⁷ But believe me when I say that my going away is for your own good. Because, if I didn't go away, the Advocate wouldn't come to you. But after I go, I'll send him to you. ⁸ And when that one gets here, he'll condemn the world over its sins, its righteousness, and its judgments.

⁹ About sin: Because they have no faith in me.

¹⁰ About righteousness: Because I'm going to the Father and you won't see me anymore.

¹¹ And about judgments: Because the Ruler of this world has been judged.

¹² 'I still have so many things to tell you, but you can't handle them all right now. ¹³ However, when that one (the Spirit of Truth) arrives, he will lead you to all truth... and he won't be speaking for himself. Rather, he'll tell you what he hears and then he will announce the things that are coming.

¹⁴ 'That one will also glorify me, because he will receive things from me and then announce them to you. ¹⁵ For everything that the Father has is now mine, and that's why I say that he will receive things from me and then announce them to you! ¹⁶ Because, in just a little while you won't be able to see me anymore... but then after a little while you will also see me again.'

¹⁷ Well, some of his disciples started asking each other: 'What does he mean when he says, *After a little while you won't see me, but after a little while you will see me again*, and, *because I'm going to the Father?*' ¹⁸ They also asked: 'What does he mean by, *a little while?* We don't know what he's talking about!' ¹⁹ But Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him [about this], so he said: 'Are you asking each other questions because I said, *After a little while you won't see me; and after a while you will see me again?*' ²⁰ I tell you the truth; You will cry and bawl while the world rejoices... yes, you will be very sad, but then your grief will be turned into joy!

²¹ 'Whenever a woman is about to give birth, she's in pain because her time has arrived. But after the child is born, she forgets about the difficult time that she had, because of her joy in knowing that a human has been born into the world. ²² So although you're now feeling grief, I'll see you again! Then

your hearts will rejoice and no one will ever be able to take away that joy... ²³ and then you won't have to ask me any more questions.

'I tell you the truth; If you ask the Father for anything, He'll give it to you in my name. ²⁴ Until now, you haven't asked for anything in my name; but then you'll ask and receive, and your joy will be complete.

²⁵ 'I've also been explaining these things to you through illustrations. But the time is coming when I'll no longer have to speak to you with illustrations, for I'll talk to you openly and bring back reports to you about the Father. ²⁶ In that day, you will ask in my name and I'll no longer [have to] tell you that I'll ask the Father for you.

²⁷ 'Why, the Father cares for you because you cared for me, and because you believed that I came here from the Father. ²⁸ So, since I came into the world from the Father, I'll also be leaving the world and returning to the Father.'

²⁹ Well at this, his disciples said: '{Look!}' Now you're talking openly without any illustrations... ³⁰ now we're aware that you know everything and that you don't need anyone to be questioning you. And this is why we believe that you came from The God!'

³¹ But Jesus asked: 'Do you believe right now? ³² Look, the hour is coming – in fact it has already arrived – when you will each be scattered to your own homes and you'll abandon me. Yet, I won't be alone, because the Father is [always] with me.

³³ 'I've told you these things so you can find peace in me; for in this world you'll only find hard times. But take courage, because I've conquered the world!'

Chapter 17

¹ Well, after Jesus said these things, he raised his eyes toward the heavens and said: 'Father, the hour has arrived! Now glorify your son so your son can glorify You. ² You've put him over all flesh, so that he can give age-long life to all those whom You've given to him. ³ And knowing You (the only true God) and the one whom You sent (Jesus the Anointed) means age-long life.

⁴ 'Father, I've glorified You on the earth and perfectly completed the work that You've assigned to me.

⁵ So now, glorify me alongside You with the same glory that I had beside You before there was this arrangement. ⁶ For I've made Your Name shine among these men that You gave me from the world... they were Yours, but You gave them to me, and they've obeyed everything that You told them to do.

⁷ 'They also realize that everything You gave me came from You, ⁸ for I've passed along to them all the things that You told me, and they welcomed these things... and they know for a fact that I came here from You! Yes, they believe that You're the One who sent me. ⁹ So this is why I'm asking on their behalf... I'm not asking on behalf of the whole world, just for these whom You've given to me, because they're Yours. ¹⁰ For all that is Yours is now mine, and all that is mine is Yours... and I've been glorified among them! ¹¹ But because I'm no longer in this world (yet they are) and I'm coming to You, Holy Father; Watch over these whom You've given to me because of Your Name... so that they may be in [each other], as we are [in each other].

¹² 'I've watched over these while I was with them (these whom You've given to me because of Your Name)... I've watched over them so that none would be destroyed other than the son of destruction, and that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I'm coming to You and I'm saying these things in

the world so that they may have all of my joy in themselves.

¹⁴ 'I've also given them Your Word... so the world hasn't cared much for them, because they're no part of this world, just as I'm no part of this world.

¹⁵ '[So Father]; I'm not asking You to take them out of the world, just to protect them from the Wicked One, ¹⁶ since they're no part of this world, just as I'm no part of this world.

¹⁷ 'Make them holy with the truth, for Your Word is the truth! ¹⁸ And as You sent me into the world, I'm now sending them into the world. ¹⁹ For I'm making myself holy on their behalf, so that they may be made holy through the truth.

²⁰ 'Now, I'm not just asking for just these; [I'm asking that] all those who say that they believe ²¹ may become one (as You Father are in me and I am in You)... yes, may they become one in us, so that the world may believe that You sent me.

²² 'I've also given them the glory that You gave to me, so they can be one with [each other] just as we are one with [each other], ²³ I in them and You in me. May they can be perfected into one, so the whole world may know that You sent me and that You love them as You love me.

²⁴ 'Father, as for those whom You've given to me; I want them to be where I am, so they can see the glory that You're giving to me because You've loved me since before the founding of the cosmos.

²⁵ 'Righteous Father; The world never knew You... but I know You, and these whom You've sent to me have come to know [You]. ²⁶ I've made Your Name known to them, and I will [continue to] make it known, so Your love for me can be in them, and I [can be] in them also.'

Chapter 18

¹ Well after he said this, Jesus and his disciples crossed the Cedar (Kidron) Wadi, where they entered a garden.

² Now, Judas (his betrayer) also knew of this place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas brought along a contingent of soldiers and some officers from the Priests and Pharisees, who came with torches, lanterns, and weapons. ⁴ And since Jesus knew everything that was about to happen, he asked them: 'Who are you looking for?'

⁵ And they replied: 'Jesus the Nazarene!'

So he said: 'That's me!' (Judas, his betrayer, was also standing among them). ⁶ But when he said, 'That's me,' they all backed up and fell to the ground. ⁷ So he asked them once more: 'Who are you looking for?'

And they again said: 'Jesus the Nazarene!'

⁸ Then Jesus replied: 'I told you, that's me! If I'm the only one you're looking for, then let the rest of them go.' ⁹ (He said this so that the words he spoke could be fulfilled: 'I haven't lost a single one of those whom You gave me'). ¹⁰ And at that, Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the Chief Priest's slave, cutting off his right ear (the slave's name was Malchus). ¹¹ However, Jesus told Peter: 'Put the sword away... shouldn't I drink the cup that the Father has given me to drink?'

¹² Then the officer, his soldiers, and the Judean officials grabbed Jesus and tied him up.

¹³ Well, first they took him to AnNas, the father-in-law of CaiAphas (who was the High Priest that year). ¹⁴ This was the same CaiAphas who had advised the Judeans that it was to their benefit for one man to die on behalf of the people.

¹⁵ Meanwhile, Simon Peter and another disciple followed behind Jesus. And since the Chief Priest was familiar with that disciple, he went into the Chief Priest's courtyard along with Jesus, ¹⁶ as Peter stood outside by the gate. Then the disciple who knew the Chief Priest went outside and spoke to the gatekeeper, and brought Peter into [the courtyard].

¹⁷ But the servant girl who served as the gatekeeper said to Peter: 'You aren't one of this man's disciples also, are you?'

And he said: 'No, I'm not!'

¹⁸ Now, the servants and the officers were standing around warming themselves by a charcoal fire that they had lit, because it was cold... and Peter was standing there with them, warming himself.

¹⁹ Well, the Chief Priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teachings. ²⁰ And Jesus told him: 'I've spoken publicly before the whole world, and I've taught in the synagogues and in the Temple where all the Judeans meet. So, since I haven't said anything in secret, ²¹ why are you questioning me? Question those who heard what I said. See... they all know what I said!'

²² And at that, one of the officers who was standing nearby slapped Jesus in the face and said: 'Is that any way to answer the Chief Priest?'

²³ And Jesus replied: 'If I spoke in error, then testify that what I said was wrong. But if [what I said was] right, then why did you hit me?'

²⁴ Well after that, AnNas sent [Jesus] away bound to CaiAphas, the High Priest.

²⁵ Meanwhile, as Simon Peter was still standing and warming himself, someone asked him: 'Aren't you one of his disciples?'

But he denied it, saying, 'I am not!'

²⁶ Then one of the Chief Priest's servants (a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off) said: 'I saw you in the garden with him, didn't I?'

²⁷ But Peter denied it again... and immediately, a rooster crowed.

²⁸ Well, early the next morning, they led Jesus from CaiAphas' [home] to the Governor's Palace. However, they didn't go inside because they didn't want to make themselves unclean, so they could eat the Passover. ²⁹ As the result, Pilate came outside to them and asked, 'What is your accusation against this man?'

³⁰ And they replied: 'If this man hadn't done anything wrong, we wouldn't be handing him over to you!'

³¹ But Pilate said: 'Then take him yourselves and judge him by your own laws.'

And the Judeans said: 'It isn't legal for us to execute anyone!' ³² (This was said so that Jesus' words would be fulfilled when he showed what sort of death he would die).

³³ So then Pilate went back inside the governor's palace, where he called for Jesus and asked, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

³⁴ And Jesus replied: 'Is it your idea to ask this, or did others tell you about me?'

³⁵ So Pilate said: 'I'm not a Jew am I? Your own people and Priests handed you over to me... what did you do?'

³⁶ And Jesus said: 'My Kingdom isn't from this world. If my Kingdom were from this world, my followers would likely have fought so I wouldn't be handed over to the Judeans... but my Kingdom isn't from here.'

³⁷ And Pilate said: 'So then, aren't you a king?'

And Jesus replied: 'You're the one who's saying that I am a king. The reason why I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth, and everyone who's on the side of truth listens to my voice.'

³⁸ Then Pilate asked, 'What is the truth?' And after he said this, he went back outside to the Judeans and told them this: 'I haven't found any reason [to hold this man]. ³⁹ So, since you usually ask me to release someone to you on the Passover; do you want me release the King of the Jews?'

⁴⁰ But they shouted repeatedly: 'Not him, but BarAbbas!' (BarAbbas was a robber).

Chapter 19

¹ So Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged with a whip. ² Then the soldiers braided a crown of thorns and placed it on his head, and they wrapped him in a purple cape ³ and started coming up to him and saying, 'Rejoice, O you king of the Jews,' as they were slapping him in the face!

⁴ Finally, Pilate went outside once more and said, 'Look; I'm bringing him outside to you so you'll know that I find no fault in him!' ⁵ Then he brought out Jesus wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cape. And [Pilate] said: 'Look; The man!'

⁶ However, when the Chief Priests and the Temple officers saw him, they shouted: 'Hang him on a pole! Hang him on a pole!'

And Pilate said to them: 'Take him yourselves and impale him! I don't find any fault in him!'

⁷ But the Judeans shouted back: 'We have a Law; and according to that Law he must die, because he made himself God's Son.'

⁸ Well when Pilate heard them say this, it frightened him. ⁹ So he went back inside the Governor's Palace and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus wouldn't answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to him: 'Aren't you talking to me... don't you know that I have power to release you and the power to impale you?'

¹¹ And Jesus replied: 'You wouldn't have any power at all over me unless it had been given to you from above. That's why the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin.'

¹² Well because of that, Pilate kept on looking for ways to release him. But the Judeans shouted, 'If you release this man, you're no friend of Caesar. For every man who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar!'

¹³ So after Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus back outside. Then he seated himself in the public-court area called the Stone Pavement (*GabBatha* in Hebrew)... ¹⁴ it was about the sixth hour of the day of preparation for the Passover. And [Pilate] said to the Judeans: 'See; Your King!'

¹⁵ However, they shouted: 'Hang him up! Hang him up! Impale him!'

Then Pilate asked, 'Should I hang your king on a pole?'

And the Chief Priests answered: 'We have no king but Caesar!'

¹⁶ So at that, he handed [Jesus] over to them to be impaled. Then they took Jesus away, ¹⁷ bearing his own pole, out to the spot called Skull Place (*GolGotha* in Hebrew). ¹⁸ There they impaled him along with two other men, one on this side and one on the other, with Jesus in the middle.

¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a sign that he put on the pole, which said: 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.'

²⁰ And as the result, many of the Judeans read this title (because the place where Jesus was impaled was close to the city); for it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. ²¹ However, the Judean Chief Priests told Pilate: 'Don't write *The King of the Jews*, but, *He said that he's the King of the Jews*.'

²² However Pilate told them: 'What I wrote is what I have written.'

²³ Well, when the soldiers impaled Jesus, they took his robe and tore it into four sections, so each soldier could have a piece. But his long inner shirt was woven without a seam from top to bottom. ²⁴ So they said to each other: 'Let's not tear it; we'll throw dice to see who gets it. This happened so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'They divided my robe among themselves and threw dice over my clothes.' And the soldiers really did these things.

²⁵ Well, standing there by the impaling pole of Jesus was his mother, his mother's sister Mary (the wife of Cleopas), and Mary of Magdala. ²⁶ So when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there, he said to his mother: 'Look, woman; Your son!' ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple: 'Look; Your mother!' And from that day on, the disciple took her into his home.

²⁸ Then later, when Jesus realized that everything had been completed (so the Scriptures could be fulfilled), he said, 'I'm thirsty.'

²⁹ Well, they had a full jar of vinegar, so they put a sponge filled with the vinegar on a stalk and held it up to his mouth. ³⁰ And when he received the vinegar, Jesus said: 'It's finished!' Then he hung his head and gave up the breath (gr. *to pneuma*).

³¹ Then, since it was Preparation and so that the bodies wouldn't hang on a pole over the Sabbath (because that was a Great Sabbath), the Judeans asked Pilate to have the men's legs broken and their bodies taken away. ³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of both men who had been impaled with

Jesus. ³³ But when they got to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they didn't break his legs. ³⁴ However, one of the soldiers jabbed his side with a spear, at which blood and water poured out.

³⁵ Now, the one who saw this is a witness to the facts and is offering this as a true testimony. He knows that he's telling the truth, and you can believe it! ³⁶ It's a fact that these things happened so the scripture could be fulfilled, 'Not a bone of his will be crushed.' ³⁷ And another scripture says, 'They will look to the one whom they pierced.'

³⁸ Well after that, JoSeph from HariMathea (he was a secret disciple of Jesus, because he was afraid of the Judeans) asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body away, and Pilate gave him permission. So he went and took the body down.

³⁹ Then NicoDemos (the man who had come to him at night the first time) arrived with a roll of myrrh and about a hundred pounds of aloes. ⁴⁰ So they took Jesus' body and bound it up with wrappings and spices (that's how the Judeans customarily prepare bodies for burial). ⁴¹ Then, because it was close to the place where he was impaled, they laid Jesus in a new unused tomb that was in a garden, ⁴² since this tomb was nearby, and it was the Jewish day of Preparation.

Chapter 20

¹ Then on the first day of the week (Sunday), Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early while it was still dark, and she noticed that the stone had already been moved away. ² So she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple (the one whom Jesus cared for) and told them: 'They've taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they've put him!'

³ Then Peter and the other disciple went to the tomb... ⁴ the two started running together, but the other disciple out-ran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ And bending over, he saw the wrappings lying there, but he didn't go inside.

⁶ Then Simon Peter came following him, and he went into the tomb. There he saw the wrappings just lying there, ⁷ but the cloth that had been on his head wasn't with the wrappings... it was rolled up and laid in another spot. ⁸ Then the other disciple (the one who had reached the tomb first) also went in... and he saw... and he believed.

⁹ However, since they still didn't understand the scripture that spoke of how [Jesus] was to be resurrected from the dead, ¹⁰ they just returned to the [place where they were staying].

¹¹ Meanwhile, Mary was standing outside the tomb crying. Then, as she was crying, she stooped over to look inside the tomb, ¹² and she saw two [of God's] messengers dressed in white; one was sitting at the head and the other at the feet of where the body of Jesus had been lying. ¹³ And they asked her: 'Woman; why are you crying?'

And she replied: 'They've taken my Lord away and I don't know where they've laid him.'

¹⁴ Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there (but she didn't recognize [him]). ¹⁵ And Jesus asked: 'Woman; why are you crying... who is it that you're looking for?'

And she, thinking that he was the caretaker, said: 'Lord, if you've carried him off, tell me where you've laid him and I'll take him away.'

¹⁶ Then Jesus said: 'Mary!' And when she turned around, she said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabboni (My

Teacher)!'

¹⁷ And Jesus said to her: 'Don't cling to me, because I haven't ascended to the Father yet. But go to my brothers and tell them that I'm ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'

¹⁸ Well at this, Mary of Magdala went and carried the news to the disciples saying, 'I have seen the Lord!' And [then she told them] what he said.

¹⁹ So late that evening, although the doors were locked at the place where the disciples were (for fear of the Judeans), Jesus came and stood in their midst and said, 'May you have peace.'²⁰ Then after he said this, he showed them his hands and his side, and the disciples rejoiced at seeing the Lord.²¹ And once again Jesus said, 'May you have peace.' Then he continued, 'In the same way that the Father sent me, I am now sending you.'²² And after he said this, he blew on them, saying, 'Receive the Holy Breath.'²³ From now on, if you forgive anyone's sins, they will remain forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they won't be forgiven.'

²⁴ However, Thomas (one of the twelve, who was called *the Twin*) wasn't with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So when the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord,' he said, 'I won't believe it unless I see the print of the nails in his hands and stick my finger in them, and stick my hand into his side!'

²⁶ Well, eight days later, his disciples were gathered inside... and this time Thomas was with them. Then Jesus came again and stood in their midst (although the doors were locked) and he said, 'May you have peace.'²⁷ And he said to Thomas: 'Now, put your finger here... and look at my hands, then take your hand and stick it into my side... stop doubting and start believing!'

²⁸ Well at that, Thomas said: 'My Lord and my God!'

²⁹ And Jesus said: 'Do you believe because you've seen me? It's those who haven't seen and still believe that are blest.'

³⁰ Well, it's a fact that Jesus performed many other signs before his disciples, which I haven't written about in this scroll.³¹ However, I've written these things so you can believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Son of God... and that by believing, you may also gain life through his name.

Chapter 21

¹ Well after that, Jesus showed himself to the disciples again at the Sea of Tiberius, and this is how he did it:² There was Simon (Peter), Thomas (the Twin), NathaniEl ([BarTholomew]) from Cana of Galilee, the sons of ZebediOu, and two other disciples;³ for Simon Peter had told them that he was going fishing, and they told him that they wanted to come along. So they all went out and got into the boat. However, they didn't catch anything all night long.

⁴ Then, just as it was starting to get light, there was Jesus standing on the beach... but the disciples didn't recognize him.⁵ And Jesus shouted, 'Children; You don't have anything to eat, do you?'

And they answered, 'No!'

⁶ So he said, 'Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you'll find some!'

Then they threw the net out, but they weren't able to bring it back in, because there were too many fish.⁷ And at that, the disciple whom Jesus used to love said to Peter: 'It's the Lord!'

And when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he slipped on his robe (because he was naked) and dove into the sea. ⁸ However, the rest of the disciples followed him in on the boat, dragging along their net full of fish, because they weren't very far from land (only about three hundred feet). ⁹ And when they reached the shore, they noticed a charcoal fire with fish and bread lying on it. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said: 'Bring some of those fish you just caught.'

¹¹ So Simon Peter pulled the net to land, and he found it was filled with a hundred and fifty-three large fish. But despite the fact that there were so many, the net didn't rip.

¹² Then Jesus said: 'Come and get your breakfast.' However, none of the disciples had enough courage to ask him who he was, because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ So Jesus went over and handed each of them some bread and some fish ¹⁴ (this was the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he had been raised from the dead).

¹⁵ Well, following breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter: 'Simon, son of Jonah; Do you love me more than these [fish]?'

And he replied, 'Yes Lord; You know how much I care for you!'

Then [Jesus] said, 'Feed my lambs!'

¹⁶ A second time [Jesus] asked, 'Simon, son of Jonah; Do you love me?'

And he said, 'Yes Lord, you know how much I care for you!'

And he said, 'Shepherd my sheep!'

¹⁷ Then he asked a third time: 'Simon, son of Jonah; Do you care for me?'

Well, Peter was hurt when he asked the third time, 'Do you care for me?' So he said, 'Lord, you know everything... and you know how much I care for you!'

Then Jesus said to him: 'Feed my sheep!'

¹⁸ 'I tell you the truth; When you were young, you used to wrap your clothes around you and walk wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will wrap you up and take you where you don't wish to go' ¹⁹ (he said this to show [Peter] the type of death he would [die, to] glorify God). And after that, he said, 'Keep on following me!'

²⁰ Well, when he turned around, Peter saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them (the one who had leaned back on [Jesus'] chest after supper and asked him, 'Lord, who will betray you?'). ²¹ And upon seeing him, Peter asked Jesus: 'Lord, what about him?'

²² And Jesus answered: 'If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you? You just keep on following me!' ²³ But because of that, word was spread among the brothers that this disciple wouldn't die. However, Jesus didn't say that he wouldn't die, he just said, 'If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you?'

²⁴ This is the same disciple who is now testifying and writing about these things, and you should know

that the testimony he is providing is the truth.

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Acts

Written in Greek by Paul's traveling companion, Luke the Physician, about 64-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ O Theophilus; This is the first account that I've assembled about all the things that Jesus did and taught ² from the day that he gave his instructions to the Apostles whom he chose by Holy Breath after he'd been raised [from the dead]... ³ yes, those to whom he showed himself after his suffering and to whom he provided many proofs during the forty days that they saw him, and during which he spoke to them about things concerning the Kingdom of God.

⁴ When they were assembled with him, he gave them this order: 'Don't leave JeruSalem, but keep awaiting the promise that was spoken by the Father and which you heard from me. ⁵ Indeed, John baptized you with water; however, in just a few days you will be baptized in Holy Breath.'

⁶ Then, when they all met with him, they asked: 'Lord, are you going to restore the Kingdom to IsraEl now?'

⁷ But he said: 'It isn't your business to know the times and periods over which the Father is in charge. ⁸ However, you will receive power when the Holy Breath comes over you, and you'll be witnesses of me in JeruSalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth.'

⁹ Well, after he said these things; as they were looking at him, a cloud hid him from their eyes. ¹⁰ Then as they were staring into the sky watching him go, {Look!} two men in white clothes stood beside them and said: ¹¹ 'Men of Galilee; Why are you standing there looking up into the sky? This Jesus who was taken from you into the sky will return in the same way that you saw him ascending into the sky.'

¹² And thereafter, they returned to JeruSalem from that hill called 'the Mount of Olives,' which is close to JeruSalem (the [maximum] legal distance for travel on a Sabbath). ¹³ And when they entered [the city], they all went to the upper room where they (Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, BarTholomew, Matthew, James [the son] of AlphaEus, Simon the zealous one, and Judas [the son] of James) were staying. ¹⁴ And they were all one of mind and purpose as they continued praying, along with some women who had come there with Jesus' mother Mary and his brothers.

¹⁵ It was at this time that Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers (about a hundred and twenty people in all) and said: ¹⁶ 'Men! Brothers! The scripture had to be fulfilled, which through [God's] Holy Breath foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas (the man who guided those who arrested Jesus, ¹⁷ who used to be one of us in sharing in this service, ¹⁸ and whose wicked wage was paid to purchase that field into the middle of which he fell headfirst and burst, causing his intestines to pour out, ¹⁹ and which field has become known to everyone living in JeruSalem to this day as Akel Dama – the Field of Blood), ²⁰ that this was written in the scroll of the Psalms:

Let his estate just lie empty;

And may no one else ever live there.

Then, let another take his position.

²¹ Therefore, we have this obligation: One of the men who has been with us since the time that the Lord Jesus entered among us until the time that he left us ²² (starting with his baptism by John until the day that he was taken up from us and someone who witnessed his resurrection) should become one of us.'

²³ So they asked the two to stand up... JoSeph (who is called BarSabbas and was surnamed Justus)

and MatThias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, saying: 'O Jehovah, You who know the hearts of men; show us which of these two You've chosen ²⁵ to receive the position of Apostleship that Judas abandoned so he could go his own way.'

²⁶ Then they gave them both lots, and the selected lot fell to MatThias. As the result, he was considered as being with the other eleven Apostles.

Chapter 2

¹ Now, toward the end of the day of Pentecost, while they were all observing that celebration, ² there was a noise that suddenly came from the sky. It sounded like a violent wind and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which were distributed so that one sat upon each of them, ⁴ and they all became filled with Holy Breath and started speaking different languages, saying whatever the Breath was telling them to say.

⁵ Now at the time, there were reverent Jews from every nation under the sky that were staying in JeruSalem. ⁶ So when this sound happened, a huge crowd gathered and they were all bewildered, because they each heard one of [the disciples] speaking his own language. ⁷ They were astonished and started to wonder and say, 'These people who are talking are all Galileans, aren't they?' ⁸ So how is it that we're each hearing our own native tongue being spoken?

⁹ [Well, there were] Parthinians, Medes, Elamites, MesoPotamians, Judeans, CappaDocians, [and people from] Pontus, Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia, PamPhylia, Egypt, parts of Libya Cyrene, travelers from Rome (Jews and proselytes), ¹¹ Cretans, and Arabians. [They said]: 'We hear them talking about the wonderful things of God in our own language!' ¹² Yes, they were all astonished and confused, and they asked each other, 'What's this all about?' ¹³ However, others joked about them saying, 'They're full of sweet wine!'

¹⁴ But Peter stood up beside the eleven, raised his voice, and told them this: 'Men of Judea and all you who live in JeruSalem; I want you to know something... listen to what I'm saying to you! ¹⁵ They really aren't drunk as you think, because it's only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ What's happening is the thing that was said through the Prophet Joel. ¹⁷ For God said:

*'In the last days, says The God;
Upon all flesh, I'll pour out My Breath,
And your sons and daughters will all prophesy...
Your young men will also have visions,
And the old among you will [see things in] dreams.*

¹⁸ *'Yes, even upon My male servants,
And upon My handmaidens;
In those days, I will pour out My Breath, And they will all prophesy.*

¹⁹ *'From the skies above, I'll send omens and signs,
With blood, fire, and smoke to the earth down below,
²⁰ Before the great, shining day of the Lord.*

*'For the sun will be changed into darkness,
And the moon will be changed into blood.*

²¹ *Then, all will be saved who call on the name of the Lord.'*

²² 'Men of IsraEl; listen to these words! Jesus the Nazarene was a man who was shown to you by God with power, omens, and signs that God performed through him in your midst, as you already know. ²³ Yet, you handed this man (who received his advice and his ability to see the future from God) over to men who didn't have the Law, and you nailed him up. ²⁴ But God resurrected him, freeing him from the cords of death, because it wasn't possible for [death] to hold him. ²⁵ Why, David said this about him:

*'I've always put Jehovah before me.
And since He is at my right hand,
I will never be shaken.*

²⁶ *'So, in my heart, I am cheerful,
And with my tongue, I'll rejoice;
For my body finds rest in the hope,
²⁷ That in the grave, You'll not leave me,
And Your loyal one will not see decay.*

²⁸ *'For the ways of life, You have shown me,
And You'll fill me with joy from Your face.'*

²⁹ 'Men! Brothers! It's good to speak to you openly about the patriarch David; for he died, was buried, and his tomb is still with us to this day. ³⁰ Yet, he was a Prophet, and he knew that God had sworn an oath to him that He would put someone on his throne who was the fruit of his loins. ³¹ So [David] looked into the future and spoke about the resurrection of the Anointed One... that he wouldn't be abandoned in the grave and that his flesh wouldn't see decay.

³² 'Now this Jesus has been resurrected by God (to which we are all witnesses), ³³ and he was elevated to God's right hand, where he received the Holy Breath that the Father had promised. And he's the one who has poured out all of this that you're seeing and hearing!

³⁴ 'And although David didn't go to heaven, he said this:

*'Jehovah said this to my Lord;
Sit here at My right hand,
³⁵ 'Til I set your enemies as a stool for your feet.*

³⁶ 'So let the entire House of IsraEl know for sure that God appointed this Jesus whom you impaled as the Lord and His Anointed!

³⁷ Well when they heard this, they were stabbed to the heart, and they said to Peter and the other Apostles: 'Men! Brothers! What must we do?'

³⁸ Then Peter told them: 'Repent, and each of you get baptized in the name of Jesus the Anointed One, so your sins can be forgiven... and then you'll receive the gift of the Holy Breath. ³⁹ That's a promise to you, to your children, and to all those who are far away... to all those who will be called by our God Jehovah!'

⁴⁰ Well, he went on and testified to them a lot more, giving them this advice: 'Get saved from this crooked generation!'

⁴¹ Then those who welcomed his words were baptized... and about three-thousand people were added that day. ⁴² These continued to attend, listening to the Apostles as they were teaching (although they all participated), and sharing in meals and prayers. ⁴³ Why, everyone there was in awe over the many signs and omens that were happening through the Apostles.

⁴⁴ Thereafter, all who became believers started sharing everything they had. ⁴⁵ Why, they even sold their belongings and properties and distributed the proceeds to anyone who was in need. ⁴⁶ In addition, they also agreed to go to the Temple every day, and afterward they would eat their meals in private homes... eating the food happily and with sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and finding favor with everyone. And all the while, the Lord kept adding the newly-saved to them each day.

Chapter 3

¹ Now, Peter and John had gone to the Temple for the hour of prayer (the ninth hour), ² and a man was there who had been lame from birth and had to be carried and placed near the Temple gate (the one called Beautiful) every day, to beg from those who were entering the Temple. ³ And when he saw Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he started begging from them. ⁴ But Peter and John stared at him and said: 'Look at us!'

⁵ So he looked at them, expecting to get something.

⁶ Then Peter said: 'I don't have any silver or gold, but I'll give you what I do have... in the name of Jesus the Nazarene, the Anointed One, walk!'

⁷ Then he took him by the right hand and lifted him; and instantly, the soles of his feet and his anklebones were made well. ⁸ So he jumped up and stood... and then he started walking! So he entered the Temple with them, walking, jumping, and praising God.

⁹ Well, everyone noticed him walking around and praising God, ¹⁰ and they started to realize that this was the man who used to sit and beg at the Temple's Beautiful Gate. This astonished them and they were all delighted by what had happened to him. ¹¹ So, as the man was holding onto Peter and John near what was called The Columns of Solomon, all the people came running to them, surprised out of their wits. ¹² And when Peter saw this, he said: 'Men of IsraEl; Why are you surprised at this, and why are you staring at us as though we made him walk by our own power or devotion?' ¹³ The God of AbraHam, IsaAc, and Jacob – the God of our ancestors – has glorified His servant Jesus, whom you betrayed and disowned before the face of Pilate, after he had actually decided to release him. ¹⁴ Yes, you disowned that holy and righteous man, and you asked [Pilate] to release a man who was a murderer... ¹⁵ so you killed the Prince of Life! However, God thereafter raised him from the dead, which we all witnessed! ¹⁶ And it is because of [our] faith in his name that this man here – whom you see and know – was made well... yes, it's because of faith that everything you see has happened!

¹⁷ 'And now brothers; I know that what you did was done in ignorance... which was also true of your rulers. ¹⁸ But (just as it was foretold by the mouths of all the Prophets), it was God who caused His Anointed One to endure this, so that it could be fulfilled this way.

¹⁹ 'So now, repent and turn around to get your sins erased, and that you might see a period of refreshment from Jehovah. ²⁰ Then He will send this one whom He appointed – the Anointed Jesus. ²¹ However, he must remain in the heavens until the time when everything that God told us through the mouths of the holy [ones] in His age of the Prophets is restored. ²² In fact, it was Moses who said, *Jehovah God will raise a Prophet like me from among your brothers, and you must listen to everything that he tells you.* ²³ *Then if the people don't listen to that Prophet, they'll all be destroyed!*

²⁴ 'Why, all the Prophets from SamuEl on – everyone who spoke – clearly talked about these days. ²⁵ And you are the sons of the Prophets and of the Sacred Agreement that God made with your ancestors, when he told AbraHam: *All the families of the earth will be blest by your seed!*

²⁶ Therefore, God raised this servant and sent him to you first as a blessing to you, so that each of you might turn from the bad things that you're doing.'

Chapter 4

¹ Well, as Peter and John were talking to the people, the Chief Priests, the Temple captains, and the SadDucees came up, ² and they were very annoyed by the fact that [Peter and John] were teaching the people and telling them how Jesus had been resurrected from the dead. ³ So they had them arrested and held until the next day (since it was already evening). ⁴ However, many of those who listened to the speech believed, and their numbers grew to about five thousand men.

⁵ Then the next day, there was a meeting held in JeruSalem that included the rulers, elders, and scribes, ⁶ along with AnNas the Chief Priest, CaiAphas, John, Alexander, and all the rest of the Chief Priest's relatives. ⁷ Then they stood [Peter and John] in their midst and asked: 'Who is it that told you and gave you the authority to do these things?'

⁸ So Peter, filled with Holy Breath, said to them: 'Rulers of the people and elders; ⁹ If we are being questioned today simply because [we] did a good deed for a handicapped person, and if we are being asked who made him well; ¹⁰ then you and all the people of IsraEl should know that it was done in the name of Jesus of Nazareth... the Anointed One whom you hung on a pole. For God raised him from the dead and he actually stood next to this man whom you now see here, healthy! ¹¹ Yes, this is *the stone that was rejected* by you builders, but who has become the head of the corner! ¹² Why, salvation doesn't come from anyone else, because there isn't another name that has been given to any man under the heavens that can save us.'

¹³ And when they saw the confidence of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and common, everyone was amazed. Then they started to recognize them and remember that these men used to be with Jesus. ¹⁴ However, as they looked at the man standing next to them who had been cured, they couldn't come up with anything to say. ¹⁵ So they sent them outside of the Jewish High-Court hall as they discussed the matter. ¹⁶ And they said, 'What will we do with them, for it's a fact that a sign has come through them... and everyone in JeruSalem saw it, so we can't deny it! ¹⁷ Therefore, to keep this from being spread around among the people, let's threaten them and tell them not to speak to anyone about this name ever again!'

¹⁸ So thereafter, they called them back in and warned them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus anywhere. ¹⁹ However, Peter and John replied: 'If it's righteous in God's eyes to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. ²⁰ But we can't stop talking about the things that we've seen and heard!'

²¹ So after they threatened them a little more, they let them go, because they couldn't find any reason to punish them. [They also chose to do nothing] on account of the people, since they were all praising God over what had happened... ²² for the man who was healed was more than forty years old!

²³ Well, after they were released, [Peter and John] returned to their [brothers] and reported what the Chief Priests and elders had told them. ²⁴ And on hearing this, they all raised their voices to God together and said: 'O our only King... You who made the lands, the skies, the seas, and everything in

them.²⁵ Through Your Breath, You asked by the mouth of our father David (Your servant):

Why are the nations so noisy,

And why do the people think foolish things?

²⁶ Yet, all the kings and rulers of the land have now united against You and against Your Anointed!²⁷ For a fact; both Herod and Pontius Pilate (these gentiles) have joined with the people of IsraEl in this city against Your Holy servant Jesus, whom You chose²⁸ to do the things that Your hands and directions commanded.

²⁹ 'So, O Lord; Pay attention to their threats and allow Your slaves to keep on speaking Your Word in full confidence,³⁰ while You stretch out Your hand to do healing, and while signs and omens continue to happen in the name of Your Holy Servant, Jesus.'

³¹ Well, as they were asking God for this, the place where they were meeting started to shake. Then everyone was filled with the Holy Breath and they started speaking the word of God confidently.³² As the result, a huge crowd became believers, and they shared [everything, as though having] a single heart and soul. None of them claimed that anything they had was their own, for they shared everything...³³ and all the while, the Apostles continued to give a powerful testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as a great manifestation of loving-kindness came over them all.³⁴ In fact, nobody could be described as being needy among them, because all those who owned fields or houses sold them and brought back the money from the things that they sold,³⁵ laying it at the feet of the Apostles. Then everything was distributed among them according to each one's needs.

³⁶ Well JoSeph (whom the Apostles called BarNabas... which translates as *Son of Comfort*), who was a Levite and a native of Cyprus,³⁷ sold a piece of land that he owned and brought in the money, laying it at the feet of the Apostles.

Chapter 5

¹ However, a man named AnaNias (along with his wife SapPhira) also sold some property that they owned,² but he secretly kept part of the money... and his wife also knew about this. Then he brought in part of it and laid it at the feet of the Apostles.

³ But Peter asked: 'AnaNias; Why has the Opposer made you so bold as to try to fool the Holy Breath and to secretly hold back some of the money for the field?'⁴ As long you owned it, it was yours. And after you sold it, wasn't the money still yours? So, why did you plan to do such a thing in your heart? You should realize that you weren't lying to men, but to God!'

⁵ And as he heard those words, AnaNias fell to the ground and died, which really frightened everyone who heard about it.⁶ Then some of the younger men got up and wrapped him in a cloth, and they carried him outside to be buried.

⁷ Well, it was about three hours later that his wife came in, and she didn't know what had happened.⁸ So Peter asked her: 'Tell me; Did you sell the field for (so much)?'

And she answered, 'Yes, for (so much).'

⁹ Then Peter said: 'Why did you agree between [the two of] you to test the Spirit of the Lord? Why look! The feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they'll carry you out also.'¹⁰ And at that, she instantly dropped dead at his feet. So when the young men returned, they also found her dead and carried her out to be buried her next to her husband.¹¹ And after the whole gathering (and everyone else) had heard about this, they were frightened by all that had happened.

¹² Thereafter, many signs and omens continued to be performed among the people at the hands of the Apostles, who used to meet among the Columns of Solomon. ¹³ It's true that no one else had enough courage to join them there; but the people spoke well of them, ¹⁴ and large numbers of men and women kept on being added to those who believed in the Lord.

¹⁵ [Why, people] even brought their sick out into the main streets and laid them on little beds and cots, so that as Peter passed by, his shadow could fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Also, throngs from the cities around JeruSalem kept coming, carrying sick people and those who were bothered by unclean spirits... and everyone was cured!

¹⁷ However, the High Priest and all those who were with him (particularly those of the sect of SadDucees) became very jealous. ¹⁸ So they attacked the Apostles and arrested them, then they locked them up in a public jail. ¹⁹ But during the night, Jehovah's messenger opened the doors of the jail and brought them out, saying: ²⁰ 'Now, go and keep on standing in the Temple, telling the people everything about The Life.'

²¹ So after they heard this, they returned to the Temple at daybreak and started teaching again.

Well, when the High Priest and those who were with him finally arrived, they assembled the Jewish High Court along with all the elders of the sons of IsraEl. Then they sent [officers] to the jail to have [the Apostles] brought in. ²² But when the officers got there, they didn't find them in the lockup; so they reported back, ²³ saying: 'We found the jail locked and guards posted at the doors. But when we opened it, we didn't find anyone inside!'

²⁴ And when the Temple captain and the Chief Priests heard this, they were confused and wondered what had happened.

²⁵ Then someone came and reported: 'Look! The men whom you put in jail are standing in the Temple teaching the people!' ²⁶ So the captain took his officers and brought them back peacefully (because they were afraid of being stoned by the people). ²⁷ Then they led them in and stood them in the Jewish High Court hall, where the High Priest questioned them and said: ²⁸ 'Though we ordered you not to teach about this name, {Look!} you've filled JeruSalem with your teachings and you're determined to bring the blood of this man upon us!'

²⁹ So Peter and the Apostles replied: 'We must obey God as ruler rather than men! ³⁰ For it was the God of our fathers who raised this Jesus whom you arrested and hung on a tree. ³¹ Then God raised him to His right hand to be the Primary Leader and Savior... and to cause IsraEl to repent, so He could forgive their sins! ³² We are witnesses to these things, as is the Holy Breath that God gave to those who are obeying Him as their ruler.'

³³ Well, when [the leaders] heard this, they were really cut to heart and they wanted to murder [the Apostles]. ³⁴ But a certain man stood up in the Jewish High Court (a Pharisee named GamaliEl, a teacher of the Law who was highly regarded by everyone) and commanded that the men be taken outside for a little while. ³⁵ Then he said: 'Men of IsraEl; Be very careful about what you plan to do with these men. ³⁶ Do you remember when TheuDas came along saying that he was somebody important, and quite a few men (about four hundred of them) followed him? Yet he was done away with, and all those who listened to him were scattered and came to nothing. ³⁷ And after him, Judas the Galilean arose during the registration, and he drew people after him. But then he died, and everyone who listened to him was scattered. ³⁸ So in this situation, I tell you not to mess with these men... leave

them alone! Because, if the thing they're doing is from men, it will be overthrown. ³⁹ But if it's from God, you won't be able to overthrow them and you'll actually be fighting against God!

⁴⁰ Well, they all agreed with him; so they called the Apostles back in, had them whipped, and ordered them to stop talking about the name of Jesus... then they let them go.

⁴¹ And as they were leaving the Jewish High Court, they were rejoicing because they had been found worthy of being dishonored for [Jesus'] name. ⁴² And they didn't stop... they kept on teaching and announcing the good news about Jesus the Anointed One every day, both in the Temple and in private homes.

Chapter 6

¹ Now, back in those days when the disciples were increasing, the Greek-speaking Jews started grumbling about the Hebrew-speaking Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. ² As the result, the twelve called all the disciples to them and said: 'The thought of our having to abandon the word of God to serve tables is displeasing to us. ³ So brothers; find seven qualified males among you who are filled with wisdom and the Breath [of God]. Then we'll appoint them to handle these needs, ⁴ so we can continue in our prayers and in serving the Word.'

⁵ Well, what they suggested sounded good to the whole group; so they selected Stephen (a man who was filled with faith and Holy Breath), as well as Philip, ProChorus, NiCanor, Timon, ParMenas, and NicoLaus (a proselyte from AntiOch). ⁶ Then they took them before the Apostles, who prayed over them and laid their hands on them.

⁷ Thereafter, the Word of God kept spreading and the number of disciples in JeruSalem kept multiplying. Why, even a large number of Priests started obeying the faith.

⁸ Now, Stephen was filled with joy and power, and he was performing great omens and signs among the people. ⁹ But certain men came from the so-called Synagogue of Freed Men (along with some Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Kilikians, and [people from the province of] Asia) started arguing with Stephen. ¹⁰ And because their arguments couldn't stand against the wisdom and Breath [of God] (with which he was speaking), ¹¹ they talked some men into saying that they'd heard him say blasphemous things against Moses and God, ¹² which stirred up the people. So some of the elders and scribes came and arrested him, then they dragged him up before the Jewish High Court, ¹³ where they produced some false witnesses who said, 'This man is speaking against this Holy Place and against the Law! ¹⁴ Why, we heard him say that Jesus the Nazarene will tear this place down and change the customs that were given to us by Moses!'

¹⁵ Then, as all those who were sitting in the Jewish High Court were looking at him, they saw his face become like that of a messenger [of God].

Chapter 7

¹ And at that, the High Priest asked him, 'Is all of this true?'

² Then [Stephen] said: 'Men... Brothers... Fathers... Listen! Our father AbraHam saw the Glorious God while he was in MesoPotamia, before he moved to Haran. ³ And [God] said to him, *Leave your land and your relatives and come to the land that I'm going to show you.* ⁴ So he went to the land of the Chaldeans and started living in Haran.

'Well, after his father died, [God] caused him to move to the land where you now live. ⁵ However, He didn't give him any land that could be inherited... not a foot's width. But [God] promised him property that he could own and pass on to his seed... even though he didn't have any children. ⁶ Then God told him that his seed would live in a foreign land where they would be slaves and be oppressed for four hundred years. ⁷ And God said, *I will pass judgment on the nation [that made them] slaves... and then they will come here and serve Me.* ⁸ So he made a Sacred Agreement with him [that required] circumcision. Thereafter, [AbraHam] went on to father IsaAc, whom he circumcised on the eighth day... as IsaAc did to Jacob, and Jacob did to the twelve family heads.

⁹ 'However, these family heads soon became jealous of [their brother] JoSeph, and they sold him into Egypt. ¹⁰ But God was with him and He carried him through all of his problems. Then He made him likable and wise in the eyes of PharaOh, the king of Egypt. So [PharaOh] appointed [JoSeph] to govern Egypt and his entire house.

¹¹ 'Then a famine came upon Egypt and CanaAn, which created such a difficult time that our ancestors couldn't find any food. ¹² But Jacob heard there was grain in Egypt, so he sent our ancestors there for the first time. ¹³ Then on the second visit, JoSeph made himself known to his brothers... which was when JoSeph's ethnic background became known to PharaOh.

¹⁴ 'Thereafter, JoSeph sent for his father Jacob and all of his relatives (seventy-five people); ¹⁵ and Jacob went down to Egypt, where he died, as did the rest of our ancestors... ¹⁶ and their bodies were taken to Shechem, where they were laid in the tomb that AbraHam had purchased with silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷ 'Well, by the time that the promise God gave to AbraHam reached its fulfillment, the people had grown and multiplied in Egypt, ¹⁸ and another king had arisen to rule over Egypt who was unfamiliar with JoSeph. ¹⁹ He treated our people treacherously and forced our fathers to give up their young children to be killed. ²⁰ Well, that's when Moses was born. He was beautiful to God, and he nursed for three months in [his] father's home. ²¹ But when he was discovered, the daughter of PharaOh picked him up and raised him as her own son. ²² So, this is how Moses came to be trained in the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he grew up to become mighty in everything that he said and did.

²³ 'Then, when he turned forty years old, [Moses] decided to pay more attention to his brothers, the sons of IsraEl. ²⁴ And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, [Moses] came to his defense and took vengeance on behalf of the one who was being abused, by beating an Egyptian to death.

²⁵ 'Well, he assumed that his brothers would understand that God was going to use him to save them... however, they didn't understand. ²⁶ So when he came to [his people] the next day and found [two of them] fighting; he tried to bring them together peacefully by saying, *Men... you are brothers! So, why are you treating each other so badly?* And at that, the one who was mistreating his neighbor just pushed him away and asked, *Who appointed you as ruler and judge over us?* ²⁸ *Do you want to kill me the same as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?* ²⁹ And when Moses heard him say this, he ran away and lived in the land of Midian, where he fathered two sons.

³⁰ 'Well, after forty more years, a messenger [from God] appeared to him in the flames of a burning thorn bush while he was in the desert near Mount Sinai. ³¹ And when Moses saw it, he was dazzled by the sight. But as he came closer to investigate, the voice of the Lord said, ³² *I am the God of your fathers... the God of AbraHam, IsaAc, and Jacob.*

'Well, Moses started to shake so hard that he didn't want to investigate any further. ³³ Then the Lord

said to him: *Remove your sandals; for the place where you're standing is holy ground!* ³⁴ Now, I've seen the bad treatment of My people in Egypt and I've heard their groaning, so I've come down to take them. Come, for I'm going to send you to Egypt! ³⁵ Yet this was the same Moses that [the IsraElites] had previously disowned, asking, *Who appointed you as our ruler and judge?* However, he's the one that God sent off as both a ruler and savior by the hand of the messenger who had appeared to him in the thorn bush. ³⁶ Then, after he had performed omens and signs, he's also the man who led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the desert for forty years.

³⁷ 'Yes, this is the same Moses who told the sons of IsraEl: *God will raise a Prophet like me from among your brothers.* ³⁸ He's the one who was with the congregation in the desert, who talked to [God's] messenger on Mount Sinai, and who received life-giving signs for our ancestors so that we might receive them! ³⁹ Yet, our ancestors refused to obey him... they just pushed him aside, and in their hearts they were back in Egypt! ⁴⁰ So they told Aaron: *Make gods to lead us, because we don't know what has happened to this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt!*

⁴¹ 'Well thereafter, [Aaron] made [an image of] a calf and they offered sacrifices to the idol... for they were very happy with this thing that they'd made with their hands! ⁴² So God handed them over to bow before the [stars] in the skies, just as it's written in the Book of the Prophets: *It wasn't to Me that you offered victims and sacrifices for forty years in the desert, was it, O house of IsraEl?* ⁴³ *Rather, you took up with the images that you made for worship in the tent of Moloch, and with the star of the god Rephan. So, [now] I'm going to exile you beyond Babylon!*

⁴⁴ 'Why, our ancestors had the Tent of Proofs [when they lived] in the desert, which He had ordered Moses to build using the pattern that he was shown. ⁴⁵ And our ancestors who received it (as they came here with JoShua), brought it into the land that was owned by the nations which God had pushed out ahead of them... and it remained here until the time of David!

⁴⁶ 'Then [David] found God's favor and he asked that [he be allowed] to provide a Temple for the God of Jacob... ⁴⁷ although it was Solomon who actually built the House for him. ⁴⁸ Yet, the Most High doesn't live in houses made with hands, just as the Prophet foretold. ⁴⁹ For Jehovah said:
*The heavens are My throne and the earth is My footstool;
So, what kind of House can you build Me,
And in what sort of place should I rest,*
⁵⁰ *Since all of these things were made by My hands?'*

⁵¹ 'So, O you with the hardened necks and uncircumcised hearts and ears... you've now become just like your ancestors. For you're always resisting [God's] Holy Breath! ⁵² Why, which of the Prophets didn't your ancestors persecute? They killed [many of] those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One... and now you've become the betrayers and murderers of him also! ⁵³ So although you were the ones who received the Law that was brought by the messengers [of God], you haven't kept it!'

⁵⁴ Well, when they heard this, they were really cut down and they were grinding their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But as he was being filled with Holy Breath, he stared into the sky and saw the Glory of God, with Jesus standing at His right hand! ⁵⁶ So he said: 'Look! I see the sky opened, and there's the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!'

⁵⁷ Well at this, they all started shouting as loudly as they could and putting their hands over their ears. So they ran up to him and grabbed him; ⁵⁸ then they took him outside of the city where they started stoning him... as those who came to watch laid their capes at the feet of a young man called Saul.

⁵⁹ And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed this: 'Lord Jesus; Receive my breath.' ⁶⁰ Then he got down on his knees and shouted loudly: 'Lord, don't hold this sin against them!' And with that, he fell asleep [in death].

Chapter 8

¹ Well, Saul approved of murdering him.

Then on that same day, a tremendous amount of persecution started to be directed toward the congregation in JeruSalem, and all except the Apostles were scattered throughout the area of Judea and Samaria. ² However, devoted men carried Stephen out to be buried and they wept bitterly over him.

³ [This is when] Saul started wiping out the congregation [in JeruSalem]; for he invaded one house after another, dragging out both the men and the women and sending them to prison. ⁴ However, those who had been scattered just kept on preaching the good news of the Word wherever they went.

⁵ Well, Philip had gone to a city in Samaria, where he preached to them about the Anointed One. ⁶ And there, crowds of people paid attention to the things that Philip was saying, listening closely and watching the signs he performed. ⁷ For many who were there had been bothered by unclean spirits, which shouted loudly as they came out; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured. ⁸ As the result, there was a lot of joy in that city.

⁹ Now, there was a man named Simon who lived in the city that used to practice magic. He amazed the people of Samaria and he called himself, [*Simon*] *the Great*. ¹⁰ Why, everyone (from the common people to the most powerful) paid attention to him and said, 'This man who calls himself *The Great* is the Power of God!' ¹¹ So they followed him for a long time, because they were dazzled by his magic. ¹² But when Philip came preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God and about the name of Jesus the Anointed One, they started believing him; so, many men and women were baptized. ¹³ In fact, even Simon became a believer! Then after he was baptized, he stayed close to Philip and was amazed as he watched the signs and great powers.

¹⁴ Well, when the Apostles in JeruSalem heard that Samaria was starting to accept the Word of God, they sent Peter and John there, ¹⁵ where they prayed for [the believers] to receive the Holy Breath, ¹⁶ since it hadn't come to any of them yet, although they had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then, when [Peter and John] laid their hands on them, they started to receive the Holy Breath.

¹⁸ Now, when Simon saw that the Apostles could give the Breath by just touching someone, he offered them money, saying: ¹⁹ 'Give me the power so that anyone I lay my hands on can receive Holy Breath.'

²⁰ But Peter said: 'May your silver be destroyed along with you! Because you think that you can buy the gift that God gives freely, ²¹ you aren't going to have any part in this, nor will you share in it; for God sees that your heart is crooked! ²² So, turn away from your badness and beg the Lord to forgive you for these thoughts in your heart. ²³ Because, I see bitterness and hate in you, and an unrighteous alliance.'

²⁴ Then Simon said: 'Please beg the Lord on my behalf, so that none of the things you said will happen!'

²⁵ Well, after they had given everyone a thorough testimony and repeated the things that the Lord had

told them, they returned to JeruSalem. And as the result, many Samaritan villages heard the good news.

²⁶ Then the Lord's messenger spoke to Philip, saying: 'Get up and go south to the road that runs through the desert from JeruSalem to Gaza.'

²⁷ And when he got there, {Look!} he found an Ethiopian who held the office of Eunuch of the Treasury under the Kandake (or queen) of the Ethiopians (possibly Amanitore) who had gone to JeruSalem to worship. ²⁸ And as he was returning [home], he was sitting in his chariot reading [a scroll] of the Prophet IsaiAh aloud.

²⁹ So the Breath told Philip: 'Go and catch up with his chariot!' ³⁰ Therefore, Philip started running alongside; and on hearing him reading the Prophet IsaiAh aloud, he asked, 'Do you understand what you're reading?'

³¹ But [the eunuch] replied: 'How could I, unless I had someone to explain it to me?' So he begged Philip to climb aboard and sit with him.

³² Well, the particular scripture he was reading at the time was this:
'He was brought like a sheep to the slaughter.
And as a lamb that's quiet before shearers,
He did not open his mouth.

³³ 'In humiliation, his justice was denied.
So who'll speak of the details to his generation,
After his life is removed from the land?'

³⁴ Then the Eunuch asked Philip: 'Just who was the Prophet saying this about... was he talking about himself or someone else?'

³⁵ So Philip proceeded to explain this scripture, and he told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ Now, as they were traveling along the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'Look... here's some water! What's to prevent me from getting baptized?' ³⁷ ——— ³⁸ So he commanded the chariot [driver] to stop, and Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where he baptized him.

³⁹ Well, after they came out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord sent Philip away quickly; so the eunuch didn't see him anymore... but he continued on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ However, Philip found himself in AshDod. Therefore, he traveled on throughout that area, preaching the good news in all the cities, until he got to Caesarea.

Chapter 9

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing threats and murder against the Lord's disciples. So he went to the High Priest ² and asked him to write letters that he could carry to the synagogues in Damascus, which would empower him to arrest anyone he found that belonged to *The Way* (both men and women) and bring them back to JeruSalem in chains. ³ But as he was getting close to Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed all around him ⁴ and he fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice say, 'Saul; Saul; Why are you persecuting me?'

⁵ And he asked, 'Who are you Lord?'

Then came the answer: 'I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. ⁶ Now, get up and enter the city, and there you'll be told what to do.'

⁷ Well all the while, the men who were traveling with him stood there speechless, because they heard the sound of a voice, but they couldn't see anyone. ⁸ And when Saul got up off the ground; although his eyes were open, he couldn't see. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. ⁹ There he remained blind for three days, and he wouldn't eat or drink anything at all.

¹⁰ Now, in Damascus there was a disciple named AnaNias. Then in a vision, the Lord called out, 'AnaNias!' And he replied, 'Here I am Lord!'

¹¹ Then the Lord said: 'Get up and go to the house of Judas on Straight Street, and look for a man called Saul of Tarsus. Look... he's praying [right now]!' ¹² For in a vision he has seen a man named AnaNias, who will come and lay his hands on him so he can start seeing again.'

¹³ However, AnaNias [objected], saying: 'Lord, I've heard about this man from many people, and of all the bad things he did to your Holy Ones in JeruSalem. ¹⁴ Why, he's been empowered by the Chief Priests to lock up everyone who calls on your name!'

¹⁵ But the Lord replied: 'Go on, because this man is the one I've chosen to carry my name before nations, kings, and the sons of IsraEl. ¹⁶ I will also make sure that he understands all the things he'll have to suffer on account of my name.'

¹⁷ So AnaNias went over to the house and went inside; then he laid his hands on him and said: 'Saul; Brother; The Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here has sent me to restore your sight and to fill you with Holy Breath.'

¹⁸ Well, what looked like scales immediately fell from his eyes and he started to see; and then he got up and was baptized... ¹⁹ after which he started eating again and regaining his strength.

Thereafter, he spent several days there in Damascus with the disciples. ²⁰ And he immediately started preaching in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of The God. ²¹ However, all those who heard him were shocked, and asked: 'Isn't this the man who went ravaging among those who are calling on this name in JeruSalem? And didn't he come here for that same reason... to carry them back in chains to the Chief Priests?'

²² But Saul's power kept growing and he really confused the Jews who lived in Damascus, because he gave them logical proofs that [Jesus] is the Anointed One.

²³ Then after several days, the Jews finally met to discuss ways to get rid of him. ²⁴ However, Saul learned about their plot against him; and because they were watching the city gates closely both day and night so as to arrest him, ²⁵ his disciples came to him one night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

²⁶ Well, when he got to JeruSalem, he tried to join the disciples. However, they were all afraid of him, because they didn't really believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But then BarNabas came to his aid... he took [Saul] to the Apostles and told them what had happened to him on the road, of how he had seen the Lord and spoken to him, and of how he had been boldly teaching in the name of Jesus while he was in Damascus. ²⁸ So thereafter, [Saul] stayed with them, entering and leaving JeruSalem, as he

preached in the name of the Lord.

²⁹ He also talked and argued a lot with the Greek-speaking Jews; but then they also attempted to do away with him. ³⁰ So when the brothers learned about their [plot], they took Paul to Caesarea and sent him on from there to Tarsus.

³¹ Well, there came a period of peace for the congregations of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. So [the brothers] kept walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Breath, as they continued to grow [in numbers].

³² Then as Peter was traveling around, he finally reached the Holy Ones who lived in LydDa. ³³ And there he found a man named AiNean who had spent eight years lying flat on his back on a cot, paralyzed. ³⁴ So Peter said to him: 'AiNean; Jesus the Anointed One heals you. Now, get up and make your bed!' And he immediately got up. ³⁵ Then, when those who lived in LydDa and the area of Sharon saw this man, many started turning to the Lord.

³⁶ Well in JopPa, there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translates as Dorcas), who was well-known for the good things she was doing and for helping others when they were in need. ³⁷ However, one day she got sick and died. So they washed her body and laid her in an upstairs room.

³⁸ Now, LydDa was close to JopPa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him to beg, 'Please hurry and come to us!' ³⁹ And at that, Peter got up and went with them.

Well, when he got [to JopPa], they took him upstairs to the room [where she was laid]. And there, all the widows came to him crying and showing him the many pieces of clothing that Dorcas had made for them while she was with them. ⁴⁰ So after sending everyone outside, Peter got down on his knees and prayed. Then he turned toward the body and said, 'Tabitha; stand again!' And at that, she opened her eyes... and when she saw Peter, she sat up! ⁴¹ So he gave her his hand and stood her [on her feet]; then he called the Holy Ones and widows in, and presented her to them alive. ⁴² And before long, this event became well known throughout JopPa, so many started believing in the Lord.

⁴³ [Peter] thereafter stayed in JopPa for several days, [in the home of] Simon the Tanner.

Chapter 10

¹ Now in Caesarea, there was a man named Cornelius (he was a centurion of the Italian Division), ² who was a devout man. He and his family feared God, praying to Him often, and they regularly helped those who were in need. ³ Well, it was about the ninth hour of the day when he clearly saw a messenger of The God who came to him in a vision and called, 'Cornelius!'

⁴ So he stared at [the messenger] in fright and asked, 'What do you want, Lord?'

And he answered: 'Your prayers and kind gifts have arisen and have been remembered before God. ⁵ So now, send some men to JopPa and call for a man named Simon, who is also known as Peter. ⁶ He's the guest of Simon the Tanner, who has a house by the sea.'

⁷ Well, as soon as the messenger [from God] who spoke to him left, he called two of his house servants and a devout soldier who was staying with him, ⁸ and he told them everything that had happened; then he sent them to JopPa. ⁹ And the next day (as they were on their way and getting close to the city), Peter had gone up on the roof (at about the sixth hour) to pray. ¹⁰ He was also very hungry and he wanted to eat... but then he fell into a trance. ¹¹ And in [a vision], he saw the sky opening and

some sort of container (it looked like a huge linen sheet that was being held at its four corners) coming down to the ground. ¹² Inside it there were all kinds of four-footed animals, things that crawl on the ground, and birds of the sky. ¹³ Then a voice came to him that said: 'Get up, Peter... slaughter [the animals] and eat them!'

¹⁴ But Peter said: 'Not me Lord, because I've never eaten anything that is dirty and unclean!'

¹⁵ And the voice [spoke] to him a second time, saying, 'Stop calling the things that God has made clean, dirty!' ¹⁶ Then it said this two more times, and thereafter the container was immediately taken back into the sky.

¹⁷ Now, Peter was confused about the meaning of this vision. However, the men that were sent by Cornelius were already at Simon's house, standing at the gate and asking for him... ¹⁸ they were calling out and asking whether Simon (who is also called Peter) was a guest there. ¹⁹ And as Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Breath [of God] said: 'Look! Three men are searching for you, ²⁰ so go downstairs and get ready to travel with them... don't worry, because I sent them.'

²¹ Then Peter went downstairs to the men and said: '{Look!} I'm the one you're looking for... why are you here?'

²² And they replied: 'Cornelius, an army officer who is a righteous and God-fearing man that the whole nation of the Jews speak well of, was given Divine instructions by a holy messenger to ask you to come to his house, so he can hear what you have to say.'

²³ Then [Peter] invited them in and offered them some hospitality. And the next day, he got up and went with them (along with some of the brothers from JopPa), ²⁴ arriving at Caesarea the following day.

Of course, Cornelius was expecting them, and he had called for all of his relatives and closest friends.

²⁵ Then as Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet, bowing low. ²⁶ But Peter lifted him up, saying: 'Get up! I'm just a man!'

²⁷ Well, as they were talking, Paul walked inside; and there he found many people already assembled.

²⁸ Then he said to them: 'You know very well how illegal it is for a Jew to associate with or even go near to people of another race. Yet, God has shown me that I shouldn't call any man dirty or unclean.

²⁹ So when I was called for, I came without any objections. But now, let me ask: Why have you sent for me?'

³⁰ Then Cornelius told him: 'Exactly four days ago, I was praying here in my house during the ninth hour, when {Look!} a man in bright clothes came and stood in front of me and said, ³¹ *Cornelius; Your prayers have been heard and your kind gifts have been remembered before God.* ³² *So send to JopPa and ask for Simon, who is also called Peter. He's staying by the sea in the house of Simon the Tanner.* ³³ Well, as the result, I sent for you right away... and it's good that you came. For now we're all assembled here before God to listen to everything that the Lord has commanded you to say.'

³⁴ And Peter said: 'I can see for a fact that God is impartial; ³⁵ for He accepts any man who fears Him and does righteous things, no matter what nation he's from! ³⁶ So He's sending word to the Sons of IsraEl that they must announce the good news of peace through Jesus the Anointed One to [the gentiles] also, for he's the Lord over all!'

³⁷ 'Now, I can see that you've already come to know about this thing that is being proclaimed throughout all of Judea, which started in Galilee after John came preaching about [the need] to get baptized. ³⁸ For thereafter, God anointed Jesus from Nazareth with Holy Breath and power, and he traveled throughout the land doing good things and healing all those who were oppressed by the Slanderer. Yes, God was with him... ³⁹ and we are eye-witnesses to everything that he did in the region of Judea and in JeruSalem!

'However, although they murdered him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ The God raised this one on the third day and allowed him to be seen... ⁴¹ but not to everyone, just to witnesses whom The God had selected ahead of time for us. Why, he appeared to us, and we ate and drank with him after he was resurrected from among the dead. ⁴² Then he ordered us to preach to the people and to testify that he's the one who was chosen by The God to judge the living and the dead, ⁴³ and that he's the one about whom all the Prophets had testified, saying that all who put faith in him will have their sins forgiven through this name!'

⁴⁴ Well, while Peter was still talking about this, the Holy Breath came upon all of those who were listening to what he said. ⁴⁵ And the faithful ones who were there with Peter (all of whom were circumcised) were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Breath was now being poured out on people of the nations... ⁴⁶ for they heard them speaking and glorifying God in different languages!

Then Peter asked: ⁴⁷ 'Can anyone forbid water to baptize these who have received the Holy Breath, the same as we have?'

⁴⁸ So he commanded that they should be baptized in the name of Jesus the Anointed One. And afterward, they asked him to stay with them for several days.

Chapter 11

¹ Soon thereafter, the Apostles and other brothers in Judea heard that people of the nations were also accepting the Word of God. ² So when Peter returned to JeruSalem, the circumcised started arguing with him, ³ complaining that he had gone into the house of uncircumcised men and had eaten with them. ⁴ So Peter explained it this way:

⁵ 'While I was in the city of JopPa, I was praying. And in a trance, I saw a vision of some sort of container coming down from the sky that looked like a huge linen sheet being held by its four corners... it was very clear to me! ⁶ And as I stared at it, I saw four-footed creatures of the ground, wild animals, things that crawl, and birds of the sky. ⁷ Then I heard a voice say to me, *Get up Peter; slaughter [the animals] and eat them!* ⁸ But I said, *Not me Lord, because I've never eaten anything that is dirty and unclean.* ⁹ Then the voice came from the sky a second time, and it told me: *Stop calling things that God has made clean, dirty.* ¹⁰ Well, this happened a third time, and then everything was pulled back up into the sky.

¹¹ 'Then {Look!} at that very moment, there were three men standing outside of the house who had been sent from Caesarea to find me. ¹² And the Spirit told me to go with them and not to doubt. Why, these six brothers here also went with me, and we all entered the man's house together! ¹³ [Well, when we got there, the man] told us how he had seen a messenger [from God] standing in his house, who told him: *Send your men to JopPa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He will tell you what you must do, so that you and your household can get saved.*'

¹⁵ 'But after I started to speak, the Holy Breath fell upon them, the same as it did upon us long ago. ¹⁶ And then I remembered that the Lord used to say, *John baptized in water, but you will be baptized in*

Holy Breath. ¹⁷ So if God gave them the same gifts that he gave to those of us who have believed in the Lord Jesus the Anointed; who am I that I should be strong enough to resist God?'

¹⁸ Well, after they heard this, they quieted down and started glorifying God, saying, 'So then, God has also given gentiles the opportunity for repentance into life!'

¹⁹ Now, those who had been scattered because of the problems that arose over Stephen had traveled as far away as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and AntiOch; and until then they had been spreading the Word just among the Jews. ²⁰ However, some Cypriots and Cyrenians who went to AntiOch started talking to the Greek-speaking [Gentile] peoples, declaring the good news of the Lord Jesus to them. ²¹ And the hand of the Lord was certainly with them, because many of them believed and turned to the Lord. ²² And when news about this reached the ears of the congregation in JeruSalem, they sent BarNabas to AntiOch. ²³ Then when he got there and saw the loving-care that God had shown for these people, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to whole-heartedly stick with the Lord! ²⁴ ([BarNabas] is a good man who is filled with Holy Spirit and faith). So a large number were then added to the Lord.

²⁵ Thereafter, [BarNabas] went on to Tarsus, to find Saul. ²⁶ And when he found him, he brought him back to AntiOch, where they stayed with that congregation for a year and taught many people. (It was in AntiOch that the disciples were by Divine providence, first called Christians).

²⁷ At the time, [brothers with the gift of] prophesying had traveled to AntiOch from JeruSalem. ²⁸ And one of them (named Agabus) stood up and told them (through the Breath [of God]) that a great famine was about to come upon the whole habitation [of mankind] – which did in fact happen in the time of Claudius [Caesar]. ²⁹ So the disciples there decided that each of them would collect relief supplies for the brothers who lived in Judea (as they could afford to) ³⁰ and send them to the elders through BarNabas and Saul.

Chapter 12

¹ This all happened about the same time that King Herod had started persecuting many of those in the congregation [at JeruSalem], ² for he did away with James (John's brother) with a sword. ³ And when he saw how much this pleased the Jews; during the celebration of No Fermentation, he also arrested Peter ⁴ and threw him in jail, assigning four shifts of four soldiers each to guard him, because he planned to put him on [trial] before the people after the Passover.

⁵ Well, while Peter was in jail, the congregation prayed to God intensely on his behalf. ⁶ And the night before Herod planned to produce him, he had Peter bound with two chains, he made him sleep between two soldiers, and he posted guards at the doors. ⁷ But {Look!} the Lord's messenger suddenly appeared, standing before him and creating a light in the cell. Then he tapped Peter on the side and woke him up, saying, 'Get up... Now!' And suddenly the chains just fell off his hands. ⁸ Then the messenger said to him, 'Get dressed and tie your sandals on,' which he did. Then he told him: 'Now, wrap yourself up in your robe and follow me!' ⁹ So [Peter] left, following [the messenger]. However, he wasn't really sure of what was happening, because, although [he knew that] the messenger was real, he thought that he was just seeing a vision.

¹⁰ Well, they walked past the first guard, then the second, and when they got to the iron gate that leads into the city, it opened by itself. Then, after they got out and started down a street, the messenger suddenly left him.

¹¹ Well, after Peter finally came to his senses, he said: 'Now I really know that the Lord sent his messenger and saved me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jews had planned to do [to

me].'

¹² Then, after [taking a moment] to collect himself, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John (who was called Mark), where several had gathered to pray. ¹³ And when he knocked at the gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came, ¹⁴ and though she recognized Peter's voice, she was so happy that she failed to open the gate... she just ran inside and told everyone that Peter was standing outside.

¹⁵ Well, everyone told her that she had to be crazy, but she kept insisting. So they said, 'It's [probably] his messenger.'¹⁶ Meanwhile, Peter was still standing outside and knocking.

Well, when they opened [the gate] and saw that it was [Peter], everyone was astonished. ¹⁷ But he motioned with his hand for them to be quiet, and he told them exactly how the Lord had freed him from the jail. Then he said: 'Tell James and the other brothers what has happened.' And with that, he left and traveled on to another place.

¹⁸ Needless to say, the next day there was quite a stir among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. ¹⁹ Herod had them search for him, and when they couldn't find him, he interrogated the guards and ordered to have them arrested. Meanwhile, [Peter] had left Judea and traveled to Caesarea, where he spent quite a bit of time.

²⁰ Back then, [Herod] was extremely angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, so [people from there] came to him, and they convinced the Royal Eunuch Blastus to ask [Herod] for peace, since [Herod] had been supplying their country with food [during the famine].

²¹ Then there came a day when Herod dressed himself up in his royal clothes and he sat down on his judgment seat to give a public lecture. ²² And the crowd that was assembled started shouting, 'It's a god's voice, not a man's!' ²³ Well instantly, a messenger of Jehovah struck him, because he didn't give glory to The God; then he became eaten up with worms and breathed his last.

²⁴ Well, during this entire time, the Word of the Lord kept on growing and spreading.

²⁵ As for BarNabas and Saul; after they'd finished delivering relief supplies to JeruSalem, they returned [to AntiOch]. And this time they took John (the one called Mark) along with them.

Chapter 13

¹ Now, in the congregation at AntiOch, there were several Prophets and teachers, including BarNabas, Symeon (who was called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Mnaen (who had gone to school with Herod, the district ruler) and Saul. ² And it was while they were serving the Lord and fasting that the Holy Breath told them: 'Consecrate BarNabas and Saul to me, to do the work for which I've called them.'³ Then [the brothers] fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on them, and sent them on.

⁴ Well, the Holy Breath first sent these men to Seleucia, and then they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ And when they arrived at the city of Salamis, they started preaching the Word of God in the Jewish synagogues... along with John (Mark) who had come along to help them.

⁶ Then, after they had traveled across the whole island to Paphos, they met up with a Jew named BarJesus, who was a sorcerer and a false prophet. ⁷ He was with the Island's governor at the time (an intelligent man named Sergius Paulus), who had summoned BarNabas and Saul, because he really wanted to hear the Word of God. ⁸ But the sorcerer ElyMas (that's how his name is pronounced [in Aramaic]) opposed them and tried to keep the governor from becoming interested in the faith.

⁹ Then Saul (who is also called Paul) became filled with Holy Breath, and he looked at the man very hard and said: ¹⁰ 'O you unethical and deceitful person; you son of the Slanderer and enemy of everything that's righteous! When will you stop twisting the straight ways of the Lord?' ¹¹ Now look! The Lord's hand has touched you so that you'll be blind and unable to even see the sun for a while.' And at that, [his eyes] instantly started to cloud over and grow dark, and he had to search for someone to lead him by the hand.

¹² Well, when the governor saw this, he was shocked and started believing in the Lord's teachings.

¹³ Next, Paul and the men who were with him sailed from Paphos to [the city of] Perga in PamPhylia. However, John [Mark] left them there and returned to JeruSalem. ¹⁴ Well, from Perga they traveled on to AntiOch in Pisidia. Then on the Sabbath, they entered the synagogue and sat down; ¹⁵ and after reading the Law and the Prophets, the presiding officers of the synagogue called them forward saying, 'Men... Brothers... If you have anything encouraging to tell the people, say it!'

¹⁶ So Paul got up, and with a sweeping gesture, he said: 'Men, IsraElites, and all you who fear God, listen! ¹⁷ The God of the people of IsraEl chose our ancestors. And when they were visitors in the land of Egypt, He elevated them... He raised His arm and brought them out of there. ¹⁸ But after that, He [had to] put up with their bad manners in the desert for forty years. ¹⁹ Then, after destroying seven nations in the land of CanaAn, He gave them each an inheritance of land... ²⁰ and all of this happened in a period of four hundred and fifty years.

'Thereafter, he gave them the judges to the time of the Prophet SamuEl, ²¹ when they demanded a king. So then God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, for forty years... a man from the tribe of BenJamin. ²² And after removing him, He promoted David to be their king, for God gave this testimony about him: *I've found a man after My own heart, David the son of Jesse, who will do whatever I wish.* ²³ And it was from [this man's] seed (according to the promise) that God brought a Savior to IsraEl, Jesus.

²⁴ 'Now, John [the Baptist] preached publicly about a baptism of repentance to all the people of IsraEl before [Jesus] arrived. ²⁵ And as John was finishing the race that he was to run, he asked [the people], *Who are you thinking that I am? It isn't me! Rather, {Look!} someone is coming behind me whose shoelaces I'm unworthy to untie!*

²⁶ 'Men... brothers... you sons of the race of AbraHam and all among you who fear God; we're the ones to whom these words of salvation have been sent! ²⁷ However, the people who lived in JeruSalem and their rulers didn't recognize this one. And when they acted as his judges, they fulfilled the things that the Prophets said... the things that are read aloud [here] on each Sabbath. ²⁸ For although they didn't find a reason for putting him to death, they demanded that Pilate should have him killed!

²⁹ 'Well, after they'd finished doing everything that was written would happen to him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ However, God raised him from the dead; ³¹ and for several days thereafter, those [of us] who had traveled with him from Galilee to JeruSalem, saw him! So we are now his witnesses to the people. ³² And here we are announcing the good news to you about the promise that God made to our forefathers, ³³ and which He has now completely fulfilled upon their children... upon us! For He resurrected Jesus, just as it was written in the Second Psalm: *You are my son, and today I am your Father!*

³⁴ 'Yes, He resurrected him from the dead so [his body] wouldn't see corruption. For He said to him,

I'll give you the sacred, trusted things of [King] David. ³⁵ And He said in another place: *You won't allow your Holy one to see corruption.* ³⁶ Now, when David (who served his generation well and followed God's instructions) fell asleep [in death], he was buried with his ancestors, and [his body] did see corruption. ³⁷ But this one who was raised by God didn't see corruption!

³⁸ 'Understand this, men and brothers; we're declaring to you that your sins can now be forgiven through him. ³⁹ Yes, all the wrong things for which the Law of Moses couldn't excuse you, can be excused for you by this one... if you believe! ⁴⁰ So make sure that [this thing] that was said by the Prophet doesn't happen to you:

*⁴¹ 'Behold, O you who show scorn,
Yes, be amazed... and then perish!
For there's a work that I'll do in your days,
Which you could never believe,
Should someone declare it to you!'*

⁴² Well, as they were leaving, the people begged them to explain more about this on the next Sabbath.

⁴³ So after the meeting at the synagogue was concluded, many of the Jews and proselytes followed Paul and BarNabas, who urged them to stick close to God's favor.

⁴⁴ Then on the next Sabbath, almost the entire city assembled to hear the Word of God. ⁴⁵ And when the Judeans saw the throngs of people, they were extremely jealous and started contradicting the things that Paul was saying in blasphemous ways. ⁴⁶ But Paul and BarNabas spoke out boldly, saying: 'It was required of us to speak the Word of God to you first. But since you're just pushing it away and you don't judge yourselves to be worthy of age-long life, {Look!} we will now be turning to the gentiles. ⁴⁷ In fact, Jehovah commanded us to do this when He said:

*'I will make you a light to the nations...
To bring salvation to the ends of the earth'*

⁴⁸ Well, when the gentiles heard this, they started rejoicing and glorifying the Word of the Lord. Then all those who were inclined to accept age-long life became believers, ⁴⁹ and the Word of the Lord was spread throughout that whole country.

⁵⁰ However, the Judeans incited many of the city's elite (devout women and leading men), and they sent people against Paul and BarNabas, who threw them out of the city. ⁵¹ So they shook the dust off their feet against them, and went on to Iconium. ⁵² However, the disciples [in that city] continued to be filled with joy and Holy Breath.

Chapter 14

¹ Then the same thing happened in Iconium. [Paul and BarNabas] went into the Jewish synagogue together to speak, and a large number of both Jews and Greeks became believers. ² However, the Jews who wouldn't accept what they said riled up the gentiles and influenced them to act badly toward the brothers. ³ Nevertheless, [Paul, and BarNabas] spent a lot of time boldly telling them about the Lord. And [the Lord] himself testified to the fact that his favor was being shown by allowing them to perform signs and omens.

⁴ Well, the whole city was split... some were for the Jews and others for the Apostles. ⁵ Then the Jews and gentiles met with the local rulers to arrange to finish them off by stoning them. ⁶ And when [Paul and BarNabas] learned about this plot, they got out of there and traveled to the cities and countryside

around Lystra and Derbe in LycaOnias, ⁷ where they continued preaching the good news.

⁸ Now in Lystra, a man was sitting there who had something wrong with his feet. In fact, he hadn't walked at all since he was born. ⁹ This man was listening to Paul; and when [Paul] looked at him and realized that he had enough faith to be healed, ¹⁰ he shouted: 'Get up on your feet!' And at this, he jumped up and started walking around.

¹¹ Well, when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted (in the LycaOnian language): 'The gods have turned themselves into men and come down to us!' ¹² So they started calling BarNabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes (since he was the one who took the lead in speaking). ¹³ Then the city's Priest of Zeus brought bulls and garlands up to the gates so that he and the crowd could offer sacrifices [to them].

¹⁴ However, when the Apostles BarNabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and jumped into the crowd, shouting and asking, ¹⁵ 'Why are you doing this? We're just humans who have the same problems as you; and we're here preaching the good news in order to turn you away from this foolishness and toward the living God who made the skies, the lands, the seas, and everything in them! ¹⁶ For though He's allowed the gentiles to go their own way for generations, ¹⁷ He didn't leave Himself without witnesses. And He did good things for you by giving you rain from the sky and good harvests, and He filled your hearts with food and happiness!'

¹⁸ Yet, despite everything they said, they had a hard time keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ Well, some Jews finally arrived from AntiOch and Iconium, and they talked the crowd into stoning Paul. Then they dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰ But after the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went back into the city. And the next day, he and BarNabas left for Derbe, ²¹ where they preached the good news in that city, making quite a few disciples. Then they returned to Lystra in Iconium and to AntiOch, ²² in order to strengthen the disciples. They encouraged them to remain in the faith, saying, 'We will all have to endure many trials to enter the Kingdom of God.'

²³ They also appointed elders in each of the congregations; and with prayer and fasting, they entrusted them into the hands of [the God in whom] they'd come to believe.

²⁴ Well from there, they traveled through Pisidia to PamPhylia. ²⁵ And after teaching the Word in Perga, they went on to Attalia. ²⁶ Then they finally sailed back to AntiOch, where by God's kindness, they had first been entrusted with the work that they were performing so well. ²⁷ And when they arrived, they gathered the congregation and told them everything that God had done through them, and of how He had opened the door of faith to the gentiles. ²⁸ Thereafter, they spent a long time (in AntiOch) with the disciples.

Chapter 15

¹ However, some men who came down from Judea started teaching the brothers that if they didn't get circumcised following the custom of Moses, they couldn't get saved. ² But after Paul and BarNabas opposed and argued with them, they arranged for Paul, BarNabas, and some others who were there, to go to the Apostles and elders in JeruSalem to ask [their opinion] about the matter.

³ So the congregation sent them off. And as they were traveling through Phoenicia and Samaria, they spoke [to the congregations] along the way about the conversion of gentiles, which brought great joy among all the brothers. ⁴ And when they got to JeruSalem, they were welcomed by the congregation

(which included the Apostles and the elders), and they told them about all the things that God had been accomplishing through them. ⁵ However, some of those who were believers from the sect of the Pharisees then stood up and said: 'We must circumcise them and order them to obey the Law of Moses!'

⁶ Well, the Apostles and the elders thereafter held a meeting to look into this matter. ⁷ And after a lot of wrangling, Peter stood up and said: 'Men... Brothers... You know how long it has been since God chose to have gentiles hear the Word of the Good News and believe through my mouth, ⁸ and of how God (who knows the heart) testified about them by giving them the Holy Breath... the same as He did to us. ⁹ As you can see, He didn't create a difference between us. Rather, He has also purified their hearts in the faith. ¹⁰ So, why are you testing God by putting this yoke on the neck of the disciples, which we and our fathers couldn't carry? ¹¹ For, we believe that they've been saved the same as we have through the loving care of our Lord Jesus!'

¹² Well at that, the group became silent as they listened to BarNabas and Paul tell about the many signs and omens that God had used them to perform among the gentiles. ¹³ And when they'd finished speaking, James said: 'Men... Brothers... Hear me! ¹⁴ Simon has explained to us how for the first time, God has [chosen] to take a people for His Name from among the gentiles. ¹⁵ And the words of the Prophet agree with this, for it's written:

¹⁶ *'After this, I will return and rebuild the Tent of David that has fallen and is buried... I will rebuild it and make it stand again, ¹⁷ so that all those who remain can seek Jehovah, **along with people from all the nations who are called by My Name.*** And this was said by our Lord who made all of this happen, ¹⁸ because He's known about these things through the ages!

¹⁹ 'So I've decided not to create problems for the gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰ Rather, I will send word to them to stay free from things polluted by idols, from immorality, from things that are strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For since ancient generations, [this Law of] Moses has been preached in city after city and read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.'

²² Well after that, the Apostles, elders, and the whole congregation were unanimously in favor of sending men whom they had selected from among themselves, to AntiOch. And [among those who traveled there] with Paul and BarNabas were Judas (who was called BarSabbas) and Silas... leading men from among the brothers. ²³ And this was what was written by their hands:

'[From] the Apostles and the older brothers, to those gentile brothers in AntiOch, Syria, and Kilikia; Rejoice! ²⁴ We've heard that some who came from us have been stirring things up there with speeches, and they've urged you to make changes in your lives (although we didn't tell them to do this). ²⁵ Therefore, we've unanimously decided to choose men to send to you along with our beloved BarNabas and Paul... ²⁶ these men who've been willing to give their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One. ²⁷ Yes, Judas and Silas can further explain these things to you. ²⁸ For through the Holy Breath, it has become clear to us that we shouldn't put any burdens on you other than these necessary things: ²⁹ Stay away from things that are sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things that are strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you stay away from these things, you'll do well. Good health to you!'

³⁰ So when these men whom they sent got back to AntiOch, they assembled the group and presented them with the letter. ³¹ And after reading it, [the brothers in AntiOch] were very happy over the encouragement that the letter conveyed.

³² Then Judas and Silas (since they were also Prophets) gave instructions to the brothers with many speeches to strengthen them. ³³ And after some time had passed, [the congregation] allowed them to return to those who had sent them with that message of peace. ³⁴ — ³⁵ However, Paul and BarNabas stayed on in AntiOch for a while (along with many others), teaching and preaching the good news of the Word of the Lord.

³⁶ Then after many days, Paul said to BarNabas: 'Now that these matters have been settled, let's go back and visit the brothers in all those cities where we preached the Word, to see how they're doing.' ³⁷ However, BarNabas wanted to bring John (who was called Mark) along with them. ³⁸ But Paul didn't think he was worthy and he didn't want to take him, because he'd left them at PamPhylia and he hadn't continued in the work. ³⁹ So there was quite an argument over this, which resulted in each going his own way. BarNabas took Mark and sailed off to Cyprus, ⁴⁰ while Paul chose Silas.

Then, after sharing the joy of the Lord with the brothers, [Paul] traveled on, ⁴¹ going through Syria and Kilikia, strengthening the congregations.

Chapter 16

¹ [Paul] traveled as far as Derbe, and then he continued on to Lystra. {Look!} There he found a disciple named Timothy, who was the son of a believing Jewish woman and a Greek father. ² The brothers in Lystra and Iconium had many good things to say about him, ³ and Paul wanted to take this man along with him. So he went and circumcised him, because of the many Jews who were in those places, since they all knew that his father was a Greek.

⁴ Well, as they traveled through the cities, they taught the decisions of the Apostles and elders in JeruSalem, and urged the brothers to obey them. ⁵ So the congregations kept getting stronger in the faith and growing day by day.

⁶ From there, they traveled through Phrygia and the country of Galatia. However, the Holy Breath [of God] wouldn't allow them to teach the Word in [the province of] Asia. ⁷ And when they got down to Mysia, they tried to go on to Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus wouldn't allow them to do so. ⁸ As the result, they passed Mysia and went on to Troas. ⁹ And there, during the night, Paul had a vision of a Macedonian man who was standing and begging him, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us!' ¹⁰ And as soon as he saw this vision, we started out for Macedonia, assuming that God had called us to preach the good news to them.

¹¹ So, having been led from Troas, we set a straight course for Samothrace. Then the next day we traveled to NeApolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi (a [Roman] colony, which is one of the main cities in that part of Macedonia), where we spent several days. ¹³ And on the Sabbath, we went to the riverbank outside the city gate, where we thought we would find a place to pray. Then we sat down there and started talking to the women who had assembled.

¹⁴ Well, a woman named Lydia from Thyatira (an importer of purple [cloth]), who was a worshiper of The God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to the things that Paul was saying. ¹⁵ Then, as she and her household were being baptized, she begged: 'If you men have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my house!' And she urged us to come.

¹⁶ Thereafter, as we were going somewhere to pray, a servant girl with a divining spirit came and met us. Her masters used her to make predictions, which earned a tidy profit for them. ¹⁷ And she kept following Paul and the rest of us, shouting, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God and they're preaching to you about the way of salvation!'

¹⁸ Well, she kept doing this for several days, and finally Paul got tired of it; so he turned and said to the spirit: 'I order you in the name of Jesus the Anointed One to come out of her!' And it came right out. ¹⁹ But when her masters saw that they had just lost their hope of any income [from her], they grabbed hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them before the rulers in the marketplace. ²⁰ There they brought them before the judges and said: 'These men are Jews who are creating a disturbance in our city ²¹ and they're preaching customs that are illegal for us as Romans to either accept or to practice!'

²² Well, the entire crowd arose against them. So the judges had their clothes stripped off and commanded that they should be beaten with rods. ²³ Then, after they had received many blows, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to keep them safe. ²⁴ And since he had received such an order, he took them into the innermost dungeon and put their feet in stocks.

²⁵ However, about the middle of the night, as Paul and Silas were praying and singing sacred hymns (within earshot of the rest of the prisoners there), ²⁶ a great earthquake occurred that shook the jail to its foundation... and this immediately opened all the doors and loosened all the chains. ²⁷ And when the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul called out loudly, 'Don't harm yourself... we're all here!'

²⁹ So he asked for lamps to be brought in; and shaking in fear, he jumped in and fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought them outside and asked: 'Lords; What must I do so that I might get saved?'

³¹ And they replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you and all in your house will be saved.' ³² Then they spoke to him and all those in his house about the Word of the Lord.

³³ So at that hour of the night, he went and washed their whip wounds; then he and his family were immediately baptized. ³⁴ And thereafter, he brought them into his home, sat them at the table, and he and his entire household started rejoicing over their coming to believe in The God.

³⁵ Well, the next morning the magistrates sent officers who told him to release them.

³⁶ And the jailer said to Paul, 'The magistrates have sent men to release you. So now that you're free, you may go your own way in peace.'

³⁷ But Paul said to him: 'Although we weren't found guilty [of anything], they had us publicly flogged and thrown in jail... and we are Romans! Are they now going to try to throw us out secretly? No, let them come down here and bring us out themselves!'

³⁸ Well thereafter, the officers went back and reported to the judges what he had said, and they were frightened when they heard that the men were Romans. ³⁹ So they called for them and released them, then they asked them to leave their city.

⁴⁰ So after they were released, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them before leaving.

Chapter 17

¹ From there they traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² And as it was Paul's custom, he went inside and reasoned with [the Jews] from

the Scriptures for three Sabbaths. ³ He opened [the scriptures] and proved that the Anointed One had to suffer and be resurrected from the dead. Then he said, 'This Jesus whom I'm preaching to you is that Anointed One!' ⁴ And as the result, some of them became believers and associated themselves with Paul and Silas, as did a large number of devout Greeks, many women, and quite a few of the [city's] leaders.

⁵ However, the Judeans got jealous and formed a mob... they assembled a group of wicked men who had been hanging around in the market, and they created quite an uproar in the city. Then they all went to Jason's house and demanded to have [Paul and Silas] brought out. ⁶ But when they didn't find them there, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city council, shouting, 'These men who are creating confusion throughout the whole world are here also... ⁷ and Jason has even welcomed them into his home! Yet, these people oppose the decrees of Caesar by saying that there's another king... someone called Jesus!'

⁸ Well, when they heard the crowd say this, the city council became agitated ⁹ and demanded a large bail from Jason and the others, before they would release them. ¹⁰ Then that night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas off to Berea.

Well, [upon arriving in Berea], they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ And there they found that these people were more noble-minded than those in ThesSalonica, because they eagerly welcomed the Word and studied the Scriptures each day to make sure that the things [they were being told] were true. ¹² So, many of them became believers, as did a number of the prominent Greek women and quite a few men.

¹³ But when the Jews in ThesSalonica learned that Paul was also preaching the Word of God in Berea, they traveled there to incite and agitate the crowds. ¹⁴ As the result, the brothers immediately sent Paul off all the way to the sea... however, Silas and Timothy stayed behind. ¹⁵ Then those who were taking Paul, brought him to Athens. And before they returned, he ordered them to send Silas and Timothy to him as soon as possible.

¹⁶ Well, while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he became disgusted to the core when he saw that the city was filled with idols. ¹⁷ So he started reasoning with the Jews and other worshipers in the synagogue... as well as with whomever happened to be in the markets each day.

¹⁸ Then some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers came to hear him and they started asking each other, 'What is this seed-picker trying to say?' And someone replied, 'He seems to be preaching a foreign demon' (because he was telling them the good news about Jesus and the resurrection). ¹⁹ So they grabbed him and took him up to the AeroPagus, where they asked him: 'Tell us; What is this new thing that you're preaching?' ²⁰ For we've heard that you've brought some strange new ideas, and we want to know what they are!'

²¹ It's a fact that all Athenians and even foreigners who traveled there had nothing to do other than spend their leisure time telling something new or listening to something new. ²² So Paul stood up in the middle of the AeroPagus and said: 'Men of Athens; I see that you have a greater fear of the demons than do others. ²³ And as I was going along and noticing all the things that you worship, I found an altar with the inscription: *To an unknown God*. So I'm here to preach to you about something that you don't know, but already worship. ²⁴ For this is the [same] God who made the cosmos and everything in it; and this Lord of the sky and the earth doesn't live in handmade Temples, ²⁵ nor does He need human hands to take care of Him (or anything at all [for that matter]), because He gives life, breath, and everything else to each one of us. ²⁶ Why, He's the One who made all the

nations of men who dwell on the face of the earth from just one man, and He's the One who determined the times and the boundaries of [when and] where they would live, ²⁷ so that we would each search for God and grope around to find Him... though He really isn't very far from any of us. ²⁸ Why, it's through Him that we have life, and move, and exist... even as some of your own poets have said: *We are His offspring!*

²⁹ 'So, since we are the offspring of God, we shouldn't think of this Divine One as being like gold, silver, stone... or like anything else that some man has artistically sculpted! ³⁰ Yet God has overlooked such periods of ignorance, and now He's telling all men wherever they may be, to repent, ³¹ because He's set a day when He's going to judge the entire habitation of mankind righteously by a man whom He has appointed. And He has given all of us a reason to believe in this one by resurrecting him from the dead!'

³² Well, when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some started joking about it. But others said, 'We'll listen to more about this at some other time!' ³³ So then Paul left them.

³⁴ However, some of the men started following him and became believers. This included Dionysius (a judge of the AeroPagus Supreme Court), a woman named Damaris, and several others.

Chapter 18

¹ After that, he left Athens and traveled on to Corinth. ² And there he found a Judean (from Pontus) named Aquila, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (gr. *Priskillan*), because Claudius [Caesar] had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. So he went to see them; ³ and because they shared the same trade (they all worked as tent makers), he stayed at their house. ⁴ He also spoke in the synagogue on every Sabbath and he kept reasoning with both the Jews and the Greeks.

⁵ Now, when Silas and Timothy finally arrived from Macedonia, Paul really intensified his work of witnessing to the Jews, proving that Jesus is the Anointed One. ⁶ However, they just kept on opposing him and blaspheming; so he shook out his clothes and said, 'Your blood is now on your own heads... I am clean of it! So from now on, I'll just be going to the gentiles.'

⁷ Then he left them and he went to the home of a man named Titius Justus (a worshiper of God), whose house adjoined the synagogue. ⁸ And later, Crispus (the synagogue's presiding officer) became a believer in the Lord, as did his whole household; and many Corinthians who heard about it also became believers and were baptized.

⁹ Then one night, the Lord said this to Paul in a vision: 'Don't be afraid; keep on talking here and don't stop, ¹⁰ because I'm with you! Nobody will attack you or try to hurt you, since I have many people in this city.' ¹¹ So he stayed there for a year and a half, teaching the Word of God among them.

¹² Now, it was while Gallio was governor of Akhaea that the Jews got together and came against Paul. They took him to court and charged him, ¹³ saying, 'This man is violating the Law by trying to convert people of other faiths to worshipping [his] God.' ¹⁴ But just as Paul was about to answer, Gallio told them: 'O Jews; I'd be patient and put up with this if you were talking about [his doing] something wrong or committing some foul act. ¹⁵ But if all you want to do is complain about words, names, and your Law, take care of it yourselves. I don't wish to be the judge of such matters!' ¹⁶ And with that, he threw them out of his court.

¹⁷ So then they dragged [Paul] before Sosthenes, the presiding officer of the synagogue. And right there in front of the Judgment Seat, they started beating him up! However, Gallio didn't pay any

attention to this.

¹⁸ Well, after staying there for several more days, Paul said goodbye to the brothers and sailed off for Syria, along with Priscilla and Aquila. Then [Paul] had his hair sheared in Kenchrea, because of a vow he'd made.

¹⁹ Now, when they arrived at Ephesus, he left [Priscilla and Aquila] and went into the synagogue to reason with the Jews. ²⁰ And although they asked him to stay there for a while, he wouldn't do it. ²¹ He just said goodbye and told them: 'If it's God's will, I'll come back again.'

Then he traveled from Ephesus ²² to Caesarea, where he went up and greeted the congregation; and then he traveled on to AntiOch.

²³ Well, after staying [in AntiOch] for some time, he left and traveled throughout the areas of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples there.

²⁴ Now, a Jew named Apollos (a native of Alexandria), who was an excellent speaker and knew the Scriptures very well, arrived at Ephesus. ²⁵ He had been taught the ways of the Lord and was aglow with the Breath [of God]. So what he said and taught about Jesus was correct; however, he only knew about the baptism of John.

²⁶ Well, he was boldly speaking in the synagogue when Priscilla and Aquila heard him; so they took him under their wing and explained the ways of God to him more completely. ²⁷ Then, because he wanted to travel across Achaea, the brothers wrote to the disciples there, telling them to welcome him. And when he got there, he provided assistance to all those who (through [God's] loving care) became believers, ²⁸ as he publicly and very enthusiastically proved that the Jews were absolutely wrong, using the Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the Anointed One.

Chapter 19

¹ Well, while Apollos stayed in Corinth, Paul traveled inland. And when he got to Ephesus, he found some disciples ² and asked them: 'Did you receive the Holy Breath [of God] when you became believers?'

And they answered: 'Why, we've never even heard that there is Holy Breath.'

³ And he asked: 'Then, into what were you baptized?'

And they replied: 'In John's baptism.'

⁴ So Paul told them: 'When John baptized, it was a baptism of repentance. However, he told the people to believe in the one coming after him... in Jesus.'

⁵ Well when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Breath came over them and they started speaking in different languages and prophesying ⁷ (there were about twelve men altogether).

⁸ Then [Paul] went into the synagogue, where he spoke boldly... for the next three months he reasoned and talked persuasively about the Kingdom of God. ⁹ But when [he noted] that some were just becoming more difficult, refusing to believe and saying bad things about The Way in front of the crowds, he left them... he separated the [true] disciples from among them and started giving lectures

in the School of Tyrannous each day;¹⁰ and this went on for two years. So everyone who lived in [the province of] Asia (both Jews and Greeks) heard the Word of the Lord.¹¹ And [all the while], God kept showing unusual power through the hands of Paul.¹² Why, even the bandannas and aprons he wore were carried to sick people, which caused their diseases to leave and wicked spirits to come out.

¹³ However, there were some traveling Judean exorcists who also started using the name of the Lord Jesus against wicked spirits, saying, 'I order you in the name of Jesus, the one whom Paul preaches ...'¹⁴ And Sceva (a Judean Chief Priest) had seven sons who were doing this.¹⁵ However, one wicked spirit said to them: 'I know Jesus, and I'm familiar with Paul, but just who are you?'¹⁶ And with that, the man who was possessed by a wicked spirit jumped on them, overpowered each one and beat them up... so they had to flee from the house naked and injured.

¹⁷ Why, everyone in Ephesus (both Jews and Greeks) heard about this, and it frightened them. As the result, the name of the Lord Jesus kept growing in praise,¹⁸ and many that became believers would come and openly confess, telling of [the bad] things they had done.¹⁹ In fact, several who used to practice magic brought their books together and burned them up in front of everyone. And when they calculated how much they'd paid for them, they found that they [were worth] some fifty thousand silver coins.²⁰ So the power of the Word of the Lord kept growing and getting stronger.

²¹ Well, after all these things had happened, Paul resolved that he would travel to Macedonia and Achaea, and then on to JeruSalem. He also said: 'After I get there, I want to see Rome!'²² So he sent two of those who served [with] him (Timothy and Erastus) to Macedonia, while he spent some time in [the province of] Asia.

²³ However, a big disturbance had arisen there because of The Way.²⁴ For there was a man named Demetrius who was a silversmith that made silver shrines of Artemis... which was a very profitable business for him and his employees.²⁵ So he gathered them along with others in his trade and said: 'Men, you know that we make a very good living from this business.²⁶ But now you're seeing and hearing how this Paul is persuading large numbers of people, making converts of them not just in Ephesus but in almost all [the province of] Asia, saying that hand-made gods really aren't gods!²⁷ Why, this not only endangers our business by damaging its reputation, but [soon] the temple of the great goddess Artemis will become unimportant, and her magnificence – which the whole [province of] Asia and the entire land worships – is about to be brought to nothing!'

²⁸ Well when they heard this, they all became very angry and started shouting, 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians,'²⁹ and the whole city became filled with confusion. Then they rushed into the theater and [dragged off] Gaius and AristArchus (Macedonians who traveled with Paul).³⁰ So thereafter, Paul wanted to go to visit them in public, but the disciples wouldn't allow it.³¹ Why, even some of the public game commissioners (who were friends of Paul) sent word to him, begging him not to enter the theater.

³² In the meantime, some [in the theater] were shouting one thing and others were shouting something else, for the whole group was confused and most of them didn't even know why they were there.³³ So they located Alexander in the midst of the crowd, and the Judeans pushed him up to the front. Then Alexander started waving his hands to defend himself before the people.³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they started a shout that lasted for two hours: 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!'

³⁵ Well, when the City Recorder finally quieted the crowd, he said: 'Men! Ephesians! Who in the world doesn't know that the City of Ephesus is the place where the temple of the Great Artemis and the image that fell from the sky is kept?'³⁶ So, since these things are undeniable, it would seem better

if you'd just calm down and not act so foolishly!

³⁷ 'Now, you've grabbed hold of these men, who aren't guilty of either robbing Temples or blaspheming our goddess. ³⁸ But if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a case against them... [remember that] there are court days and there are governors! So, let them bring charges there. ³⁹ If you're looking for anything more, it has to be decided in a legal hearing!

⁴⁰ 'Now, we are really in danger of being charged with rioting today, and we don't have a good reason for doing that! Who can give me an explanation for this disorderly mob?'

⁴¹ And after he said that, he dismissed the assembly.

Chapter 20

¹ Now, when all the rioting was over, Paul sent for the disciples. And after encouraging them, he said goodbye and left for Macedonia. ² Then, after traveling around to encourage the people there with many speeches, he went to Greece, ³ where he then spent three months. However, the Jews [in Greece] started plotting against him. And although he first decided to leave for Syria, he later changed his mind and returned through Macedonia.

⁴ Accompanying him [to Greece] were Sopater (the son of PyrRhus of Berea), AristArchus, Secundus (of the Thessalonians), Gaius (of Derbe), and Timothy, as well as Tychicus and Trophimus (from the [province of] Asia). ⁵ These went on ahead and waited for us in Troas. ⁶ Then after the period of No Fermentation, we sailed from Philippi to Troas, where they were, which took five days, and then we spent seven more days there.

⁷ Then on Sunday, when we met to have a meal, Paul gave a public talk (because he was going to leave the next day). However, his speech went on until midnight, ⁸ so many lamps were lit in the upstairs room where we met.

⁹ Well, there was a young man named EuTychus who was sitting in a window and fell fast asleep while Paul was talking... he slumped over and fell out of the third-story window. And when they picked him up, he was dead. ¹⁰ But Paul went downstairs and threw himself on top of him, hugged him, and said, 'Don't worry; he's still alive!' ¹¹ So he went back upstairs, started the meal, and they all ate and talked until daybreak... then he left. ¹² Meanwhile, they had taken the boy [home] alive, and everyone was extremely encouraged.

¹³ From there, we went on ahead of Paul by boat and sailed to Assos, where we waited for him (because that's what he told us to do), since he was going to travel there on foot. ¹⁴ So when he caught up with us in Assos, we took him aboard and we went on to Mitylene; ¹⁵ then we sailed from there the next day, coming ashore across from Chios. On the following day we stopped at Samos, and then we arrived at Miletus the next day.

¹⁶ Now, Paul had planned to sail past Ephesus, so he wouldn't spend any time in the [province of] Asia, because he was in a hurry to get to JeruSalem before Pentecost, if he could. ¹⁷ However, [while he was] in Miletus, he sent word to Ephesus to call the elders of the congregation to him. ¹⁸ And when they arrived, he told them: 'You know very well that from the first day I stepped foot into Asia, I was with you all the time, ¹⁹ humbly slaving for the Lord. And [you know] of all the tears and trials that I endured because of the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ Yet, I didn't fail to remind you and teach you both both in public and in [your] homes; ²¹ for I thoroughly testified to both Jews and Greeks about [the need to] repent before God, and [to have] faith in our Lord Jesus.

²² 'But now {Look!} I'm traveling to JeruSalem as though I were already in chains. For I don't know what's going to happen to me there. ²³ [All I know is that] in city after city, the Holy Breath keeps testifying to me, telling me that chains and difficulties are awaiting me there. ²⁴ Yet, I won't say anything that would make my life more valuable to me, so I can faithfully finish my course and fulfill the service assignment that I received from the Lord Jesus... to testify completely about the good news of God's loving care.

²⁵ 'Now, {Look!} I know that all of you to whom I preached the Kingdom will see my face no more. ²⁶ So I'm testifying to you today that I'm clean from the blood of all men, ²⁷ because I haven't held back from telling you any of God's purposes. ²⁸ Therefore, you need to pay close attention to yourselves and to the whole flock over which the Holy Breath [of God] has appointed you watchmen and shepherds... this congregation of God that He purchased with the blood of [His own Son]. ²⁹ For I know that after I leave, oppressive wolves will enter among you who won't spare the flock, ³⁰ and that men from among you will arise and speak twisted things to attract some of the disciples toward following them. ³¹ So stay awake... and keep those three years in mind during which I didn't stop counseling each of you tearfully, both night and day.

³² 'And now, I'm entrusting you into loving care of our Lord, who can build you up and give you an inheritance among all the Holy Ones.

³³ '[You know that] I haven't longed for anyone's silver, gold, or clothing; ³⁴ for you're aware of how I've used my own hands to take care of my own needs and [for the needs] of those who were with me. ³⁵ I've demonstrated to you how necessary it is for us to work like this, so we can help those who are weak. Therefore, remember the words that were said by our Lord Jesus: *There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.*' ³⁶ And after he said this, he knelt down with them all and prayed.

³⁷ Well, many tears flowed as they hugged Paul's neck and tenderly kissed him. ³⁸ For when he said that they wouldn't see his face again, they were deeply saddened. Then they all accompanied him out to the boat.

Chapter 21

¹ Now, when we finally tore ourselves away from them and put out to sea, we ran straight over to Cos, then to Rhodes the next day, and from there, to Patara. ² And when we found a boat that was going to Phoenicia, we went aboard and sailed off.

³ Well, we came in sight of the Island of Cyprus, passing it on our left, and we sailed on to Syria, landing at Tyre (because that's where the boat unloaded its cargo). ⁴ There we searched for and found the disciples, and we stayed with them for seven days. However, by the Breath [of God], they repeatedly warned Paul not to set foot in JeruSalem.

⁵ [A week later], we got ready to continue our journey; and everyone (including the women and children) followed us outside the city. And then kneeling down on the beach, we had a prayer ⁶ before saying goodbye to each other. So then we boarded the ship as they returned to their homes.

⁷ Well after we left Tyre, we finally arrived at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and spent the day with them. ⁸ Then the next day we traveled on to Caesarea, where we went to the house of Philip the evangelizer (one of the seven men), and stayed with him. ⁹ This man had four virgin daughters who all prophesied.

¹⁰ But after we'd stayed there for several days, a Prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ He walked up to us and removed Paul's sash, then he used it to tie up his own hands and feet, and he said: 'Thus says the Holy Breath [of God]: *This is how the Judeans will bind the man to whom this sash belongs and hand him over to the gentiles.*'

¹² Well, when we heard this, we all (everyone there) started begging [Paul] not to go to JeruSalem. ¹³ But Paul replied: 'Why are you crying and crushing my heart? I'm not only ready to be bound, but also to die in JeruSalem for the name of our Lord Jesus.' ¹⁴ And when we couldn't change his mind, we gave in, saying, 'May [God's] Will be done.'

¹⁵ So after several days, we prepared for the journey and headed toward JeruSalem. ¹⁶ Meanwhile, some of the disciples from Caesarea traveled with us and led us to the home of a man who showed us some hospitality... Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple.

¹⁷ Well, when we arrive in JeruSalem, the brothers were all happy to see us. ¹⁸ And the next [day], we went with Paul to see James and the rest of the elders. ¹⁹ So [Paul] greeted them and started giving a detailed account of the things that God had done among the nations through his ministry. ²⁰ And after hearing about it, they glorified God.

Then they told him: 'Our brother; You know how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they all zealously obey the Law. ²¹ But they have heard the rumor that you're teaching Jews who live among the nations an apostasy from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or to follow our traditions. ²² So what do you suppose we can do about this?

'Now, they're going to hear that you've arrived. ²³ So do what we are telling you to do: We have four men who have taken a sacred vow... ²⁴ take them with you, and all of you should cleanse yourselves ceremonially, then pay to have your heads shaved. That way, everyone will know that there's no truth to the rumors we've heard about you, and that you're personally following the rules and obeying the Law.

²⁵ 'As for the gentiles who've become believers; We've already sent them our decision to stay free from things that are sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things that are strangled, and from sexual immorality.'

²⁶ So the next day, Paul took the [four] men along and they cleansed themselves ceremonially. Then they entered the Temple to give notice of their ceremonial cleansing (to start counting the days until an offering should be made for each of them). ²⁷ But when the seven days were about up, some Judeans from [the province of] Asia saw him in the Temple and started a riot among the crowd... they grabbed him, ²⁸ shouting, 'Men of IsraEl! Help! This is the man who is teaching against our people, against the Law, and against this place to everyone everywhere. Why, he has even defiled this Holy Place by bringing Greeks into the Temple!' ²⁹ ([They said this], because they had seen him in the city earlier with Trophimus the Ephesian, and they thought that Paul had also brought him into the Temple.)

³⁰ Well, the whole city was in an uproar and many people started running there. So they grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the Temple, then they closed the [Temple] doors ³¹ and tried to kill him. But when the commander of the [Roman] garrison heard the uproar there in JeruSalem, ³² he immediately took a contingent of officers and soldiers, and ran down to them. So when [the mob] saw the commander coming with his soldiers, they stopped beating on Paul.

³³ However, the commander arrested [Paul] and ordered him bound with two chains. Then he asked [the mob] who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ However, some in the crowd started shouting one thing and others shouted something else. So, because he was unable to be sure of anything (due to all the confusion), he commanded [that Paul] should be taken back to their garrison.

³⁵ Well, when they reached the stairs, the situation got even worse. For the mob became so violent that the soldiers had to literally carry him along... ³⁶ as the people followed, shouting, 'Take him away!'

³⁷ Then as he was being carried into the garrison, Paul asked the commander: 'Am I allowed to say something to you?'

And he replied: 'Can you speak Greek? ³⁸ Aren't you the Egyptian who started a rebellion and led four-thousand dagger men into the desert some time ago?'

³⁹ But Paul said: 'For a fact, I'm a Jew from Tarsus in Kilikia... I'm a citizen of a well-known city. So I beg you; Allow me to speak to the people!'

⁴⁰ Well at that, he gave Paul permission. So [Paul] stood on the stairs and waved his arms [to quiet] the people. And when everything quieted down, he spoke to them in Hebrew, saying:

Chapter 22

¹ 'Men... brothers and fathers! Allow me to say something in my own defense now.' ² Well, when they heard him addressing them in Hebrew, things got quieter. And he said, ³ 'I'm a Jew who was born in Tarsus of Kilikia. I went to school right here in this city, and I received my instruction at the feet of GamaliEl, who taught me to obey the Law of our fathers strictly and to show the same zeal for God that you're showing today.'

⁴ 'Why, I personally persecuted this *Way*, by arresting and delivering their men and women to prisons for execution. ⁵ The High Priest and the entire assembly of elders can testify to this, because I obtained letters from them to our brothers in Damascus, where I went to bring all those who they had in prison back to JeruSalem for punishment. ⁶ But as I was on my way and getting close to Damascus, at about noon, a bright light in the sky flashed all around me. ⁷ Then I fell to the ground and I heard a voice say to me, *Saul; Saul; Why are you persecuting me?* ⁸ So I asked, *Who are you, Lord?* And he replied, *I'm Jesus the Nazarene, the one whom you're persecuting.*

⁹ 'Well, the men who were with me saw the light, but they didn't hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ Then I asked, *What must I do Lord?* And the Lord told me: *Get up and go into Damascus. There you will be told of everything that you've been assigned to do.* ¹¹ But, since I could no longer see due to the brilliance of that light, those who were [traveling] with me had to lead me into Damascus by the hand.

¹² 'Now, AnaNias – a man who devoutly obeyed the Law and who was well spoken of by all the Judeans who live there – ¹³ came and stood next to me. Then he said, *Saul... Brother... See again!* And I could immediately see him.

¹⁴ 'Then he said: *The God of our fathers has selected you to learn about His Will, to see the Righteous One and to hear the voice from his mouth,* ¹⁵ *because you are to be his witness to everything that you've seen and heard.* ¹⁶ *So now, why are you wasting time? Get up, get baptized, and wash your sins away by calling on his name.*

¹⁷ 'Then after I returned to JeruSalem, I was praying in the Temple when I fell into a trance where I saw [Jesus]. ¹⁸ And he told me: *Hurry! You must leave JeruSalem right away, because the [people here] don't want to listen to your testimony about me!*

¹⁹ 'But I said: *Lord; they all know very well that in one synagogue after another I used to have all those who believe in you arrested and whipped.* ²⁰ *And when the blood of your witness Stephen was being spilled, I stood there and approved... in fact, I guarded the robes of those who did away with him!* ²¹ But he just told me: *Leave, because I'm sending you to far-away nations.'*

²² Now, they had been listening to him until he said that; but then they started shouting, 'Kill this man, for he isn't fit to live!' ²³ And because they were shouting, throwing their clothes around and tossing dirt in the air, ²⁴ the commander ordered that Paul should be taken inside the garrison.

Then he gave orders to scourge him with a whip to force him to explain why everyone was shouting about him that way. ²⁵ But when they stretched him out to be whipped, Paul asked the centurion who was standing there, 'Is it legal for you to whip a man who is a Roman and hasn't been charged with a crime?'

²⁶ Well, when the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and asked, 'Just what do you intend to do? Why, this man is a Roman!'

²⁷ So the commander came to [Paul] and asked, 'Tell me; Are you a Roman?'

And he answered, 'Yes.'

²⁸ Then the commander said, 'Why, I paid a lot to obtain my citizenship.'

And Paul said, 'I was born [a citizen].'

²⁹ Well, the men who were about to torture him left immediately. And on learning that he had arrested a Roman [citizen], the military commander was frightened. ³⁰ So the next day, because he wanted to know for sure just what the Jews were accusing him of; he [unshackled] him and commanded the Chief Priests and the entire Jewish Court to assemble. Then he brought Paul down and stood him among them.

Chapter 23

¹ Well, Paul just glared at the [judges of the] Jewish Court, and said: 'Men... Brothers... I have a perfectly clear conscience about the way I've been behaving before God down to this day.'

² And at that, the High Priest AnaNias ordered those who were standing by him to hit him in the mouth.

³ So Paul said: 'God is going to hit you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit there judging me by the Law, and at the same time break the Law by telling them to hit me?'

⁴ Then those who were standing by him said: 'Are you speaking against the High Priest of God?'

⁵ And Paul answered: 'Brothers; I didn't know he was the High Priest. For it's written: *You must not speak badly of the one who rules your people.'*

⁶ Well, when Paul noticed that part of the group were SadDucees and the rest were Pharisees, he called out in the High Court: 'Men... Brothers... it is because I'm a Pharisee and the son of Pharisee that I'm being judged over my hope in the resurrection of the dead!'

⁷ And after he said this, quite an argument broke out between the Pharisees and SadDucees, which divided the crowd; ⁸ because, the SadDucees say there is no such thing as a resurrection, or [divine] messengers, or the Breath [of God]. However, the Pharisees publicly preach all of those things. ⁹ So there was a lot of shouting, and some of the Pharisees' scribes stood up and started heatedly arguing, saying, 'We don't find anything wrong with this man! For if the Breath [of God] or [one of His] messengers spoke to him... '

¹⁰ Well, the argument became so heated that the commander feared they would pull Paul to pieces. So he ordered the soldiers to go down and take him from their midst and bring him back to the garrison.

¹¹ Then on the following night, the Lord stood next to [Paul] and said: 'Be strong! So far, you've thoroughly testified to things about me in JeruSalem; but now you must also testify about me in Rome.'

¹² Well the next morning, the Judeans formed an alliance and swore with a curse that they wouldn't eat or drink until after they had killed Paul ¹³ (there were more than forty men who formed this oath-bound conspiracy). ¹⁴ So they went to the Chief Priests and elders and said: 'We've taken a solemn oath with a curse not to take a bite of food until we've killed Paul. ¹⁵ Therefore, we want you and the High Court to explain to the military commander that he should bring [Paul] to you, so you can learn more about the charges against him... and we'll be ready to do away with him before he gets there!'

¹⁶ However, Paul's nephew heard that they would be laying for him, so he went to the garrison and reported it to Paul. ¹⁷ Then Paul called one of the centurions and said: 'Take this young man to the commander, because he has something to report.'

¹⁸ So [the soldier] took [Paul's nephew] to the commander and told him: 'The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, because he has something to tell you.'

¹⁹ Well, the commander took him by the hand and led him in, then he asked him privately: 'What is it that you want to report to me?'

²⁰ And he answered: 'The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the Jewish Court tomorrow, pretending to want to learn more about the charges against him. ²¹ But whatever you do, don't let them convince you to do this, because they have more than forty men who are waiting to ambush him. These men have sworn an oath with a curse not to eat or drink until they've done away with him. And all they're awaiting is a promise from you.'

²² So at that, the commander sent the young man away, giving him the order: 'Don't tell anyone that you've explained this to me.' ²³ Then he called in two of his centurions and said: 'I want you to get two hundred soldiers ready, plus seventy cavalrymen and two hundred spearmen... have them prepared to march all the way to Caesarea at eight o'clock tonight. ²⁴ Also, provide animals for Paul to ride, then carry him safely to Governor Felix.'

²⁵ And thereafter, he wrote a letter that read like this: ²⁶ 'Claudius Lysias, to the mighty Governor Felix: Rejoice!

²⁷ This man was seized by the Jews and they were about to do away with him. However, I came there

quickly with a contingent of soldiers and rescued him, because I learned that he was a Roman. ²⁸ And because I wanted to know what they were accusing him of, I took him down to their High Court. ²⁹ And there I found that they had accused him over questions having to do with their Law... but he hadn't been charged with anything that deserves death or jail. ³⁰ However, because I learned about a plot against this man, I am sending him to you right away, and I'm ordering his accusers to speak against him there before you.'

³¹ So these soldiers followed their orders and took Paul to AntiPatris that night.

³² Then the next day, they sent him on with the cavalry (which later returned to the garrison). ³³ And when they got to Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor along with Paul.

³⁴ Well, after he read the letter, [Felix] asked [Paul] which province he came from. And when he heard that he was from Kilikia, he said: ³⁵ 'I'll give you a thorough hearing after your accusers get here.'

So he gave orders that [Paul] should be kept under guard in the Praetorian Palace of Herod.

Chapter 24

¹ Well, five days later, High Priest AnaNias arrived with some elders and an orator named Tertullus, and they explained their accusations against Paul to the governor. ² Then when he was called forward, Tertullus said this:

'You've brought about so much peace, and we welcome the well-thought-out reforms that you've brought to our nation ³ in every way and everywhere, with the greatest thankfulness, O mighty Felix. ⁴ But, so that I don't waste any of your time, I beg you to hear us briefly, in your kindness.

⁵ 'We found this man (this plague) stirring up rebellions among the Judeans throughout the whole inhabited earth, for he's the leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ And when he tried to profane our Temple, we arrested him. ⁷ — ⁸ You can examine him yourself to learn more about all these things that we're accusing him of.'

⁹ And at this, the Judeans also joined in the attack, affirming that the things [Tertullus] said were true.

¹⁰ Then the governor nodded for Paul to speak. And he said: 'I know very well that you've been the judge of our nation for many years. So I'm happy to speak in my own defense about these things that I've been accused of, ¹¹ since you are in a good position to understand them.

'It hasn't been more than twelve days since I went to worship in JeruSalem, ¹² and they didn't find me in the Temple arguing with anyone, nor did they find me inciting a riot in the synagogues... or anywhere else in the city for that matter! ¹³ So right now, they can't prove any of the things they're accusing me of before you. ¹⁴ But I do admit to this: That which they're calling *a sect*, is nothing more than the way that I've always been worshiping the God of my fathers.

'I believe everything that is written in the Law and in the Prophets. ¹⁵ And I have this hope in God (which they also share) that there's going to be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous. ¹⁶ This is why I'm constantly on the alert so as to not offend my conscience by doing anything against God or men. ¹⁷ And this is also the reason why, after [being gone for] several years, I returned [to JeruSalem]... to bring gifts to the poor in my nation and to present my offerings [before God].

¹⁸ 'It was while I was doing this that they found me in the Temple... ceremonially cleansed! I didn't

bring along a mob or start a riot! Why, some Jews from the [province of] Asia ¹⁹ should be here before you to accuse me... that is, if they can find something against me. ²⁰ Why not ask these who are here to tell you what wrong things they found me doing as I stood before their High Court... ²¹ there was just the thing that I shouted while I was standing among them when I said, *I am being judged before you today over the resurrection of the dead!*

²² Well, although Felix knew a lot about things that have to do with the Way, he just put them off, saying, 'When Commander Lysias gets here, I'll make a decision on this matter that you're so concerned about.' ²³ Then [Felix] ordered the centurion not to kill [Paul], but to allow him some liberty, and not to prevent his people from serving his needs.

²⁴ It was several days later that Felix arrived with his woman Drouille. And since she was a Jew, he sent for Paul and they listened to him talk about his belief in the Anointed Jesus. ²⁵ However, Felix became frightened when he talked about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment; so he said, 'That's enough for now! Go on back, and when I have the time, I'll send for you again.' ²⁶ However, he really hoped that Paul would try to bribe him; so he sent for him and talked to him frequently.

²⁷ Well after two years, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And because Felix wanted to be liked by the Judeans, he kept Paul locked up.

Chapter 25

¹ It was just three days after Festus was appointed the provincial governor that he traveled from Caesarea to JeruSalem. ² And there the Chief Priests and Judean leaders talked to him about Paul. ³ They begged him (asking it as a favor) to send [Paul] to JeruSalem... since they planned to ambush and kill him along the road. ⁴ However, Festus replied that he would just keep Paul in Caesarea. But because he would be leaving [JeruSalem] shortly, he told them, ⁵ 'Those of you who have been empowered to do so should come back with me, and if he has committed some crime, you can make your accusations against him there.'

⁶ Well, after he had spent about eight to ten days [in JeruSalem], he returned to Caesarea. And the next day, he sat on the Judgment Seat and ordered Paul to be brought in. ⁷ And when [Paul] arrived, the Jews who had come from JeruSalem stood all around him and charged him with several serious offenses... but they couldn't prove anything.

⁸ Then Paul spoke in his own defense, saying, 'I haven't committed any sins against the Law of the Jews, against the Temple, or against Caesar!'

⁹ However, Festus (in an attempt to gain favor with the Jews) asked Paul: 'Do you want to go back to JeruSalem and to be judged over these things before me there?'

¹⁰ But Paul said: 'I'm standing before the Judgment Seat of Caesar, and this is where I ought to be judged! I've done nothing wrong to the Judeans, as you're finding out for yourself. ¹¹ However, if I really am a wrongdoer and have done something that I should die for, I'm not begging off from dying. On the other hand, if none of the things they are accusing me of are true, then no one can just hand me over to them as a favor. So I appeal to Caesar!'

¹² Well, after discussing it with his counselors, Festus replied: 'You have appealed to Caesar; so to Caesar you will go!'

¹³ Then, after several days had passed, Agrippa (the king) and Bernice arrived in Caesarea to pay a courtesy visit on Festus. ¹⁴ So, since they were to spend several days there, Festus laid the matter of Paul before the king, saying, 'There's a man here who was left as a prisoner by Felix. ¹⁵ And when I was in JeruSalem, the Chief Priests and Judean elders brought me some information about him and asked me to condemn him to death. ¹⁶ But I told them that it isn't the Roman way to just hand a man over as a favor before he meets his accusers face to face and gets a chance to speak in his own defense. ¹⁷ So when they got here, I didn't delay the matter... the next day I sat down on the Judgment Seat and ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ And when they came [before me], his accusers didn't really produce any serious charges as I thought they would. ¹⁹ They simply complained about some dispute they had with him over questions about their religion and about some Jesus, who was dead, but whom Paul kept claiming was alive!

²⁰ 'Well, I became so confused over the matter that I finally asked if he would like to go to JeruSalem to be judged there over these matters. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be bound over for a decision by the August One, I ordered him to be held until I can send him to Caesar.'

²² So Agrippa told Festus: 'I'd like to hear from this man also.'

And he said: 'Tomorrow you will hear him!'

²³ Then the next day, Agrippa and Bernice arrived with a lot of pomp and ceremony and went into the hearing room along with some military commanders and prominent men from the city. And when Festus gave the command, Paul was brought in.

²⁴ So Festus said: 'King Agrippa and all of you who are here with us; Now you can see this man about whom all the Judeans, both here and in JeruSalem, are shouting that he shouldn't be allowed to live any longer. ²⁵ However, I haven't found anything that he's done to deserve death; so when he appealed to the August One, I decided to send him there... ²⁶ but I really don't have anything to write to [my] lord about. Therefore, I brought him here before you... and especially before you, King Agrippa, so you can examine him and judge something that I might write. ²⁷ For it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner [to Rome] and not be able to specify the charges against him.'

Chapter 26

¹ Then Agrippa told Paul: 'You may now speak on your own behalf.'

So Paul stretched his hands out and said this in his defense: ² 'King Agrippa; I'm happy to be here so as to defend myself before you today over all these things that I've been accused of by the Jews, ³ because you're an expert on all Judean customs and controversies. So I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴ 'This is the way that I've lived since I was a boy: From long ago, everyone in my nation (all in JeruSalem and all the Jews ⁵ who used to know me) can testify to the fact that I was raised in the strictest sect of our type of worship... I was a Pharisee. ⁶ And now, it's over the hope of a promise that was made by God to our ancestors that I'm standing here being judged, ⁷ since it's concerning the hope of attaining this that our twelve tribes have been so earnestly serving [God] night and day. And it's over this same hope that I'm being accused by these Judeans, O king. ⁸ So, why is it that you all find it unbelievable that God can raise the dead?

⁹ 'For a fact, I once thought that it was right to do whatever I could to oppose the name of Jesus the Nazarene... ¹⁰ and I did this in JeruSalem. Why, I locked up many of the Holy Ones and threw them in

jail, because I was authorized to do this by the Chief Priests. And as they were being brought up for execution, I voted against them! ¹¹ I often punished them in synagogues and tried to make them commit blasphemy; and since I was so crazy [in my hatred] against them, I even traveled to other cities to persecute them.

¹² 'Well, it was because I was doing this that I traveled to Damascus with an authorization and a commission from the Chief Priests. ¹³ Then at noon, while I was on the road, O king, I saw a light that was brighter than the sun that flashed from the sky around me and those who were traveling with me. ¹⁴ Then we all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in Hebrew: *Saul; Saul; Why are you persecuting me? It's so hard for you to keep kicking against the goad!*'

¹⁵ 'Then I asked, *Who are you Lord?* And the Lord replied: *I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.* ¹⁶ *Now, get up and stand on your feet. I've made myself visible to you so as to take you ahead of time to be my servant, and you can testify to the fact that you saw me and all the things that I'm going to make you see.* ¹⁷ *For I'm selecting you out of the people and out of the nations where I'm going to send you,* ¹⁸ *to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and to lead them from the power of the Opposer, toward God. I'm doing this so that their sins can be forgiven and they can receive an inheritance among those who have been made holy by [their] faith in me.*

¹⁹ 'As the result, King Agrippa; I didn't disobey this vision from heaven. ²⁰ First, I went to those in Damascus, then to those in JeruSalem and the entire countryside around Judea... and finally to the gentiles, to whom I carried the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing things that prove their repentance. ²¹ And this is why the Judeans grabbed me in the Temple and tried to beat me to death!

²² 'However, through the help of God, I've kept witnessing to both the least and the greatest down to this day. I haven't been saying anything other than what the Prophets and Moses told us would happen... ²³ that the Anointed One was to go to suffer. And that, as the first to be resurrected from the dead, he was going to proclaim light to these gentiles.'

²⁴ Now, while he was saying these things in his defense, Festus shouted: 'You're crazy, Paul! All the writings are driving you mad!'

²⁵ But Paul said, 'I'm not going crazy, O mighty Festus; I'm telling you things that are true and which make good sense! ²⁶ For a fact, the king that I'm speaking to so openly knows a lot about these things! Why, I believe that none of this has escaped his notice, because none of it was done off in some corner! ²⁷ King Agrippa; Do you believe the Prophets? I know that you believe!'

²⁸ But Agrippa said to Paul: 'It wouldn't take long for you to convince me to become a Christian also!'

²⁹ And at this, Paul said: 'I wish to God (whether it takes a short time or a long time) that not only you, but also everyone who hears me today would become men just like me... except for these chains.'

³⁰ Then the king got up, as did the governor, Bernice, and the men who were sitting with them. ³¹ And as they were walking out, they were talking to each other, saying, 'This man hasn't done anything deserving of death, or even for which he should be locked up!'

³² Then Agrippa said to Festus: 'Well, this man could have been released if he hadn't appealed to Caesar.'

Chapter 27

¹ Thereafter, since it had been decided that we had to sail away to Italy, they handed Paul (along with some other prisoners) over to a centurion named Julius, who was [a soldier] of the Augustus Division.
² So we boarded a ship along with AristArchus (a Macedonian from ThesSalonica).

Now, the ship had come from AdraMyttium, and it was sailing to places along the coast of the [province of] Asia. ³ So the next day, when we landed at Sidon, Julius treated Paul very kindly by allowing him to visit friends who cared for his needs.

⁴ Then from there, we sailed around Cyprus, because the winds were against us, ⁵ hitting the open sea [south of] Kilikia and PamPhylia, then putting into port at Myra in Lukias. ⁶ There the centurion found a ship that was coming from Alexandria and sailing for Italy, which he made us board. ⁷ Then, after sailing slowly (and with a lot of difficulty) for several days, we stopped at Knidos. And because the winds wouldn't let us go on, we sailed [south of] Salmone, Crete. ⁸ Then following the coastline carefully, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

⁹ Well, since we had lost so much time (it was already past [Yom Kippur]) and the sea was hazardous to navigate, Paul made a recommendation. ¹⁰ He said: 'Men; I see that any further navigation is going to result in damage and huge losses not only to the cargo and ship, but to our lives!'

¹¹ However, the army officer preferred to listened to the pilot and the ship's owner, rather than to what Paul was saying.

¹² Now, since this harbor was a poor place to winter, the majority recommended that they set sail and go on, in an attempt to make it to Phoenix, where they could spend the winter (it's a harbor in Crete, which has openings to the northeast and southeast).

¹³ Well, when the south wind started blowing gently, they thought that this would meet their needs. So they weighed anchor and coasted along the shore next to Crete. ¹⁴ But after a little while, a typhoon wind they call the Euro Clydon bore down on us. ¹⁵ And because the ship was being tossed so violently that it couldn't maintain its heading, we just gave up and [allowed ourselves to be] carried along by the wind.

¹⁶ Then, when we passed south of a small island called Cauda, we used all our strength to get hold of the rowboat that was tied at the rear of the ship. ¹⁷ And after we hoisted it aboard, they started wrapping the ship with [ropes and chains]. And since they were afraid of running aground on the shoals, they lowered the masts and we were just carried along. ¹⁸ Then on the next day (because we were still being violently tossed by the storm), they started to lighten the ship. ¹⁹ And by the third [day], they had tossed all the boat's furnishings overboard with their own hands.

²⁰ Now, since we hadn't seen the sun or stars for several days and a storm was still over us, we had lost any hope of being saved... ²¹ and considerable time had elapsed since anyone had been able to eat. Then Paul stood up in the midst of them and said, 'Men; You certainly should have taken my advice and not put out to sea from Crete, just to suffer this kind of damage and loss. ²² But now I'm telling you to be happy, because not a single life will be lost... though the ship will [be lost]. ²³ You see; a messenger from the God that I serve and to whom I belong came to me this evening and said: ²⁴ *Don't be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar. And {Look!} God has favored you by also giving you [the lives of] those who are sailing with you.*

²⁵ 'So be happy, men! Because, I believe that God will do exactly as He told me! ²⁶ However, we will

be cast ashore on an island.'

²⁷ Well thereafter, on the evening starting the fourteenth day, as we were being carried along in the Adriatic Sea (at about midnight), the sailors thought that we were getting close to land. ²⁸ So they did a depth sounding and found it at twenty fathoms. Then after we had traveled on a little farther, they took another depth sounding, and this time it was fifteen fathoms. ²⁹ So, because they were afraid that we might soon run aground on the rocks, they threw out four anchors at the stern and waited for daylight.

³⁰ Meanwhile, the crew tried to escape from the ship by lowering the rowboat into the sea, as they were pretending to drop anchors from the prow. ³¹ But Paul then told the centurion and his soldiers: 'Unless those men stay on this ship, you can't be saved.' ³² So the soldiers cut away the ropes that held the rowboat and let it drop.

³³ Well, very close to dawn, Paul encouraged everyone to eat something, saying: 'Today makes the fourteenth day that you've been on watch, and all that time you've gone without food or taking anything else into you. ³⁴ So I encourage you to eat something, since that will help you to survive. Then, not so much as a hair on any of your heads will be destroyed!'

³⁵ And after he said this, he took a loaf [of bread], gave thanks to God before them all, broke it, and started eating. ³⁶ So they all became more cheerful and started eating some food.

³⁷ At the time, there were two hundred and seventy-six people on the ship. ³⁸ And after they had enough food, they lightened the boat some more by throwing all the wheat into the sea.

³⁹ But when it finally became light, they didn't recognize where they were... there was just a bay with a beach, and they decided to try to get to the beach in the ship. ⁴⁰ So they cut away the anchors, letting them drop into the sea; then they untied the ropes that held the rudder, hoisted the foresail to the wind, and headed for the beach. ⁴¹ But then they hit a shoal out in the water, where the ship ran aground (the prow was stuck and it couldn't be moved), and the stern started falling apart in the crashing waves. ⁴² So the soldiers decided to kill the prisoners to keep them from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³ However, because the centurion wanted Paul to make it, he prevented them from doing that. He told everyone who could swim to dive into the sea and get to the shore first, ⁴⁴ then the rest could [float in] on planks and other things from the ship... and that's how everyone got to land safely.

Chapter 28

¹ Well, after we made it to safety, we recognized that this was the island of Malta. ² There the native people found us and showed us uncommon hospitality, building a fire and welcoming all of us in the cold and the rain.

³ Then, when Paul went and collected a bundle of sticks and laid it on the fire, a viper was driven out by the heat and bit into his hand. ⁴ Well, when the native people saw this dangerous animal hanging from his hand, they said to each other: 'This man must be a murderer; for although he made it to safety from the sea, justice isn't going to allow him to live!'

⁵ But [Paul] just shook the animal off into the fire, and he didn't suffer any ill effects... ⁶ though they thought he was going to swell up and suddenly drop dead. However, after they waited a long time and saw that nothing bad had happen to him, they started saying that he was a god!

⁷ At the time, there was some property located nearby that belonged to the island's leader ([a man]

named Publius). He welcomed us also and treated us kindly and hospitably for three days. ⁸ So when Publius' father became very sick with a fever and dysentery, Paul went into his room and prayed, then he laid his hands on him and healed him. ⁹ And after this, the rest of the sick people on the island started coming to him to be cured, ¹⁰ honoring us with many gifts, and several brought us provisions that we would need.

¹¹ Well, three months later, a boat from Alexandria called *The Sons of Zeus* (which had been wintering on the island) took us aboard ¹² and carried us to Syracuse, where we stayed for three days. ¹³ Then from there, we traveled around [Sicily] and arrived at Rheggium. And a day later, we caught a south wind and made it to Puteoli in just two days, ¹⁴ where we found some of our brothers who begged us to stay with them for the next seven days. Then from there, we traveled on to Rome.

¹⁵ Well, when the brothers [in Rome] got the news about us, they came as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Shops to meet us. And when Paul saw them, he thanked God, because he was very encouraged. ¹⁶ Then, when we finally entered Rome, they allowed Paul to live on his own, with just a soldier to guard him.

¹⁷ Well, three days later, he called a meeting of the local Jewish leaders. And when they had assembled, he said to them: 'Men... Brothers... Although I haven't done anything against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was taken prisoner in JeruSalem and handed over to the Romans. ¹⁸ But after [the Romans] examined me, they wanted to release me, because they couldn't find any reason to put me to death. ¹⁹ However, when the Judeans kept opposing [my release], I was forced to appeal to Caesar... though I didn't do this in order to accuse my nation.

²⁰ 'Well, this is why I begged to see you and to talk to you... for, it's because of the hopes of IsraEl that I have this chain around me!'

²¹ Then they told [Paul]: 'We haven't received any letters about you from Judea, nor have any of the brothers who've arrived from there reported or said anything bad against you. ²² So we think it's worthwhile to listen to what you have to say, because we know for a fact that this sect is spoken against everywhere.'

²³ Well after that, they arranged for a day when many more could come to hear him at the place where he was staying. And there he laid things out for them by completely testifying about the Kingdom of God. He also reasoned with them about Jesus from morning until evening, citing both the Law of Moses and the Prophets. ²⁴ So some started to believe in what he said, but the rest didn't. ²⁵ And since they couldn't reach a consensus, they all got ready to leave. So Paul said this: 'The Holy Breath [of God] spoke very accurately to your ancestors through IsaiAh the Prophet, when he said:

²⁶ *'You must go to these people and say:
When you listen, you'll hear, but not understand.*

And when you look, you'll look, but not see.

²⁷ *For these peoples' hearts have been closed.*

So though they can hear with their ears,

They will just not respond;

And they have eyes that are closed.

'Thus, though they have eyes, they can't see,

Nor can they hear with their ears,

Or understand with their hearts,

And return, so I can bring healing to them.

²⁸ 'Therefore, I'm warning you that God is now giving this hope of salvation to the gentiles... and they'll listen to it!' ²⁹ ——

³⁰ Well, he stayed in that rented house for two whole years, welcoming everyone who came to visit him, ³¹ telling them about the Kingdom of God and teaching them things about the Lord Jesus the Anointed One openly and without any interference.

Romans

*A letter to the Christian congregation of Rome that was written (possibly in Aramaic)
by Tertius for the Apostle Paul, sometime around 60-CE.*

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, a slave of Jesus the Anointed One, who is called an Apostle and who was set aside for the good news of God, ² which He promised through His Prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ that tell about His Son who came in the flesh from the seed of David, ⁴ and who proved to be God's Son in a powerful way when he (by [God's] Holy Breath) was resurrected from the dead... yes, Jesus the Anointed One and our Lord, ⁵ through whom we received loving care and a commission that we have obeyed so that all the nations might have faith in his name, ⁶ from among whom you've also become called ones belonging to Jesus the Anointed.

⁷ To all in Rome that are God's loved ones and have a holy calling; may you have favor and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus, the Anointed.

⁸ First, I thank my God for all of you through the Anointed Jesus, because your faith is being announced throughout the whole world. ⁹ For my God (who appointed me to use my breath in service to the good news about His Son) is my Witness that I never fail to mention you in my prayers. ¹⁰ I keep begging that I can find a way sometime (as it is God's Will) to come to you, ¹¹ for I long to see you so that I can give you some spiritual gift to help make you unshakable... ¹² or perhaps we could encourage each other through our faith (both yours and mine).

¹³ I don't want you to fail to recognize this, brothers: I planned to come to you many times, but I've been prevented from doing so until now, so that I could find the same type of fruitage which I have in you among the rest of the gentiles ¹⁴ (the Greeks and the barbarians, the wise and the ignorant... all those to whom I am indebted). ¹⁵ Yet I'm eager to preach the good news to you there in Rome also.

¹⁶ I'm not ashamed of the good news, because it's the power that God uses to save everyone who has faith... first the Jews, and then the Greeks. ¹⁷ Why, God's righteous ways are revealed in the faith of the faithful, for it's written: 'The righteous will live by [their] faith.' ¹⁸ However, God's fury is being displayed from heaven against all the ungodliness and badness of people who unrighteously try to resist the truth. ¹⁹ For, whatever can be known about God already shines among them, because God made it shine to them. ²⁰ Indeed, His invisible qualities can be seen in everything He's made since creation of the cosmos. And once they are understood, they clearly demonstrate His eternal power and might, which leaves [these people] without any excuse.

²¹ However, although they already know God, they don't glorify Him as God or thank Him, so their thoughts are wasted and their foolish hearts are darkened. ²² And while they claim to be wise, they've become morons, ²³ since they've turned the glory of the incorruptible God into images of corruptible men, of things that fly, of four-footed creatures, and of things that slither. ²⁴ So God is giving them what their hearts desire... uncleanness, to dishonor their bodies. ²⁵ Yes, they've exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and they've started worshiping and serving things that were created rather than the One who created them... the One who is praised through the ages. May it be so.

²⁶ And this is why God abandoned them to their dishonorable passions; for their females have changed the natural use of themselves into something that's unnatural, ²⁷ and the same is true of their males! They've left the natural use of females and started burning in their lust toward each other – males with males – doing what is indecent and receiving the type of reward they deserve for such wrongdoing. ²⁸

And because they don't approve of coming to an accurate knowledge of The God, He has given them depraved minds, which make them do these wrong things.

²⁹ Why, they're filled with unrighteousness, wickedness, greediness, badness, envy, murder, arguing, deceitfulness, rudeness, and gossip. ³⁰ [They are] slanderers, God haters, insolent, proud, braggarts, inventors of badness, disobedient to parents, ³¹ without any understanding, agreement breakers, without any natural love, and merciless. ³² And although they know the righteous judgments of God very well (that those who do such things deserve death); they not only keep on doing them, but they also approve of others who are doing such things!

Chapter 2

¹ So you are defenseless, O man, if you're someone who judges others. Because when you judge others you're condemning yourselves, since you're doing the very same things that you judge [to be wrong in them]. ² And we know that God's judgment on those who do such things is righteous. ³ Thus, when you judge those who do these things that you're also doing, do you think that you'll escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you fail to appreciate the value of the loving care, patience, and tolerance that He's [had to show for you]? Realize that these [fine] qualities of God are trying to lead you to repentance!

⁵ Why, because of your hard and unrepentant hearts, you're saving up a treasure of rage upon yourselves in that day of fury when the righteous decisions of God will be seen ⁶ and He pays them all back for the [bad] things they're doing.

⁷ Those who do good things are searching for age-long life, as well as glory, honor, and incorruption. ⁸ But for those who like to argue and disobey the truth by being unrighteous, there'll be just wrath, anger, ⁹ and some very hard times. Yes, this is what will come into the life of every person who works at doing what's bad (to the Jews first and then to the Greeks). ¹⁰ But there is glory, honor, and peace for all those who work at doing what's good (for the Jews first, and then for the Greeks), ¹¹ because God is impartial.

¹² Indeed, all those who are without the Law and who sin, will perish without the Law. Likewise, those who are under the Law and who still sin are condemned by the Law. ¹³ So those who just listen to the Law aren't deemed righteous before God, for only those who **obey the Law** will be found righteous. ¹⁴ But whenever people of the nations who don't have the Law naturally obey things in the Law, they not only **have** the Law, **they are the Law!** ¹⁵ For when they obey the Law, they show that it's written in their hearts and it's working with their consciences there to examine their thoughts. Then [their own hearts] will either accuse them or defend them ¹⁶ in that Day when God judges the hidden things of men by this good news that I'm preaching (through the Anointed Jesus).

¹⁷ Now, if you are called *a Jew* and you're resting on the Law and taking pride in your God, ¹⁸ and if you understand His Will and all the excellent instructions of the Law, ¹⁹ and if you think that you're a guide to the blind and a light to those who are in darkness ²⁰ (someone who can instruct the unreasonable and teach babies), and if you fully grasp all the knowledge and truth in the Law... ²¹ then do you, [the one] who is teaching others, also teach yourselves? And you who preach, *Do not steal*... do you steal? ²² And you who teach, *Do not commit adultery*... do you commit adultery? And you who are disgusted with idols... do you steal from temples? ²³ And you who take pride in [God's] Law... do you dishonor God by breaking the Law? ²⁴ For it's written: 'God's Name is being blasphemed among the gentiles because of you people!'

²⁵ Now, circumcision is good... as long as you're obeying the Law. But if you're a person who breaks

the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶ And if an uncircumcised person obeys the righteous requirements of the Law; Won't his uncircumcision be considered circumcision? ²⁷ So if those who are uncircumcised naturally obey the Law (except for what it says about being circumcised), they're really judging those of you who break the Law!

²⁸ Therefore, being a Jew isn't something that can be seen; for [true] circumcision isn't something that's visible in the flesh. ²⁹ Rather, being a Jew is something within you, since circumcision comes from the spirit of the heart, not from something that's written... it's not there to be praised by men, but by God!

Chapter 3

¹ In what way then is a Jew superior, or of what benefit is circumcision? ² It's a huge benefit in every way! For God entrusted His Word to the hands [of the circumcised]. ³ And if some [of them] don't believe; does their lack of faith prove that faith in God is worthless? ⁴ May that never happen! Rather, let God be proven true even if that makes every man a liar! As it's written: 'So that you might be proven righteous by your words and you can come off victorious when you're being judged.'

⁵ However, if our unrighteousness [is exposed by] God's righteousness; what can we say? Then God won't be wrong when He brings His wrath, will He? So I'm saying this to [all] men: ⁶ May that never happen! Otherwise, how could God judge the world?

⁷ But if I tell a lie and that makes the truth of God and His glory grow, why should I be judged a sinner? ⁸ Well, it's [because we're doing such things] that people aren't just slandering us, they're **proving** that some of us are saying, 'Let's do bad things so that good things can happen.' And this is why such a condemnation is so well deserved!

⁹ Is there anything that makes us [Jews] better than [gentiles]? No, not at all; for we have proven to you that both Jews and Greeks are sinners! ¹⁰ It's written: 'No one is righteous... no one!

¹¹ For there's no one who truly understands,

And no one one is searching for God,

¹² Since all have strayed and are useless.

And no one is kind... no not one!

¹³ Their throats are like open graves,

And with their tongues, they practice deceit,

For the poison of asps is under their lips.

¹⁴ With cursing and shouting, their mouths become filled,

¹⁵ And their feet are ready to go and spill blood.

¹⁶ In their swath, is misery and destruction,

¹⁷ And the road to peace, they've not known;

¹⁸ For in their eyes, there's no fear of God.'

¹⁹ Now, we know that everything that was said in the Law was meant for just those who are under the Law... yet it stopped every mouth and proved the whole world deserving of God's punishment. ²⁰ But no flesh is going to be called righteous before Him by obedience to the Law, because the Law just helped us to understand what sin is. ²¹ Therefore, the absence of the Law is revealing the righteousness of God... and to this the Law and the Prophets all testified! ²² So this is why the righteousness of God is now coming to all those who believe and who are showing their faith in Jesus the Anointed One. And it's why there is no longer any difference between us, ²³ since we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

²⁴ Being called righteous is a gift that [God] kindly gives to us through the ransom that was paid by the Anointed Jesus. ²⁵ For God sent him here as a sin offering, so that when we have faith in his blood, the sins that we committed ²⁶ back when God was just tolerating us, can be forgiven. And this is what allows us to look into His righteous ways today. Yes, He proves Himself righteous by calling [all] those who have faith in Jesus, righteous!

²⁷ So, where is our reason for boasting? It's gone! Does it come from obeying the Law? No, it comes through the Law of Faith, ²⁸ since we believe that a man is called righteous because of his faith, not by the works of the Law!

²⁹ [Do you think that God is] only the God of the Jews... isn't He also [the God of] of the gentiles? Yes! [He's the God] of the gentiles also! ³⁰ So God is really the One who calls both the circumcised and the uncircumcised righteous because of their faith.

³¹ Then, does our faith invalidate the Law? Never may that happen! Rather, it makes the Law stronger.

Chapter 4

¹ For example, consider our fleshly ancestor AbraHam. ² If [God] had called AbraHam righteous because of the things he did, [AbraHam] might have had a reason to boast... but not to God. ³ However, what do the Scriptures say? 'AbraHam was counted as righteous because he **believed in** The God (gr. *To Theo*).'

⁴ Now, when a man works [for a living], his getting paid isn't thought of as a kindness... it's something that he's owed! ⁵ However, those who don't actually do anything other than just believe in the One who calls the ungodly righteous are counted as righteous because of their faith.

⁶ Notice that David also spoke of how blest a man is whom God counts as righteous despite [all the bad things] that he's done. [For he wrote]:

⁷ 'Blest are those forgiven for breaking the Law,
And those whose sins have been covered.

⁸ Yes, blest is the man whose sins are not counted by [God]!'

⁹ So, doesn't this 'blessing' apply to both the circumcised and the uncircumcised? For as [David] said: 'AbraHam was counted as righteous because of his faith.' ¹⁰ And just what was [AbraHam's] situation when [God] thought of him that way? Was this **before** he was circumcised or **after** he was circumcised? It wasn't **after** he was circumcised, it was **while he was uncircumcised!** ¹¹ For the sign that he received (circumcision) was a seal of the righteousness that he showed while he was uncircumcised! Therefore, [AbraHam] became the father of those who have faith while they are yet uncircumcised, and [just like AbraHam], they can be counted as righteous! ¹² So he not only became the father of circumcision to the uncircumcised, but also the father of those who follow in the faith and footsteps of our father AbraHam when he was uncircumcised!

¹³ Indeed, AbraHam and his seed weren't given the promise of inheriting the world because of the Law, but because of their righteous faith! ¹⁴ But if [you can only] become heirs through the Law, then faith has no value and the promise is worthless... ¹⁵ for all that the Law brings is [God's] wrath. Yet, where there's no law, there's nothing to break!

¹⁶ Because we believe in [God's] loving care, we are assured that the promise applies to all who are [AbraHam's] seed... and they're not just those who are under the Law, but all those who have the

same faith as AbraHam, who is the father of us all! ¹⁷ For notice that it was written: 'I've appointed you to be the father of **many nations**.'

[Now, when this was said about him], he was standing before The God in whom he believed... the One who makes the dead alive and who calls the things that aren't and makes them exist. ¹⁸ So although [AbraHam originally] didn't have any reason for hope, he came to believe that he would become the father of **many nations**; for he was told, 'They will be your seed.'¹⁹ So the fact that his body was almost dead (since he was a hundred years old) and that the womb of Sarah was dead, this didn't weaken his faith, ²⁰ because it was promised to him by The God in whom he trusted. So he was strengthened by something that was unbelievable... and God was glorified by his faith! ²¹ For [AbraHam] was completely convinced that [God] could do whatever He promised, ²² and this is why he was counted as righteous!

²³ Now, the words, 'he was counted as,' weren't just written for his sake, ²⁴ but for the sake of all those whom [God] thinks of in that same way... those who believe in the One who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. ²⁵ For after he had been offered up for our errors, he was then raised. And this is why we too can be counted as righteous!

Chapter 5

¹ So, now that we've been declared righteous because of our faith, let's enjoy the peace that we have with God through our Lord Jesus the Anointed One. ² For it's through him that we have this faith and are able to bask in His loving care.

Therefore, let us boast about the hope [that we have] to the Glory of God. ³ And not only that; let's also boast about the difficulties we suffer, because we know that these difficulties give us endurance, ⁴ the endurance helps us to pass the tests, and passing the tests gives us a hope ⁵ that will never embarrass us, because it pours God's love into our hearts through the Holy Breath that He gives to us.

⁶ For a fact; the Anointed One came right on time and died for ungodly men back when we were still weak! ⁷ Yet, few would be willing to die for the righteous, and even fewer would be willing to die for the good. ⁸ But God showed His love for us through the Anointed One who died for us while we were still sinners!

⁹ Now, since we've been called righteous by [Jesus'] blood; isn't it even more likely that he will save us from [God's] wrath? ¹⁰ Because, if we found God's favor through the death of His Son while we were His enemies, how much more so will we be saved by His [Son's] life, now that He cares for us! ¹¹ And not only that; but now (through our Lord Jesus the Anointed One) we're also glorifying The God who has granted us this privilege.

¹² Why, sin entered the world through one man, and this sin resulted in death. So by this [one] sin, death was passed on to all men and they have all sinned. ¹³ So even before the Law arrived, there was sin in the world... yet sin isn't counted [against us] when there's no law to break. ¹⁴ But despite that, death still reigned from [the time of] Adam down to Moses, even over those who hadn't sinned in the same wrong way that Adam had sinned... but this [Adam] was a prototype of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ Now, the sin [of Adam] can't be compared to the gift [from God]. For if death came to many because of the wrongdoing of one man; think of how much more the loving-care of God and His gift (the loving care of one man, Jesus the Anointed One) has brought an abundance to so many!

¹⁶ This true gift didn't come from the one (Adam) who had sinned... indeed, his judgment was just condemnation. But [God's] gift is the justifying of many errors. ¹⁷ So if death did in fact come to rule through that one error; how much greater is the abundance of the gift of righteousness and the receiving of life that will come to rule through the loving care of that one... Jesus the Anointed.

¹⁸ Also, since the result of one error was to condemn all mankind; then through this one righteous act, everyone can be counted righteous so they can live! ¹⁹ And as the disobedience of one man caused many to become sinners; through the obedience of one [man], many will also be counted as righteous!

²⁰ Now, the Law came along so as to show up many errors. However, where there are many sins, a superabundance of loving-care can be shown. ²¹ Therefore, as sin has reigned and brought death; [God's] loving care will bring a righteous rule and age-long life through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed.

Chapter 6

¹ So, what can we say? Should we remain sinners so there can be more [of His] loving care? ² May that never happen! If we've died to sin, how can we still live in it? ³ Are you ignorant of the fact that all who were baptized into the Anointed Jesus were also baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore, we were buried with him by our baptism into the death, so that just as the Anointed One was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father, we should be walking in a new way of life. ⁵ And if we've been buried with him into the same type of death; then [like him], we will also be resurrected.

⁶ So we must recognize that the person we used to be was hung on a pole with [him] to bring an end to our sinful bodies... which means that we shouldn't be slaves to sin anymore! ⁷ Because, those who have died have been acquitted of their sins. ⁸ And if we believe that we have already died with the Anointed One, we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that the Anointed One has been raised from the dead and he won't die again, so death isn't his master anymore. ¹⁰ And when he died, he died for sins once and for all time... so now he's alive and he's living to The God (gr. *To Theo*)! ¹¹ Likewise, you should also consider yourselves dead when it comes to sin, but alive to The God through the Anointed Jesus.

¹² Therefore, don't allow sin to rule your mortal bodies anymore and don't obey its desires... ¹³ don't offer your body parts to serve as unrighteous weapons of sin! Rather, offer yourselves to The God as people who've been made alive from among the dead, and [offer] your body parts to God as weapons of righteousness! ¹⁴ Indeed, sin must not be your master... indeed, you aren't under the Law, you're under [God's] loving care.

¹⁵ So if we are no longer under the Law but under [God's] loving care, does that mean we can keep on sinning? May that never happen! ¹⁶ Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to obey someone as a slave, you're really the slave of the one whom you're obeying? [So, you're] either [a slave] to sin, which results in death, or [you're a slave] to obedience, which results in righteousness. ¹⁷ Thank God that, although you used to be slaves to sin, your hearts have started to obey this teaching that you were given, ¹⁸ which freed you from sin and made you slaves to righteousness!

¹⁹ I'm going to put this in simple terms because of your fleshly weaknesses: Just as you once offered your body parts as unclean slaves to immorality and Law breaking, you must now offer your body parts as slaves to righteousness and holiness; ²⁰ because, [back] when you were slaves to sin, you were free from righteousness. ²¹ And what was the result of the things [you did] back then? Aren't these the very things that you're so ashamed of? And these are the things that end in death! ²² But now that you've been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, you can have holiness and age-long

life. ²³ For the wage of sin is death, while God's gift is age-long life through the Anointed Jesus, our Lord.

Chapter 7

¹ Are you ignorant, brothers? I'm telling those of you who know the Law, that the Law is a man's master for as long as he lives! ² This is the same situation as with a woman who is bound to the law of her man for as long as he's alive... but after he dies, she's no longer under his law. ³ So, though she would be condemned as an adulteress if she were to ever become another man's woman while her man is still alive; after he dies, she's free from his law and she isn't an adulteress if she marries another.

⁴ So my brothers; You died to the Law through the body of the Anointed One, and now you belong to someone else... you've been raised from the dead so that you can now produce fruitage for God! ⁵ Because, while you were fleshly, what the Law labels as *sinful passions* were working within you, and the fruitage they produced was death. ⁶ But now that you've been set free from the Law (because you've died to the thing that held you down), you can become slaves to something new... to a newness of spirit, and no longer to some old writings!

⁷ So what should we say... that the Law sinful? May that never be true, for I wouldn't have known what sin was, were it not for the Law. [For example;] I wouldn't have known what envy was if the Law hadn't said, 'You must not envy.' ⁸ Yet, when I learned about this sin from the Commandment, it created every sort of envy [in me]. So before the Law arrived, sin was dead.

⁹ Actually, I once lived apart from the Law; but after I came under the Commandments, sin came to life and I died. ¹⁰ Therefore, I found that the Commandments which were supposed to lead me to life, led me to death... ¹¹ for the sins that I learned about in the Commandments seduced me and killed me. ¹² Nevertheless, the Law and the Commandments are still holy, righteous, and good.

¹³ So, what is it that killed me? Was it the thing that was good for me? May that never be true! Rather, it's sin (when it was exposed as sin by that which is good for me) that [led me to] death... for the Commandments made sin a lot more sinful! ¹⁴ This is because the Law is something that's spiritual, while I am fleshly and sold into sin. ¹⁵ So I really don't understand what I'm doing, for I don't do the things that I want to do, and I don't like the things that I'm doing. ¹⁶ Yet, despite the fact that I'm doing things that I don't want to do, I still say that the Law is good. ¹⁷ For although I'm no longer trying to be under [the Law], sin is still there dwelling within me.

¹⁸ I know that nothing that's dwelling within me (in this flesh) is any good; for although I want to do what's right, I don't have the will to do it. ¹⁹ So I don't do the good things that I want to do and I still practice what's bad. ²⁰ Therefore, if I'm doing things that I don't want to do, I'm really not in charge [of my body]... the sin that dwells there is! ²¹ So although I find that I want to obey the Law and do good things; badness is always here within me. ²² And although the man that I am on the inside really enjoys the Law of God; ²³ my body parts are obeying a different law and they're at war with the law of my mind... they drag me into the laws of sin that are in my body parts.

²⁴ O what a miserable man I am! Who will save me from this body of death? ²⁵ But thanks to God (through our Lord Jesus the Anointed); though I'm a slave to sin's law in my flesh, I'm still a slave to God's Law in my mind!

Chapter 8

¹ There is nothing that can condemn those who are in the Anointed Jesus (those who are walking in the ways of the Spirit, not [in the ways of] the flesh), ² because the law of the Spirit of life that's in the Anointed Jesus doesn't come from the Law of sin and death. ³ So the weakness of the Law is just the weakness of the flesh. And by sending His own Son over this matter of sin (in what appeared to be sinful flesh), God condemned the sins of the flesh, ⁴ so that the righteous requirements of the Law could be fulfilled in those of us who aren't obeying the flesh, but the Spirit. ⁵ For those of the flesh just think about fleshly things, while those of the Spirit [think about] spiritual things.

⁶ Indeed, the thoughts of the flesh bring death, while the thoughts of the Spirit bring life and peace. ⁷ And obeying the flesh brings God's rejection, because [the flesh] isn't under God's Law, nor can it ever be! ⁸ Therefore, those who follow fleshly ways can't be pleasing to God. ⁹ However, if God's Breath lives in us, we are no longer fleshly but spiritual... and those don't have the spirit of the Anointed One don't belong to him. ¹⁰ So if the Anointed One is truly within you, your body is indeed dead to sin and his spirit is making you alive through your righteousness.

¹¹ Therefore, if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you; the One who raised the Anointed Jesus from the dead will also make your dying bodies alive through His Breath that's in you. ¹² So brothers; since we don't owe anything to the flesh, we shouldn't be following fleshly [ways]! ¹³ For if you're living according to the flesh, you're intending to die. But if (by [God's] Breath) you're willing to destroy the deeds of the body, you will live!

¹⁴ Indeed, all who are led by God's Breath are Sons of God! ¹⁵ [And because of this,] you didn't receive a spirit of bondage to fear again; rather, you received a spirit of adoption, through which you can now call out, 'Papa! Father!' ¹⁶ This is the same Spirit that testifies to the spirit within us that we are God's children... ¹⁷ and if we're [His] children, we're also [His] heirs... yes, heirs of God and heirs with the Anointed One! However, we'll all have to suffer together so we can be glorified together.

¹⁸ I don't believe that the sufferings we currently must endure amount to anything when they're compared to the glory that's going to be revealed in us. ¹⁹ Indeed, [all] creation is awaiting and earnestly expecting the revealing of the sons of The God. ²⁰ For creation wasn't subjected to futility willingly, but by the will of the One who subjected it, in the hope that ²¹ all creation will also be set free from bondage to decay and then enter the glorious freedom of the children of The God!

²² We know that all creation has been groaning and in birth pains until now. ²³ And it isn't alone, since even those of us who have received the first fruitage of [God's] Breath groan within ourselves as we await the adoption and the [payment of] the ransom that will free our bodies. ²⁴ Yes, this is the hope that's saving us!

Now, when you hope for something that you can see, that really isn't hope... because people don't hope for something they can already see. ²⁵ However, if we keep hoping for something we can't see, we'll keep waiting for it patiently.

²⁶ And we have the [Holy] Spirit helping us with our weaknesses, because we don't always know what we should be praying for. Yet the Spirit is always there, groaning the words [that we] haven't spoken.

²⁷ And the One who searches hearts knows the thoughts of the Spirit; because, like a god, he's an advocate for the holy ones.

²⁸ We know that The God makes everything work together for the good of those who love Him (those who have been called to do His Will). ²⁹ For He recognized them ahead of time and chose them to

become like His Son, who was to be the firstborn from among many brothers! ³⁰ All whom He chooses, He calls; all whom He calls, He makes righteous; all whom He makes righteous, He glorifies!

³¹ So, what can we say about all of this? If God is over us, who can come down on us? ³² And since He didn't spare even His own Son, but handed him over for all our sakes; then, why shouldn't [we believe that] He will also give us everything else? ³³ For, who can accuse those who have been chosen by God? Yes, if God has declared us to be righteous, ³⁴ who can condemn us? So, since we now have the Anointed Jesus (who died, was raised from the dead, and is at God's right hand) there pleading our case, ³⁵ what can remove us from the love of the Anointed One? Not hard times, difficulties, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or swords!

³⁶ It was written: 'We're being killed for Your sake all day long... we are thought of as sheep to be slaughtered!' ³⁷ But through this One who loves us, we have conquered all these things! ³⁸ Why, I'm convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor governments, nor things that are happening or will happen, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to take us from God's love that is in the Anointed Jesus, our Lord!

Chapter 9

¹ In the name of the Anointed One, I'm telling you this as the truth (no, I'm not lying), for my conscience testifies with me in [God's] Holy Breath ² that I'm extremely sad and constantly sick at heart, ³ because I wish that I could be the one that is cursed by being separated from the Anointed One, rather than my brothers and fleshly relatives, the IsraElites. ⁴ For they're the ones to whom the adoption as sons, the glory, the Sacred Agreement, the Law, the worship, and the promises belong. ⁵ They're the ones [who descended] from the forefathers and the ones through whom the Anointed One [came] in the flesh... yes, praise God who is over it all through the ages. May it be so!

⁶ However, God's Word hasn't failed in this, because not all who came from IsraEl are really IsraEl, ⁷ nor are AbraHam's seed his only children. Though [it's written], 'That which will be called your seed will come through IsaAc;' ⁸ [IsaAc's] fleshly children aren't all the children of God... for the children of the promise are that seed. ⁹ Notice the promise that [AbraHam] was given: 'I will return at this time and Sarah will have a son.' ¹⁰ And this isn't the only occasion. For when Rebecca was pregnant with twins from our forefather IsaAc, ¹¹ and before they were born or did anything good or bad (just to show that God's purpose doesn't depend on the things we do, but on the One who does the choosing), ¹² she was told: 'The older will be the younger [one's] slave.' ¹³ And it was written: 'I loved Jacob, but I didn't care for Esau.'

¹⁴ So what can we say? Is God unjust? May that never be true! ¹⁵ But he told Moses: 'I will show mercy upon whomever I choose to show mercy, and pity upon whomever I choose to feel pity.' ¹⁶ So, it doesn't depend on the one who does the wishing or on the one who does the running, but on the mercy of God! ¹⁷ For the Scriptures say that He told the PharaOh: 'The reason why I raised you is so that I can show My power through you, and to have My Name announced throughout the whole earth!'

¹⁸ So the [point is this]: He shows mercy on whomever He wishes to show mercy, and He hardens [the hearts] of whomever He wishes.

¹⁹ So you might ask: 'Then, why does [God] find fault with anyone who resists His plans?' ²⁰ O man, who are you to question God? Will the thing that is made ask its maker, 'Why did you make me like this?' ²¹ For, isn't the potter in charge of his clay; and can't he make one pot for an honorable use and

another for a dishonorable use from the same lump [of clay]? ²² Therefore, God can choose to show His rage and make His power known through whatever pottery He's had to endure. And if He made it for His rage, it's only fit to be destroyed! ²³ But He can also show the richness of His glory upon the pots of mercy that He has prepared ahead of time for glory... ²⁴ those of us whom He called not just from among the Jews, but also from among the gentiles!

²⁵ It's as He said in Hosea: 'I will call those who aren't My people, *My people*, and the one I didn't love, *My loved one*. ²⁶ So in those places where they were [once] told, *You're not My people*, they will be called *The Sons of the Living God!*'

²⁷ Yet, IsaiAh shouted this about IsraEl:
'The people of IsraEl will then grow to be,
As many as the sands of the seas,
From the few that survive.'

²⁸ And for a fact, [we can see that] the Lord is [now] bringing about this reduction on the earth.'

²⁹ IsaiAh also prophesied:
'If Jehovah of armies hadn't left us a seed,
We would have become just like Sodom,
And the same as GomorRah.'

³⁰ Therefore, we can say that people of the nations became righteous (although they weren't trying to be righteous) with the [type of] righteousness that comes from faith, ³¹ while IsraEl, which was following a righteous Law, just didn't make it! ³² And why was that so? Because [IsraEl] didn't look for it in faith, but in the things that they were doing... they tripped over the 'stumbling stone.' ³³ As it is written:

'{Look!} Upon the foundation of Zion,
I'll place a valuable stone...
A costly, select cornerstone,
In order to serve as its base...
And those trusting in him will never be shamed.

'

Chapter 10

¹ Brothers, the goodwill that I have in my heart for [the Jews] and the thing that I beg of God, is for them to be saved! ² For I can testify to the fact that though they have a zeal for God, they still don't know [Him]. ³ And since they don't understand God's righteous ways and they're always trying to prove their own ways [to be righteous], they don't submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ However, the Anointed One fulfilled the Law so as to bring righteousness to those who have faith.

⁵ Moses wrote: 'You must follow all My rules and all My decisions... yes, follow them in such a way [that you learn to] live by them.' ⁶ However, righteousness that is based on following the [ways of] faith tells us: 'Don't ask in your hearts, *Who could ascend into the heavens to bring the Anointed One down,* ⁷ or, *Who could descend into the abyss to bring the Anointed One up from the dead?*' ⁸ What does it say? 'The words are close to you... they're in your mouths and in your hearts'... and these are the words of faith that we are preaching!

⁹ So if you confess and say the words in your mouths that Jesus is [our] Lord, and if you truly believe

in your hearts that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved! ¹⁰ For heart-felt faith [moves you to] righteousness, and your mouth's confessions [lead you to] salvation. ¹¹ For the Scriptures tell us, 'Those who believe in him will never be shamed.'

¹² So there's really no difference between Jews and Greeks, because we all have the same Lord... and he provides abundantly for all those who call on him. ¹³ Therefore, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved! ¹⁴ However, how will they call on someone in whom they don't believe; how will they believe in someone of whom they've never heard; how will they hear without someone to preach; ¹⁵ and how will they preach if they aren't sent? This is why it was written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news about good things!'

¹⁶ Yet, not everyone will obey the good news; for notice that IsaiAh asked: 'Who has trusted our report of the Lord?' ¹⁷ So, faith comes from hearing... that is, by hearing the things that were spoken by the Anointed [One]! ¹⁸ But now I'm asking, *Why haven't they heard*, since the call has gone throughout their whole land... in fact, the words reached to the ends of the earth! ¹⁹ Yes I'm asking, *Why doesn't IsraEl already know?*

Notice that it was Moses who first told [them]:

'I will provoke you to jealousy with those who are not [of your] nation and anger you with those who don't understand.'

²⁰ Then IsaiAh dared to [write]:

'I was seen by those not searching for Me,
And found by those not asking for Me.
I said, *Here I am*, to a nation,
Which has never called on My Name.'

²¹ And he went on to say this regarding IsraEl:

'I've held out My hands all day long,
To a people who just will not listen,
And to those who prefer to talk back.'

Chapter 11

¹ So, let me ask: Has God pushed His people away? May that never be so! Why, I'm also an IsraElite... I'm the seed of AbraHam and of the tribe of BenJamin, ² and God hasn't rejected all these people whom He knew first!

Don't you remember what the scriptures tell us that EliJah said as he was pleading with God concerning IsraEl? ³ [He said], 'O Jehovah; They've killed Your Prophets, they've dug up Your Altars, and I'm the only one left... and now they're seeking my life!' ⁴ And what was [God's] reply? 'I've kept seven-thousand people for Myself who haven't bent a knee to BaAl.' ⁵ So the same thing is true in this period of time; there are some still left who, through [His] loving care, have been chosen. ⁶ However, [receiving] His loving care doesn't come through [obedience to the Law], for if it did, His loving care wouldn't really be loving care. ...

⁷ So what happened to IsraEl? Well, not all of them received the thing that they were seeking... just the ones who'd been chosen from among them received it, while the rest became more obstinate. ⁸ For it's written:

'God gave them a spirit to slumber;
So their eyes haven't seen and their ears haven't heard,

Down to this very day.'

⁹ David also said:

'Let their table be a snare, trip lever, and trap,
As retribution upon them.

¹⁰ Let their eyes grow dim, so they cannot see,
And their backs forever bent double.'

¹¹ So I ask: Did they stumble so [badly that] they couldn't be raised [again]? May that never be so! However, they've been missing out as the nations were being saved, just to make them jealous. ¹² But if their missing out has enriched the world, and if their failures have enriched the gentiles; how much more will result from their [being included]?

¹³ Now, I want to address those of you who are gentiles. Since I'm really an Apostle to the gentiles, I can make my service even more glorious ¹⁴ if I can somehow make those who are my own flesh jealous and bring some of them to salvation. ¹⁵ Because, if throwing them away is restoring the world's relationship [with God], then what will receiving them back again mean, other than life for those who are dead? ¹⁶ And if the first fruits [can be made] holy, [then the rest of the crop will also be holy]... if the roots are holy, so are the branches! ¹⁷ Therefore, if some of the branches were broken off so that you wild olives could be grafted in, you have become sharers in the fatness of that olive [tree's] roots. ¹⁸ But don't start cheering because those branches [were removed]; for if you find yourselves doing that, remember that you aren't supporting the roots, they're supporting you!

¹⁹ You can in fact say, 'The branches were broken off so I could be grafted in'... ²⁰ and that's a fact! They were broken off because they lacked faith, and you have taken their place because you have faith. But don't think too much of yourselves... be afraid! ²¹ For if God didn't spare the natural branches, He won't spare you either!

²² Therefore, recognize God's loving kindness as well as [His] willingness to remove. So, although those who have fallen have been cut off and you're now receiving God's loving care; it's only yours for as long as you stay in that [good relationship], because you can be pruned off also! ²³ And then, if [the Jews] don't continue in their disbelief, they will be grafted back in, since God can graft them back in again! ²⁴ So if you were cut from an olive tree that's wild by nature and then (contrary to nature) grafted into the garden olive tree; recognize how much easier it will be for those who are natural branches to be grafted back into their own olive tree again!

²⁵ Brothers, I don't want you to ignore this mystery, so you don't become too wise in your own eyes: IsraEl was allowed to become calloused until the full number of gentiles came in. ²⁶ Yet, this is how all IsraEl is going to be saved! For it's written:

'A Savior will come out of Zion,
And remove from Jacob, his godless ways.

²⁷ Yes, this is My promise to them,
After I have removed all their sins.'

²⁸ Therefore, from the standpoint of the good news, they have become His enemies for your sakes! But from the standpoint of the choosing, they are the ones who are loved because of their ancestors, ²⁹ since the loving gifts of God and His calling are irrevocable!

³⁰ So, just as you were once disobedient to God but have now been shown mercy [despite your] disobedience; ³¹ they are now being disobedient. Yet, because you were shown mercy, they may also

be shown mercy. ³² Yes, God has locked them up together in disobedience so that He might show mercy to us all.

³³ 'O the depths of God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge,
And the mysteries of His decisions;
For His ways can't be figured out!

³⁴ 'Who's come to know the mind of Jehovah,
And who can give Him advice,

³⁵ Or given Him something that He must repay?

³⁶ Since all is from Him, by Him, and for Him,
To glorify Him through the ages'...
May it be so.

Chapter 12

¹ So I beg you by the compassion of God, brothers, to offer your bodies as living, holy sacrifices that are pleasing to God, and to serve Him in sensible ways. ² Don't [allow yourselves] to be molded by this system of things; rather, be transformed by renewing your minds so that you come to think well of the good, pleasing, and perfect Will of The God. ³ So, through the loving care that was shown to me, I'm telling all of you not to think too much of yourselves. Rather, think clearly, as God has given each of you your own share of faith.

⁴ [Remember that] our bodies have many parts, and none of [these parts] have the same function. ⁵ So, although there are many of us, we're really just one body in the Anointed One. Then starting from him, we are each parts of that body, so we all belong to each other. ⁶ And each of us also have different gifts that we were kindly given, whether it's prophesying according to our portion of faith, ⁷ serving in some service, teaching some point, ⁸ offering some encouragement, simply sharing, earnestly taking the lead, or cheerfully showing mercy. ⁹ Therefore, we should love [each other] without being judgmental. Rather, we should hate what is wicked and stick with the good things!

¹⁰ So, let your brotherly love make you more tender and caring to each other, and take the lead when it comes to showing honor to each other. ¹¹ Do your best... don't be lazy... slave for the Lord and bubble over with his Spirit... ¹² let your hope fill you with joy as you endure the difficulties and persecutions... and keep on praying. ¹³ Also, share whatever you have with the Holy Ones and be hospitable. ¹⁴ Learn to say nice things to those who persecute [you]... don't curse them, praise them! ¹⁵ Rejoice with people who are rejoicing and cry with those who are crying... ¹⁶ be aware of each other's needs... don't spend too much time thinking about high ideas, but deal with each other humbly... don't think too much of yourselves! ¹⁷ Don't be rude to people who treat you poorly, but plan to do good things in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ And if possible (whenever you can), be peaceable with everyone... ¹⁹ don't get even, loved ones; put anger in its place, because it's written: *'Let Me get even and I'll pay them back,* says Jehovah.' ²⁰ Also: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; and if he's thirsty, give him something to drink; for whenever you do this, you'll pile burning coals on his head.' ²¹ So, don't allow evil to conquer you, Rather, keep conquering the evil with goodness.

Chapter 13

¹ Everyone should submit to the authorities that are over them. Indeed, there are no offices of authority that aren't from God, or any that haven't been instituted by God. ² So those who resist the authorities whose laws have come from God are opposing themselves and condemning themselves! ³ For there's no reason to fear the rulers when we're behaving... just when we're misbehaving.

Do you wish that you wouldn't have to fear the authorities? Then, do good things and they'll praise you, ⁴ because they're God's servants for your own good. But if you're doing something that's wrong, you have good reason to fear. For that's why they bear the sword of God... they're God's servants and His avengers to show His rage upon those who are doing what is wrong!

⁵ So, it's important for you to obey them... and not just for [fear of] angering them, but because of [your] consciences. ⁶ This is why you pay your taxes; because, as public servants, they're serving God's purposes! ⁷ So, pay everyone whatever they're owed... to the tax collector, the property tax, and to the toll collectors, the tolls. Also, fear the police and show honor to those [who should be] honored. ⁸ Don't owe anything to anyone, except your love for each other, because those who love others have fulfilled [the] Law. ⁹ For [the Laws], 'You must not commit adultery; you must not murder; you must not steal; you must not envy;' (and whatever other Commandments there are) are summed up in the words, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' ¹⁰ So those who love don't do bad things to their neighbors, and the Law is fulfilled through love.

¹¹ As for those of you who are aware of the season; it's time to wake up, because our salvation is now closer than it was when we first became believers! ¹² The night is almost over and the Day is near; so we should be getting rid of the things that belong to darkness and putting on the weapons of light. ¹³ Yes, let's behave as we would in the daytime... not in wild partying and drunkenness; not in immoral sex and the lacking of principles; and not in arguing and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, we should be putting on the Lord Jesus the Anointed One, and no longer be planning [to satisfy] the cravings of the flesh.

Chapter 14

¹ Therefore, welcome those who are weak in the faith and don't try to judge their motives. ² For [example]: Those who have faith can eat anything, while those who are weak just eat vegetables. ³ But the one who eats [everything] shouldn't look down on the one who doesn't, and the one who doesn't eat [everything] shouldn't judge the one who does, since God has accepted them both. ⁴ For who are you to judge the house servant of another, since he stands or falls before his own master... and he can stand, because the Lord can make him stand!

⁵ Also, some consider one day as more important than others, while some consider each day the same as all the rest. However, each one should be sure of this in his own mind! ⁶ Then those who observe a certain day [as holy] should observe it to the Lord. Also, those who eat [whatever they wish] should eat it to the Lord, because they have thanked God for it, and those who don't eat [everything] should abstain to the Lord, since they too have thanked God [for what they have received].

⁷ So, none of us should be living just for ourselves, and none of us should be dying just for ourselves. ⁸ For when we live, we should be living for the Lord, and when we die, we should be dying for the Lord... because whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord! ⁹ And the reason why the Anointed One died and came to life again was so that he could be the Lord of both the living and the dead.

¹⁰ So, why are you judging your brothers, or why are you looking down on them, since we will all stand before the judgment seat of God! ¹¹ For it's written: '*As I live, says the Lord; every knee will bend before Me and every tongue will confess before God.*' ¹² So, since each of us must answer for ourselves before God, ¹³ we should stop judging each other. Rather, we shouldn't be setting anything before our brothers that will cause them to stumble and fall.

¹⁴ Now, I know (and I've been persuaded by the Lord Jesus) that nothing is unclean... it's only when a man considers something to be unclean that it's unclean to him. ¹⁵ So if what you're eating upsets your

brother, you aren't following the path of love yet. For you shouldn't want anyone for whom the Anointed One died to be destroyed over the food that you're eating... ¹⁶ nor should he speak badly of the good things that you're doing! ¹⁷ Because, the Kingdom of God has nothing to do with eating or drinking... just with righteousness, peace, and the joy of [God's] Holy Breath. ¹⁸ So, those of you who choose to make yourselves slaves in such matters [for the sake of] the Anointed One will be approved both by God and by men. ¹⁹ And what we should all be doing is trying to do the things that promote peace and to build each other up. ²⁰ [We must] stop tearing down the work of God over food!

So, though it's true that all [food] is clean, it can still be bad for someone who stumbles over what others are eating. ²¹ Therefore, it isn't good to eat meat, or to drink wine, or to do anything else that could be a snare to our brothers. ²² Because, we should be sure that the things we believe [to be right] also look good in the eyes of God... and any man who isn't being judged over things of which he personally approves should be praised. ²³ However, if he's unsure of something that he's eating, his lack of faith is condemning him for eating it; because, whenever we do something that we believe [could be wrong], that's a sin.

Chapter 15

¹ So, those of us who are strong must handle the weaknesses of those who aren't strong, and not just be pleasing ourselves. ² Rather, we should each be trying to please our neighbors by doing good things that build them up. ³ For even the Anointed One didn't just please himself. Notice that it's written: 'The insults of those who are insulting you, have fallen upon me.'

⁴ Understand that everything that was written until now has been written to teach us, so that through our endurance and through the comfort that comes from the Scriptures, we could have hope. ⁵ Therefore, may the endurance and comfort that comes from God supply these to you, so that you may pay attention to each other's needs in the same ways as did the Anointed Jesus. ⁶ Then together, as with one mind and one mouth, we can all bring glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One.

⁷ So, welcome each other as the Anointed One welcomed us (to the glory of God). ⁸ For [he] became a servant to those who are circumcised for the sake of the truth of God, and he verified the promises that were made to their ancestors, ⁹ while he allowed the gentiles to glorify God for His mercies. As it's written:

'That's why I will praise You **to the gentiles**,
And it's why I will sing to Your Name.'

¹⁰ And again it says:

'**Rejoice, you gentiles**, along with His people!'

¹¹ And again:

'Praise Jehovah, **you gentiles**...
Let all the peoples give praise to Him.'

¹² Also, IsaiAh wrote:

'From the root of Jesse, one will arise,
Who will rule all the nations;
And in him, **the gentiles** will all put their hope.'

¹³ So, may the God who gives hope fill you with all joy and peace in the belief that you'll have more than enough faith through the power of [His] Holy Breath.

¹⁴ I'm sure of this about you, my brothers: You are filled with goodness, because you've been filled with all knowledge. Therefore, you can also strengthen each other!

¹⁵ Now, I'm writing to you in plain words to remind you that, because of a gift that God kindly gave to me, ¹⁶ I was appointed a [Temple] Official to the gentiles by Jesus the Anointed One and as their Priest of the good news of God, so that the offerings of the gentiles can be found worthy and clean through the Holy Breath... ¹⁷ and the Anointed Jesus has given me many good reasons to be cheerful when it comes to these things of God.

¹⁸ Therefore, I wouldn't dare to tell of anything that the Anointed One might have failed to accomplish on behalf the gentiles through me, because I've obediently followed his instructions in everything that I've said and done ¹⁹ through the power of signs, omens, and by the might of the Holy Breath. For I've thoroughly preached the good news about the Anointed One in a circuit from JeruSalem all the way to IILyricum. ²⁰ And I've made it my goal not to preach the good news in places where they've already heard about the Anointed One, so I wouldn't be building on another man's foundation. ²¹ As it's written:

'He'll be seen by those to whom he didn't preach,
And those who haven't heard him will then understand.'

²² So it was because of this that I was prevented from coming to you several times before. ²³ However, now that I no longer have a place in these regions, and because I've wanted to come to you for several years, ²⁴ it's my hope to see you along the way as I travel to Spain. Then, perhaps you can come to the place where I'll be stopping over.

²⁵ However, right now I have to travel to JeruSalem to serve the needs of the Holy Ones, ²⁶ because those in Macedonia and Achaea were happy to share their things by contributing to the poor among the Holy Ones in JeruSalem. ²⁷ True, they were happy to do so, but they were also indebted to them. Because, if the gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they owed it [to the Holy Ones] as part of a public service to share things for the fleshly body.

²⁸ So after I finish this and deliver these things to them safely, I'll visit you on the way to Spain. ²⁹ And I know that when I do come to you, I'll come with a full measure of blessings from Anointed One.

³⁰ Now, I beg you brothers, through our Lord Jesus the Anointed One and through the love of the Breath [of God], that you share in praying to God on my behalf, ³¹ that I might be saved from the unbelievers in Judea... and that my service in JeruSalem may prove to be what the Holy Ones need, ³² so that when I have the joy of getting back to you (if it's God's Will), I can spend some time resting up with you there. ³³ May the God who gives peace be with all of you. May it be so.

Chapter 16

¹ I recommend our sister Phoebe to you, who is also a servant in the congregation at Kenchreae. ² Welcome her in the Lord as you would [welcome] the Holy Ones, and help her in any matter where she may have needs, because she has protected me many times... yes, me personally.

³ Give my greetings to Priska and Aquila, my fellow workers in the Anointed Jesus, ⁴ who have risked their necks for my life. And not just for me, but offer them thanks for all those who are called [from among] the gentiles. ⁵ And [send my greetings] the called ones in their home.

Also send my greetings to my beloved EpaiNeton, who is one of the first fruits of the Anointed One

in [the province of] Asia. ⁶ And send them to Mary, who has done so many things for you. ⁷ Give my greetings to Andronicus and Junias, my relatives and fellow captives, who are notable ones among the Apostles, and who've been in the Anointed One longer than I have.

⁸ Give my greetings to Ampliatus, my loved one in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in the Anointed One, as well as my beloved Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, the one who is approved in the Anointed One. Also greet those from the household of AristoBoulou. ¹¹ Send my greetings to my relative Herodion, as well as those in the Lord from the household of Narcissus. ¹² Greet TryPhaina and TryPhosa, [women] who are working hard in the Lord. And send my greetings to our beloved Persida, because she has done so many good things in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, the Lord's chosen one, as well as his mother and mine. ¹⁴ Greet AsynCritus, Phlegonta, Hermes, PatroBas, Herman, and the brothers who are with them. ¹⁵ Send my greetings to PhiloLogus and Julian, Nereus and his sister Olympas, and all the Holy Ones with them. ¹⁶ Also greet each other with a holy kiss. For all the congregations of the Anointed One send you their greetings.

¹⁷ Now, I beg you brothers to keep an eye on those who are creating divisions and setting traps by going against the teachings that you've learned... avoid them, ¹⁸ because such men aren't slaving for our Lord the Anointed One, but for their own bellies. They're seducing the hearts of people who aren't really bad by using kind words and praises.

¹⁹ However, everyone has noticed your obedience, so I rejoice over you. I just want you to be wise when it comes to doing what's good, and not to get mixed up in doing what's evil, ²⁰ since the God of peace will crush the Opposer under your feet shortly. So, may the loving care of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, sends his greetings, as do Lucius, Jason, and SosiPater, my relatives.

²² I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in [the] Lord.

²³ Gaius, our host, and all in his congregation greet you. Erastus, the city public works manager, greets you, as does KouArtos his brother. ²⁴ ———

²⁵ Now, to the One who can make you strong in the good news that I declare through my preaching about Jesus the Anointed One and about the revelation of the mystery that has been kept a secret through the ages, ²⁶ but which through the prophetic scriptures have now been made known and seen among all the nations by the command of the God of ageless time to promote obedience by faith; ²⁷ yes, to God who is the only truly wise One, be the glory through Jesus (the Anointed) through the ages. May it be so.

1 Corinthians

Written to the congregation in Corinth, Greece for the Apostle Paul, possibly by Sosthenes and possibly in Aramaic, sometime between 53 and 60-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, who was called to be an Apostle of Jesus the Anointed by God's will, and Sosthenes ([your] brother), ² to the congregation of God in Corinth... to you who have been made holy in the Anointed Jesus and who are called to be Holy Ones along with all those who call on the name of our Lord Jesus the Anointed everywhere (their Lord and ours); ³ may you receive loving care and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus, the Anointed.

⁴ I always thank God for you, because in His loving care (through the Anointed Jesus), God has given you ⁵ everything that you need to make you rich in Him. [He has given you] all the words and a complete knowledge, ⁶ while the testimony about the Anointed One is being made firm in you, ⁷ so you haven't lagged behind in any gift as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus the Anointed. ⁸ He will make you strong to the end, and you will be free from any accusations in the Day of our Lord Jesus the Anointed. ⁹ For God, who called you to have a share with His Son (our Lord Jesus the Anointed), is faithful.

¹⁰ Now, through the name of our Lord Jesus the Anointed, I want to encourage you brothers to all teach the same things... there shouldn't be any divisions among you. Rather, you must all learn to think the same way and to share the same opinions. ¹¹ For those of the house of Chloe have told me that you do a lot of arguing, my brothers. ¹² What I mean is that some of you are saying, 'I follow Paul,' or 'I follow Apollos,' or 'I follow Cephas,' or 'I follow the Anointed One;' ¹³ so the Anointed One is being divided. Why, Paul wasn't hung on a pole for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I'm thankful that I didn't baptize any of you (other than Crispus and Gaius), ¹⁵ so that no one can say that they were baptized in my name.

¹⁶ Oh yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; but as for the rest, I don't think that I baptized anyone else, ¹⁷ because the Anointed One didn't send me to baptize, but to preach the good news. [And I wasn't sent] with many wise words, because that would make the Anointed One's impaling pole less important. ¹⁸ For the message about the impaling pole is just a lot of foolishness to those who are dying... but to those of us who are being saved, it's the power of God. ¹⁹ As it's written: 'I'll destroy the wisdom of the wise and set aside the understanding of the intellectuals.'

²⁰ So, where are all the wise men? Where are all the writers? Where are all the great debaters of this age? Didn't God make the world's wisdom foolish? ²¹ And since the world doesn't understand the wisdom of God, He saw that it was good for us to preach foolishness in order to save those who would believe! ²² So while the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ we preach the Anointed One as having been hung on a pole. [Of course], this is a trap to the Jews and a lot of foolishness to the nations. ²⁴ But to those who are called (both Jews and Greeks), the Anointed One is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because, a foolish thing from God is wiser than men, and a weak thing from God is mightier than men.

²⁶ Now, notice this about your calling, my brothers: Not many were called who were wise in a fleshly way, not many were called who had power, and not many were called from important families. ²⁷ Rather, God chose the foolish things of the world to put its wise men to shame, He chose the weak things of the world to put the mighty to shame, ²⁸ and He chose the common things of the world and the things that are looked down on – the things that aren't – in order to make the things that are, worthless. ²⁹ The reason why He did this was so that no flesh can boast before God. ³⁰ And because

you are in the Anointed Jesus, he has become God's wisdom to us, as well as His righteousness, His holiness, and our ransom. ³¹ As it is written: 'Whoever boasts; let him boast in the Lord!'

Chapter 2

¹ So when I came to you, brothers, I didn't bring you the mysteries of God with high-sounding words of wisdom. ² In fact, I decided not to teach you about anything other than Jesus the Anointed, and about how he was hung on a pole. ³ I came to you as weak, afraid, and trembling. ⁴ And what I said and preached wasn't done with persuasive wise words, but with Spirit and power, ⁵ so you wouldn't believe because of the wisdom of men, but because of the power of God.

⁶ Yes, we do use wisdom when we're speaking to those who aren't mature... but not the wisdom of this age or that of the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing. ⁷ Rather, we speak God's wisdom as a mystery (hidden wisdom), when it comes to the things that God planned for our glory long before this age arrived. ⁸ This is the type of wisdom that none of the rulers of this age understand, because if they understood it, they wouldn't have hung our glorious Lord on a pole. ⁹ As it's written: 'Eyes haven't seen and ears haven't heard, nor have the hearts of men even thought about all the things that God has prepared for those who love Him.'

¹⁰ Yes, these are the types of things that have been revealed to us by God's Spirit, because His Spirit searches through all things... even through the deep things of God. ¹¹ For, as no man really understands another man better than the spirit that's in him; nobody understands the things of God better than the Spirit of God.

¹² So, we don't really have the spirit of this world, because we've received the Spirit that comes from The God (gr. *Tou Theou*), through which we can understand the things that He has so kindly given to us. ¹³ And as the result, we don't speak with words that come from human wisdom. Rather, we are taught by the Spirit in spiritual ways that communicate spiritual things to us. ¹⁴ For physical men don't recognize the Spirit of The God, because these are just foolishness to them and they can't understand them, since such things can only be understood spiritually. ¹⁵ And since a spiritual man can judge everything, no one can pass judgment on him. [As the scripture says:]

¹⁶ 'Who can know the mind of Jehovah
And who has become His advisor?'

So, we now have the mind of the Anointed One.

Chapter 3

¹ Brothers, I can't talk to you as I would to spiritual men. Rather, [I must speak] as I would to fleshly men (as babies in the Anointed One), ² for I've had to feed you milk, not solid food, because you weren't strong enough... and you're still not strong enough, ³ since you're men of the flesh! For whenever you're jealous and arguing, aren't you fleshly... aren't you acting like men of the flesh? ⁴ And when one of you says, 'I follow Paul,' and another says, 'I follow Apollos,' aren't you [proving yourselves] to be men of the flesh? ⁵ For what is Apollos and what is Paul? [We're just] servants through whom you became believers, since each of you was given to us by the Lord. ⁶ Though I planted and Apollos watered, it's God who makes it grow! ⁷ So the one who plants is nothing and the one who waters is nothing, for it's God who makes it all grow! ⁸ However, those who plant and those who water will each be rewarded for their own work.

⁹ Understand that we are just God's field hands, while you are God's field and God's house! ¹⁰ And it was only through the loving care of The God that I was assigned to be a wise chief craftsman. So although I laid the foundation, someone else is actually doing the building... and he must keep an eye

on how he's doing his building, ¹¹ because no one can lay a foundation other than that has already been laid, Jesus the Anointed.

¹² Now, whether someone builds on that foundation using gold, silver, and precious stones, or with wood, hay, and stalks, ¹³ [the quality of] his work will show up and be seen in the daytime, since it will be exposed by fire... and that fire will prove what kind of work each one has done. ¹⁴ Then if his construction remains, he'll be rewarded. ¹⁵ But if his construction burns down, he'll be damaged by the loss... though he'll still be saved. However, it will be as though he came through fire.

¹⁶ Don't you know that you are God's Holiest of Holies? For God's Breath is dwelling within you! ¹⁷ And if someone should destroy God's Most Holy, God will destroy him... yes, you're God's Holiest of Holies! ¹⁸ Therefore, don't try to fool yourselves. If you are thought of as being wise in this age, then you should become morons so you can be [truly] wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this system of things is just silliness to God. As it's written:

'He catches the wise in their cunning deeds.'

²⁰ And again:

'God knows the ways that men think,
And the things that they ponder are foolish.'

²¹ Therefore, nobody should boast about [being followers of] men, since everything already belongs to you, ²² whether [it came from] Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or this system of things, or life, or death, or what is here, or what's about to come... it already belongs to you! ²³ Rather, you belong to the Anointed One, and the Anointed One belongs to God.

Chapter 4

¹ So, let us think of [such] men as just galley rowers of the Anointed One and as house servants to whom the mysteries of God have been entrusted. ² And when it comes to house servants; all that is required of them is just to be found faithful.

³ Now, it really isn't too important to me if I'm being judged by you or by some human court... for I don't even judge myself, ⁴ since I'm unaware of anything against myself. However, this doesn't mean that I'm righteous, because the Lord is my judge. ⁵ So we shouldn't judge anything before its time. However, when the Lord's Day arrives, the secret things that are done in darkness [will be brought] into the light and the secret thoughts of hearts will be put on public display... then each ones' commendations will come from God.

⁶ Now brothers; if I've overstated these things about Apollos and me, I've done it for your own good so that you'd learn the rule: Don't go beyond the things that are written! And don't get all puffed up by showing more favor for the one than the other. ⁷ Who really knows you, and what do you have that wasn't given to you? So, since these things were just given to you; why should you be boasting over things that were given as gifts?

⁸ Are you already satisfied? Are you already rich? Have you started ruling without us? Why, I wish that you had already started ruling, so we could also be ruling along with you! ⁹ For I think that God has put us (the Apostles) last on display as men who are condemned to death... we've become theatrical spectacles in this world to both men and angels! ¹⁰ Yet, while we are viewed as fools because of the Anointed One, you are wise in the Anointed One... we're weak, but you're strong... we're dishonorable, but you're the glorious ones. ¹¹ Yet down to this very hour we've been hungry, thirsty, almost naked, beaten up, homeless... ¹² and we've had to work for a living. But when we're being shouted at, we praise; when we're being persecuted, we bear it; ¹³ and when we're being

slandered, we offer encouragement. But still, until now, we are considered the world's refuse and scum!

¹⁴ Understand that I'm not writing this way to shame you, but to teach you as my beloved children. ¹⁵ For although you could have thousands of tutors in the Anointed One, you don't have many fathers... and since I became your father in the good news through the Anointed One, ¹⁶ I beg you to start imitating me!

¹⁷ This is why I'm sending Timothy to you. He's my loved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of the ways that I'm teaching in all the congregations everywhere, through the Anointed Jesus.

¹⁸ Now, I know that some [of you] are all puffed up as though I weren't coming to you. ¹⁹ But I'll be there shortly (if it's the Lord's will), and I won't pay any attention to what those who are puffed up have to say. However, [I will pay attention] to their power, ²⁰ because the Kingdom of God doesn't have anything to do with words, but with power.

²¹ So, which would you prefer? Should I come to you with a stick or with a loving and mild spirit?

Chapter 5

¹ Yet I've actually heard that there is sexual immorality among you, and it's a type of immorality that isn't even [heard of] among the nations... that someone has taken his father's woman! ² Are you proud of this? Shouldn't you mourn instead, and shouldn't the man who committed this act be removed from your midst?

³ Although I'm not there physically I'm there in spirit, and I've already judged the man who has done this thing as though I were there. ⁴ My spirit and the power of our Lord Jesus agree that ⁵ in the name of our Lord Jesus, you should hand such a man over to the Opposer for the destruction of his flesh, so that the spirit within him may be saved in the Day of the Lord.

⁶ There's nothing for you to boast about here! Don't you know that a little [yeast] ferments the whole ball [of dough]? ⁷ So, you must clean out the old fermentation so that you can become something that's new and unfermented! For since the Anointed One (who is our Passover) has already been sacrificed, ⁸ we shouldn't be observing this Festival with old fermentation or with the fermentation of badness and wickedness, but with the unfermented bread of sincerity and truth!

⁹ Didn't I write you in my [last] letter to say that you must stop associating with those who are sexually immoral? ¹⁰ [Of course, I wasn't telling you to] completely avoid the immoral [people] of this system of things, or the greedy, or the extortionists, or the idol worshipers... otherwise, you'd actually have to get out of the world. ¹¹ But I'm now writing to tell you this: Stop associating with anyone called a brother who is sexually immoral, or greedy, or an idol worshiper, or someone who shouts insults, or a drunk, or an extortionist... don't even eat with people like that!

¹² Indeed, how much can the judgment of outsiders mean to me, when you aren't judging those who are among you? ¹³ God is going to judge those on the outside... however, you should expel any among you that are wicked!

Chapter 6

¹ Would any of you who think you've been [wronged] by another dare to take it to court [to be tried

by] unrighteous men rather than by the Holy Ones? ² Don't you know that the Holy Ones will judge the world? So if you're going to judge the whole world, aren't you qualified to judge small matters?

³ Don't you know that we're going to judge angels? And if so, then how much more the things of this life! ⁴ Or would you rather bring them before those whom the congregation views with little regard?

⁵ I'm saying this to shame you! For isn't there at least one wise man among you who can [serve as] judge between his brothers? ⁶ Or must a brother take a brother to court to be judged by unbelievers? ⁷ Really, if you're bringing lawsuits against each other, you've already lost the battle! Why wouldn't you rather allow yourselves to be mistreated or defrauded? ⁸ Yet, [it's a fact that] some of you are mistreating and cheating others... including your own brothers!

⁹ Don't you know that the unrighteous won't inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't make any mistakes about this; sexually immoral people, idol worshipers, adulterers, gays, men who have sex with men, ¹⁰ thieves, greedy people, drunkards, insulters, and extortionists won't inherit God's Kingdom... ¹¹ and that's what some of you once were! However, you've been washed clean, you've been made holy, and you've been found righteous through the name of our Lord Jesus the Anointed and by the Breath of our God.

¹² [It's a fact that] everything is legal for me, though not everything is good for me. And even though everything's legal for me, I won't allow anything to become my master. ¹³ For example, food is for the belly and the belly's for food; however, God is going to bring [the belly] and [food] to nothing. The same is true of the body... the body isn't for sexual immorality, it's for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴ Therefore, just as God raised our Lord, He will use His power to raise us.

¹⁵ Don't you know that your bodies are all a part of the Anointed One? So, should I take one of the Anointed One's body parts and give it to a whore? May that never happen! ¹⁶ For whoever joins himself to a whore becomes one with her body, since [God] said, 'The two will become **one flesh**.' ¹⁷ However, those who share his Spirit are also in the Lord, ¹⁸ and this is why you should flee from sexual immorality!

Why, every other sin that a man commits is outside of his body; but when he has immoral sex, he's sinning against his own body! ¹⁹ And don't you know that your bodies are the Divine Habitation of the Holy Spirit within you, which you received from God? So you no longer belong to yourselves, ²⁰ because you were bought and paid for. Therefore, you must use your bodies to glorify God!

Chapter 7

¹ Now, concerning those things that you wrote to me about:

It's best for a man not to even touch a woman. ² However, because of all the immorality, each man should be allowed to have his own woman and each woman her own man. ³ Then every man should give his woman what she's due, and every woman should do the same for her man. ⁴ Women don't have authority (gr. *exousiazai*) over their own bodies, their men do. And men don't have authority over their own bodies, their women do. ⁵ So don't deprive each other, except for set periods that you may agree on to devote time to prayer... then come together again. Don't allow the Opposer to tempt you by your lack of self control (gr. *akrasian*). ⁶ However, this is just my opinion, it's not a commandment.

⁷ I wish that all were as I am. However, everyone has his own gift from God, and each in a different way. ⁸ I'm telling unmarried people and widows that it's best for them to be like me. ⁹ However, if they

don't have self control (gr. *enkrateuontai*), let them marry, because it's better to marry than to burn [with passion].

¹⁰ To married people I give this warning (not really me, but the Lord): A woman shouldn't leave her man. ¹¹ But if she does, she must either remain unmarried or make up with him... and men shouldn't leave their women.

¹² To the rest I say this (yes me, not the Lord): If any brother has an unbelieving woman who agrees to live with him, he shouldn't leave her. ¹³ And if a woman has an unbelieving man who agrees to live with her, she shouldn't leave him, ¹⁴ because the woman makes [her] unbelieving man holy, and the brother makes [his] unbelieving woman holy... otherwise, their children would be unclean; but now they are holy. ¹⁵ However, if the unbelieving one wants to leave, let him go, because a brother or a sister isn't a slave to such matters, since God has called us to peace. ¹⁶ But woman; how do you know that you won't save your man? Or man; how do you know that you won't save your woman?

¹⁷ Also, as the Lord has given each one his share and as God has called each one, let him follow in that same path. This is what I'm teaching in all the congregations. ¹⁸ Was any man called when he was circumcised? Then he shouldn't act like someone who's uncircumcised. Has any man been called when he was uncircumcised? Then he shouldn't be circumcised. ¹⁹ For circumcision doesn't mean anything and uncircumcision doesn't mean anything; [what's important] is obeying God's commandments! ²⁰ So it doesn't matter what state you were in when you were called; just stay that way.

²¹ Were you called when you were a slave? Don't let that bother you... but if you can become free, seize the opportunity, ²² because anyone in the Lord who was called [when he was] a slave, has already become a free man in the Lord. And anyone was free when he was called has become a slave of the Anointed One. ²³ So since you've already been bought and paid for; stop becoming slaves to men!

²⁴ Therefore, brothers; it doesn't matter what condition each [of you] were called in, just stay that way, living to God.

²⁵ Now, when it comes to virgins, I don't have any commands from the Lord. However, I'll give you my own opinion (as one who by the Lord's mercy, has been faithful). ²⁶ I think that it's best for anyone who's had a reason to stay one way, to continue as he [or she] is. ²⁷ [For example], are you tied to a woman? Stop trying to get free! Are you free from a woman? Stop searching for a woman! ²⁸ However, even if you marry, you aren't sinning. And if a virgin marries, she hasn't sinned.

Remember that those who [marry] will have fleshly problems, and I'm just trying to save you [from this].

²⁹ Let me say this brothers... the season has been shortened! Therefore:

Let those who have women act as though they have none;

³⁰ Let those who are crying act like those who don't cry;

Let those who are rejoicing act like those who don't rejoice;

Let those who are buying act like those who own nothing;

³¹ And let those who are using this system of things act like those who don't use it... because the ways of this world are about to change.

³² [You see], I don't want you to worry about anything. A single man worries about the things of the

Lord and winning His approval, ³³ while a married man worries about worldly things and winning his woman's approval... so he's divided. ³⁴ Also, single women and virgins just worry about the things of the Lord... about how they can be holy in their bodies and who they are on the inside. However, a married woman must worry about worldly things and winning the approval of her man.

³⁵ Now, I'm just describing the best situation... I'm not trying to hang you, I'm just trying to move you to do things that work out well and sit well with the Lord, and which won't distract you. ³⁶ But if anyone thinks his virginity isn't working out and he's past the bloom of youth, this is what should happen: Allow him to do whatever he wishes, for he isn't sinning if he marries! ³⁷ However, if someone is settled in heart, doesn't have any [sexual] needs, has self-control, and has decided in his heart to keep his virginity, he'll do better. ³⁸ Yes, although the one who gives up his [or her] virginity and marries does well, the one who doesn't marry does better. ³⁹ For a woman is tied down as long as her man is alive. But if her man falls asleep [in death], she can marry whomever she wishes (but only in the Lord). ⁴⁰ However, it's my opinion that she'll be happier if she stays [single]... and I consider myself as having God's Spirit.

Chapter 8

¹ Now, regarding things that have been sacrificed to idols; We realize that everyone knows something [about this]... but knowledge puffs up, while love builds up. ² So if anyone thinks he already knows everything about this, he doesn't really understand it as well as he should yet. ³ However, God knows those who love Him.

⁴ So, when it comes to eating food that has been offered to idols; We know that idols are really nothing in this world, and that there is no God but the One. ⁵ And though there are some that are called gods, whether heavenly or earthly (there are many gods and many lords), ⁶ we have just one God, the Father, through whom everything has come, and we are in Him. There is also just one Lord, Jesus the Anointed, through whom everything came to be, and we are through him.

⁷ However, not everyone fully understands this. For up until now, some have followed the practice of eating food to an idol as a sacrifice to that idol... and this damaged their consciences and made them weak. ⁸ But understand that what we eat doesn't affect our standing with God; so if we choose not to eat [food that was sacrificed to idols], we aren't sinning... nor will we be blest if we eat it. ⁹ But be careful that this power of yours doesn't become a trap to those who are weak. ¹⁰ Because, if they see you (the one who knows) dining in a temple; won't the weak one's conscience be built up to the point where he starts eating things as a sacrifice to idols? ¹¹ So because of your knowledge, you will have ruined the man who is weak... your brother for whom the Anointed One died! ¹² And when you sin against your brother in this way and wound his weak conscience, you're sinning against the Anointed One. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a trap to my brother, I'll not eat the meat [of idols] through [the rest of] the age, so I don't turn myself into a snare for my brother.

Chapter 9

¹ Am I not free? Am I not an Apostle? Haven't I seen our Lord Jesus, and aren't you my works in the Lord? ² If I weren't an Apostle to all the rest, I certainly am to you, because you're the seal that confirms my Apostleship in the Lord! ³ So I say this in my defense before those who would judge me: ⁴ I can eat or drink whatever I wish, ⁵ and I could also take a sister as my woman [if I wished], as did the other Apostles, the Lord's brothers, and Cephas (Peter).

⁶ Also, are BarNabas and I [the only ones] who have to work for a living? ⁷ Who serves as a soldier at his own expense... who plants a vineyard and doesn't eat its fruit... who shepherds a flock and

doesn't drink some of the [sheep's] milk? ⁸ Is this just human reasoning, or doesn't the Law say the same thing? ⁹ For it's written in the Law of Moses: 'You must not muzzle a bull when it's threshing the grain.'

So, does God just care about bulls, ¹⁰ or didn't he say that for all our sakes? Really, it was written for all of us, because the man who plows ought to plow in hope, and the man who threshes ought to do so in hope of eating [the grain]. ¹¹ Therefore, if we've planted things of the Spirit within you, is it such a big thing for us to harvest things of the flesh from you? ¹² And if the people you work for are benefiting from your efforts, shouldn't we [benefit] from them even more? Yet, we haven't really used the [full] authority that we have, for we've been taking care of ourselves so that we don't get in the way of the good news about the Anointed One.

¹³ Don't you know that those who serve in the Temple also eat the things that are [contributed], and that those who serve at the Altar also share in the things that are sacrificed? ¹⁴ So the Lord meant for those who preach the good news to be provided for by means of this good news. ¹⁵ However, I haven't used any of those provisions, and I'm not writing this so that will to happen to me... for I'd rather die than allow someone to take away my reason for boasting!

¹⁶ Now, there's no reason for me to boast when it comes to preaching the good news, because it's something that I must do... in fact, woe to me if I don't preach the good news! ¹⁷ If I do this willingly, I'll receive my wages. However, if I don't do it willingly, it's still my assignment. ¹⁸ Then what is my pay? It's my ability to preach the good news free of charge. And by doing this, I'm not abusing the authority that I have in the good news, ¹⁹ which leaves me free from being indebted to anyone.

Yes, I've made myself a slave to everyone so that I can gain more. ²⁰ I became a Jew to Jews, so I could gain Jews; I became as under the Law to those who are under the Law (although I'm not under the Law), so I could gain those who are under the Law; ²¹ I became as someone who is without the Law to those who aren't under the Law (although I'm not without law toward God and I'm under the law of the Anointed One), so I could gain those who are without the Law; ²² and I became weak to those who are weak, so I could gain the weak. Yes, I've become everything to everyone and used every means to save some of them, ²³ doing it all for the sake of the good news... so that I might share it with others!

²⁴ Don't you know that although all who [enter a] race in the stadium must run, only one gets the prize? So, run to win! ²⁵ And every fighter has to maintain full control of himself just to win a garland that rots away... but we will receive one that doesn't rot. ²⁶ As the result, I'm not running timidly nor am I just swinging my arms... I'm boxing! ²⁷ I beat my body and treat it as a slave, so that after I've preached to others, I won't be rejected.

Chapter 10

¹ Now, I don't want you to miss this point, brothers: Our ancestors were under the cloud and they all passed through the sea, ² so they were all baptized into Moses because of the cloud and the sea. ³ They all also ate the same food from [God's] Spirit, ⁴ and they all drank the same spiritual drink, because they drank from the spirit of the rock... and that rock was the Anointed One. ⁵ However, because God wasn't pleased with most of them, He left [their bodies] spread across the desert.

⁶ Now, things like this should serve as examples to us, so we won't become people who desire bad things as they did... ⁷ and we don't want to become idol worshipers, as some of them did!

Notice that it's written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink, **and then they got up to play.**'⁸ So we shouldn't commit sexual immorality as some of them did, because twenty-three thousand of them fell in just one day!⁹ And we don't want to put Jehovah to the test as some of them did, because they were destroyed by snakes.¹⁰ Nor do we want to complain as some of them did, because they were killed by the destroyer!

¹¹ Recognize that these things that happened to them [should serve as] examples to us, for they were written as warnings to us upon whom the end of the age has arrived.¹² So let those who think they are standing be careful that they don't fall!¹³ For none of you have faced any temptations yet, other than the things that are common to all men. And since God is faithful, He won't allow you to be tested beyond what you can bear... for with every temptation He provides a way out, so you can hang on.¹⁴ However, my loved ones; Flee from idol worship!¹⁵ And since I'm talking as I would to people with good sense; figure out for yourselves whether the things that I'm saying are the truth.

¹⁶ Now, when we [say a] blessing over the cup of blessings, aren't we sharing in the blood of the Anointed One? And when we break the loaf, aren't we sharing in the body of the Anointed One?¹⁷ So although and there are many [of us], there's just one loaf... and we are all one body, since we all eat from that same loaf.¹⁸ And as in fleshly Israel; don't those who eat the sacrifices also share part of it with the Altar?

¹⁹ So what am I saying... that idols are anything, or that things sacrificed to idols are anything?²⁰ No, I'm telling you that the things the nations offer as sacrifices are really being offered to the demons, not to God... and I don't want you to become sharers with the demons!²¹ For you can't drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, nor can you eat at the table of the Lord and at the table of the demons.²² We aren't trying to make the Lord jealous, are we? For we aren't mightier than he is, are we?

²³ Recognize that although everything is legal, not everything is good for us... yes, everything is legal, but not everything makes us stronger.²⁴ So let's not just be watching out for our own interests, but [also for the best interests] of others.

²⁵ The fact is, you can eat whatever is sold at the meat markets without it bothering your consciences,²⁶ for the earth and everything in it belongs to the Lord!²⁷ And if an unbeliever invites you [for a meal] and you wish to accept, you can eat whatever is set before you and not let it bother your consciences.²⁸ But if someone should say, 'This was offered as a sacrifice,' don't eat it. You should do this for the sake of the one who said that because of conscience...²⁹ not your conscience, that of the other person.

But [you might ask], 'Why should anyone else judge my freedom?'³⁰ If I'm eating thankfully, why should I be slandered over something for which I've given thanks?³¹ Well, whether you're eating, drinking, or doing anything else, you should be doing everything for God's glory.³² So you shouldn't be doing anything that would stumble Jews, Greeks, or the Called Ones of God.³³ And this is why I'm trying to please everyone in everything, and not just doing what's best for myself... I'm [trying to do] what's best for others so I can save them!

Chapter 11

¹ I'm asking you to imitate me, as I'm [imitating] the Anointed One...² although I also praise you for remembering me and all the things that I've given to you, and for holding onto the things that I taught you.³ But I want you to recognize this: The head of the woman is the man, the head of every man is the Anointed One, and the head of the Anointed One is God.⁴ So every man who prays or prophesies with something on his head shames his head.⁵ And every woman who prays or prophesies without

something on her head, shames her head, for it's the same as if she had her head shaved.

⁶ Indeed, if a woman doesn't wish to cover her head, she should have her hair cut off. But if cutting her hair short or shaving her head would shame a woman, then she should cover her head. ⁷ However, a man shouldn't cover his head, since he [was created in] the image and glory of God... while a woman is the glory of man, ⁸ since the man didn't come from the woman, the woman came from the man. ⁹ Also, the man wasn't created for the woman, the woman [was created] for the man. ¹⁰ So that's why the woman should have [a sign of] authority on her head... as well as [for the sake of God's] messengers. ¹¹ Yet there really isn't any difference between males and females in the Lord; ¹² for as the female came through the male, males come through females, while everything comes from God.

¹³ So judge it for yourselves; Is it becoming for a woman to pray revealed before God? ¹⁴ Doesn't physical nature teach us that if a man has long hair it dishonors him, ¹⁵ but if a woman has long hair it glorifies her? Yes, that's why women were given longer hair. ¹⁶ However, if anyone wants to argue about this, we don't have any other custom, nor do the congregations of God.

¹⁷ In addition to that, I'm not praising anyone when it comes to your meetings, for they seem to be doing more harm than good. ¹⁸ First, I hear that when you meet as a congregation, there are divisions among you... and I believe that's partly true, ¹⁹ because there had to be sects among you so that those who are approved could be clearly identified.

²⁰ However, when we meet in our gatherings, isn't it to eat the Lord's Supper? ²¹ Yet [I'm hearing that] some of you are bringing your own meals and eating and drinking and getting drunk, while others have to go hungry! ²² Don't you have homes where you can eat and drink... or are you condemning the congregation of God by shaming those who don't have anything?

What should I say to you? Should I praise you in this? No, I don't praise you!

²³ Let me tell you something that I received from the Lord, and which I want to share with you... it's that the Lord Jesus, on the very night that he was going to be handed over, took a loaf, ²⁴ and after giving thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that I'm giving for you. Keep on doing this in remembrance of me.' ²⁵ And after the meal he did the same thing with the cup, saying, 'In this cup is the blood of my New Sacred Agreement. Keep on doing this; and as often as you drink it, think of me.'

²⁶ Therefore, as often as you eat from the loaf and drink from the cup, you will keep proclaiming the death of the Lord until he arrives. ²⁷ But recognize that anyone who eats the loaf and drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy condition will also be judged by the Lord's body and blood. ²⁸ Therefore, each person should examine himself before eating from the loaf or drinking from the cup; ²⁹ for those who eat and drink are eating and drinking judgment on themselves if they don't judge [the worthiness of] their own flesh. ³⁰ And this is why so many of you are weak and unhealthy, and quite a few have fallen asleep! ³¹ Understand that if you would judge yourselves, you wouldn't have to be judged. ³² But [if you leave that] judgment to the Lord, you'll have to be disciplined so that you aren't condemned along with this system of things!

³³ So my brothers; when you come together to eat, wait for each other! ³⁴ And if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so you don't meet for judgment.

As for the rest of the matters; I'll straighten them out when I get there.

Chapter 12

¹ Now brothers; I don't want you to be ignorant when it comes to spiritual things. ² For you know that when you were 'gentiles,' you were led to be followers of dumb idols. ³ But now I want you to understand that nobody, when they're speaking through the power of God's Breath, can say that Jesus is cursed or that Jesus is Lord, other than by Holy Spirit. ⁴ For no matter how many types of gifts there are, they all come from the same Spirit. ⁵ And no matter how many types of services there are, [they all come from] the same Lord. ⁶ So although there are many types of manifestations, they all come from the same God, who provides the outworking of everything for each person. ⁷ And it's all these many ways that the Spirit expresses itself through different people that brings it all together.

⁸ Therefore, through the same Spirit, this one is given words of wisdom, while that one is given words of knowledge. ⁹ It gives words of faith to some, while others get the gift of healing, ¹⁰ or the ability to perform powerful deeds, or of prophesying, or of distinguishing different spirits, or of speaking different languages, or of interpreting the languages... ¹¹ yet they all come from the same Spirit, which works in many ways (as it wishes) through each person.

¹² So just as the body is a single thing that has many members, and all the members (while being many) make up that one body... this is how the Anointed One is. ¹³ For through the same Spirit we were all baptized into that one body, whether we are Jews or Greeks, slaves or free men... and we were all made to drink from this Spirit. ¹⁴ So understand that this body isn't one part, but many. ¹⁵ Therefore, if the foot should say, 'Because I'm not a hand, I'm no part of the body,' that doesn't mean it's no part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, 'Because I'm not an eye, I'm no part of the body,' that doesn't mean it's no part of the body either. ¹⁷ For if the whole body were just an eye, how would it hear? And if it could just hear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ Therefore, God has placed each part in the body as He pleases. ¹⁹ And if all parts were the same, how could there be a body?

²⁰ So understand that although there are many body parts, there's just one body; ²¹ and the eye can't say to the hand, 'I don't need you,' nor can the head say to the feet, 'I don't need you.' ²² And notice that the weaker each body part seems to be, the more it is needed. ²³ For the body parts that we consider the least honorable are the ones that we surround with the most honor. And our unattractive parts were made more attractive, ²⁴ because our attractive parts don't need any help. For when God assembled the body, He gave more honor to the parts that have less, ²⁵ so there would be no divisions in the body, and all the parts would show the same loving care for each other. ²⁶ As the result, if one body part suffers, all the other body parts suffer along with it. Or if a body part is glorified, all the other body parts rejoice along with it.

²⁷ So understand that you're all the Anointed One's body and body parts, ²⁸ and that God has designated each of your places in the congregation... first the Apostles; second the Prophets; third the teachers; then [those with] powerful works, or the gifts of healing, or performing helpful services, or the ability to direct, or speaking different languages. ²⁹ Therefore, not all are Apostles, are they? Not all are Prophets, are they? Not all are teachers, are they? Not all can perform powerful works, can they? ³⁰ Not all have the gift of healing, not all can speak different languages, and not all are translators. ³¹ However, zealously keep seeking the greater gifts.

But now I'm going to show you something that's even better.

Chapter 13

¹ If I can speak the languages of men and of angels but don't have love, I'm the sound of [clanging] brass or a clashing cymbal. ² If I can prophesy, or understand all the mysteries, or have all knowledge,

or have enough faith to move mountains, but don't have love, I'm nothing at all. ³ And if I were to give everything that I own to feed others, or hand over my body so that I could boast, but don't have love, it would do me no good.

⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love isn't envious, it doesn't brag, it isn't conceited, ⁵ it doesn't scheme, it doesn't watch out just for itself, it doesn't stir things up, it doesn't hold grudges, ⁶ and it doesn't rejoice over unrighteous things; rather, it just rejoices over the truth... ⁷ it covers everything, believes everything, hopes everything, and endures everything... ⁸ love never fails.

However, the [gift of] prophesying will be done away with, the [gift of] speaking [in foreign] languages will end, and the [gift of miraculous] knowledge will pass away, ⁹ because we now have just a partial knowledge and we can just prophesy partially. ¹⁰ But when the perfect thing arrives, the partial thing will be done away with.

¹¹ Back when I was a baby, I talked like a baby, I thought like a baby, and I reasoned like a baby. But now that I've become a man, I'm finished with baby's things. ¹² So what we see today is like looking into a metal mirror... however, then it will be face to face. And though I can only understand partially now... then I will have a complete understanding and I will be completely understood! ¹³ Then only these three things will remain: faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of them is love.

Chapter 14

¹ Therefore, we should pursue love, as we also zealously seek the [gifts] of the Spirit... and I prefer that you prophesy. ² For those who speak in tongues aren't talking to men but to God, since nobody else is listening... so by the Spirit they're speaking mysteries. ³ On the other hand, those who prophesy build up, encourage, and bring comfort to others. ⁴ So while the one who speaks in tongues builds himself up, the one who prophesies builds up [the whole] congregation.

⁵ Therefore, although I would like all of you to [be able to] speak in tongues, I would prefer that you prophesy, because the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues... that is, unless he also translates so the whole congregation can be built up.

⁶ Brothers, if I were to come to you right now and speak to you in a foreign tongue, what good would it do if I didn't also speak to you with a revelation, or with knowledge, or with a prophecy, or with something that I can teach you?

⁷ It's the same as with inanimate things that make sounds, like flutes or harps. If you can't distinguish the difference between the notes, how can you tell what's being played? ⁸ Also, if a trumpet blows an unrecognizable signal, who will prepare for war? ⁹ So unless you use your tongues to say things that are easily understood, how will anyone know what you're saying? You will for a fact just be speaking into the air!

¹⁰ There are many kinds of vocalizations in the world, and they all mean something. ¹¹ However, if I don't understand the meaning of the sound, I'm a foreigner to the one who is speaking, and the one who is speaking will be a foreigner to me.

¹² Therefore, if you have a zeal for the Spirit, use it in ways that build the congregation up, so everyone can prosper. ¹³ Let the one who speaks in tongues pray that he can also translate. ¹⁴ For when I pray in a foreign language; although my spirit may be praying, my mind isn't receiving any benefit.

¹⁵ So what should we do? If I pray by the Spirit, I'll also pray in my mind. And if I sing praises by the

Spirit, I'll sing praises in my mind. ¹⁶ For if we're only offering praise by the Spirit, how will any ordinary man who is there and doesn't understand us say 'May it be so,' when we're giving thanks? ¹⁷ For though it may be true that we're giving thanks in a fine way, this person isn't being built up.

¹⁸ I thank God that I can speak more languages than all of you. ¹⁹ However, I would rather speak five words using my mind so that I can teach others when I'm in a congregation, than ten thousand words in a foreign language.

²⁰ Brothers, don't be like children when it comes to [using] the power of your minds... be babies when it comes to badness as you perfect your abilities to reason! ²¹ For it's written in the Law: '*Though I speak to these people in other tongues and with other lips, they still won't listen to Me*, says Jehovah.'

²² Understand that speaking in a foreign tongue isn't a sign to unbelievers but to believers, while prophesying isn't for believers, it's for unbelievers. ²³ For if the whole congregation is speaking in tongues when some ordinary person or unbeliever comes into your meeting place, won't he just think you're crazy? ²⁴ However, if everyone is prophesying when an unbeliever or ordinary person enters, he is corrected and judged by them all. ²⁵ Then as the secrets in his heart are revealed, he will fall to his face before God and say, 'God is truly among you!'

²⁶ So what should happen, brothers? When you're meeting, one should have a psalm, another should have a teaching, another should have a revelation, and another should speak in a foreign language... that is, as long as someone else interprets it. Everything that's done should be for [the purpose of] building up! ²⁷ So if some are speaking in tongues; limit it to two or three at the most, and do it in turns... and then have someone do the translating. ²⁸ However, if no one can translate it, those people should be silent in the congregation, speaking just to themselves and to God. ²⁹ Let two or three Prophets speak instead, and allow the rest to judge the meaning of what they're saying. ³⁰ Then if someone else has a revelation while he's sitting there, the first one should [yield to him]. ³¹ This way, when each of them prophesy in turns, everyone can learn and be encouraged. ³² For the spirits of the Prophets should be controlled by the Prophets, ³³ because God doesn't send confusion, [He sends] peace!

(Disputed Verses) *And as [is true] in all the congregations of Holy Ones; ³⁴ the women should remain silent in the congregation... they shouldn't be allowed to speak out. Rather (as the Law says), they should be submissive. ³⁵ And if they wish to know something, let them ask their men [when they get] home; for it's disgraceful for a woman to speak out in a congregation.*

³⁶ [Do you think that] the Word of God is coming from just you, and that you are the only one who understands it? ³⁷ Well, if someone thinks he's a Prophet and that he's under the influence of [God's] Spirit, then he should agree with these things that I'm writing to you, because these are the Lord's commandments! ³⁸ However, if someone chooses to be ignorant, let him remain ignorant.

³⁹ My brothers; Keep on zealously seeking the [gift of] prophesying, but don't forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ Just make sure that everything is conducted in a tasteful and orderly way.

Chapter 15

¹ Now brothers; I want you to understand this about the good news that I preached to you (which you received, in which you are standing, ² and through which you are being saved): If you are still holding onto this good news that I preached to you, your faith hasn't been wasted, ³ because what I passed along to you was the first thing that I learned... it's that the Anointed One died for our sins (just as the Scriptures foretold), ⁴ and he was buried and then raised on the third day, ⁵

where he appeared first to Cephas (Peter), then to the rest of the twelve. ⁶ And after that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive today (although some have fallen asleep), ⁷ then he appeared to James and to all the Apostles. ⁸ But lastly – like some miscarriage – he appeared to me... ⁹ for I'm the least of the Apostles, and I'm unfit to even be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Called Ones of God. ¹⁰ Yet, through the loving care of God, I am what I am. And the loving-care that He showed me hasn't been wasted, because I've worked harder than all the rest... and not just because of me, but because of God's loving care that's now in me. ¹¹ However, whether it was from me or from some other source; we have all preached and you have believed.

¹² Now, if we're preaching that the Anointed One was raised from the dead, then why are some of you saying there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ For if there was no resurrection of the dead, then the Anointed One couldn't have been raised either. ¹⁴ And if the Anointed One hasn't been raised, our preaching and our faith is all in vain, ¹⁵ and we've proven to be false witnesses of God, because we've testified concerning God that He raised the Anointed One... who couldn't have really been raised if the dead won't be raised!

¹⁶ Indeed, if the dead won't be raised, the Anointed One hasn't been raised either! ¹⁷ And if the Anointed One hasn't been raised, our faith is useless and we're all still sinners. ¹⁸ Also, all those who have fallen asleep in the Anointed One are just gone! ¹⁹ So if we've been putting our hope in the Anointed One while this life all there is, we're the most pitiful of all men!

²⁰ However, the Anointed One has been raised from the dead, and he's the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep [in death]. ²¹ For although death came through a man, resurrection from the dead has also come through a man. ²² And as all are dying because of Adam, all will be made alive in the Anointed One... ²³ but each one in his own order, [starting with] the first fruits of the Anointed One, followed by those who belong to the Anointed One when he arrives. ²⁴ Then in the end, after he has brought all governments, authorities, and powers to nothing, he will hand over the Kingdom to his God and Father. ²⁵ For he must rule [as king] until he has put all his enemies under his feet, ²⁶ and the final enemy, the death, has come to an end.

²⁷ Yes, he will indeed put everything under his feet! However, when it says that everything will be put under his feet, it's evident that the exception is the One who put everything under him. ²⁸ For after everything has been put under him, the Son will submit to the One who put everything under him, so that God can be everything to everyone.

²⁹ Also, if none of the dead will be raised, what good would it do for us to be baptized into [Jesus'] death? Yes, why [are we] being baptized for that purpose... ³⁰ and why are we in danger every hour? ³¹ Why, I'm dying every day just prove that you are worthy of all my boasting about you... you whom I [call] *my brothers* through the Anointed Jesus, our Lord.

³² And if the dead aren't going to be raised, and if it was just as a man that I fought wild animals at Ephesus, what good did it do me? Why, 'Let's eat and drink, for tomorrow we'll die!'

³³ So, don't allow [anyone] to mislead you... remember that bad companions spoil good habits!

³⁴ Brothers, become more serious about being righteous and stop sinning! For some [of you] know nothing at all about God (yes, I'm saying this to embarrass you)!

³⁵ Why, some of you have been asking, 'Just how will the dead be raised... in what sort of bodies will

they return?' ³⁶ You foolish people! Those who plant seeds know that they can't live unless they die first; ³⁷ for whatever is planted isn't the body that it's going to become... it's just a naked grain of wheat, or whatever. ³⁸ So understand that God will give us any [type of] body He wishes, just as He gives each seed its own body.

³⁹ Realize that not all flesh is the same! There is one type of flesh of men, another of cattle, another of birds, and another of fish. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies... and the glory of heavenly bodies is different from that of earthly bodies. ⁴¹ Why, the glory of the sun is one type, the glory of the moon is another, and the glory of the stars is yet another. In fact, stars differ from other stars in their glory. ⁴² So, that's how it will be with the resurrection of the dead:

'It's planted in decay and then raised as clean.

⁴³ It's planted without honor, and then raised in glory.

It's planted as weak, and then raised in power.'

⁴⁴ Therefore, what's planted as a breather's body will be raised as a spiritual body... as there's a breather's body, there is also a spiritual [one].

⁴⁵ It's written that the first man (Adam) became a living soul. However, the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ Thus the first [body] is human, not spiritual, for the spiritual one comes later. ⁴⁷ Likewise, as the first man came from the dust of the ground and the second man came from heaven; ⁴⁸ those that come from the dust are like the one who came from the dust, while those that are heavenly are like the heavenly one. ⁴⁹ Therefore, as we've worn the shape of the one who was made from the dust of the ground, we'll also wear the image of the Celestial One.

⁵⁰ Let me tell you this brothers: Flesh and blood can't inherit God's Kingdom, nor can [something] that's corruptible inherit something that's incorruptible.

⁵¹ Look, I'm going to explain a mystery to you: Not all of us will be laid to rest; rather, we'll be changed ⁵² in a moment – in the twinkling of an eye – during the last trumpet! For the trumpet will be blown and the dead will be raised incorruptible... yes we will be changed. ⁵³ Then that which is corruptible will put on incorruptibility, and that which is dying will put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when that which is dying puts on immortality, the words that were written will be fulfilled: 'Death, which prevails, will be swallowed.'

⁵⁵ 'So where is your victory, O death... yes, where is your sting, O death?' ⁵⁶ The sting that brings death is sin, and the power for sin comes from the Law. ⁵⁷ But thanks to God, who will bring each of us victory through our Lord Jesus the Anointed One!

⁵⁸ So my loved brothers; become settled, immovable, and always have plenty to do in the work of the Lord, since [you] know that the things you do in the Lord are never done in vain.

Chapter 16

¹ Now, regarding the collection for the Holy Ones: Do the same thing that I told the congregations in Galatia. ² On each Sabbath day, you should set something aside in your savings, as you are prospering, so we won't have to take up a collection after I arrive. ³ Then when I get there, I'll send whichever men you select and write letters about to carry your kind gift to Jerusalem. ⁴ And if I'm found worthy to go myself, they can travel with me.

⁵ I will come and [visit] you after I go to Macedonia, because I'll be traveling through Macedonia. ⁶ And if things turn out right, perhaps I can stay for a while, or even spend the winter with you. Then you can escort me part of the way to wherever I'm going.

⁷ I don't want to see you as I'm passing through right now, because I hope to spend more time with you, if the Lord allows it. ⁸ I'll be staying in Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹ because a large door of opportunity has opened to me there. However, there are also many opposers.

¹⁰ When Timothy gets there, make sure that he has nothing to fear while he's with you, because he's doing the Lord's work the same as I am... ¹¹ don't allow anyone to treat him disrespectfully! Then escort him part of the way in peace, so he can come here to me, because I'm waiting for him with the brothers.

¹² Now, regarding our brother Apollos; I begged him to come to you with the brothers, but he doesn't want to do that right now. However, he will come when he has the opportunity.

¹³ So, stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, and grow mighty. ¹⁴ And may everything you do be accomplished in love.

¹⁵ Now, I want to encourage you to do this, brothers: You know that the household of Stephanas is the first fruit of Achaia, and that they've been serving the needs of the Holy Ones. ¹⁶ Follow the instructions of such people, and all of you should labor and work hard together.

¹⁷ I'm very grateful that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and AchaiKus are here, because they've made up for your not being here. ¹⁸ They are a breath of fresh air in my life and in yours. So give special recognition to such men.

¹⁹ The congregations of [the Province of] Asia send you their greetings. Aquila, Priska, and the called ones in their home send you hearty greetings in the Lord. ²⁰ In fact, all the brothers send their greetings, so greet each other with a holy kiss. ²¹ [Here are] my greetings (Paul's), written in my own hand.

²² May all those who don't care for the Lord be cursed. Come, O Lord! ²³ May the loving care of the Lord Jesus be with you. ²⁴ And may my love be with all of you, in the Anointed Jesus.

2 Corinthians

Written to the congregation in Corinth, Greece for the Apostle Paul (possibly by Silvanus and possibly in Aramaic) within months after writing 1 Corinthians.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, who by the Will of God is an Apostle of the Anointed Jesus, and our brother Timothy, to the called ones of God in Corinth, as well as to all the Holy Ones throughout Achaia; ² May you receive peace and loving care from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One.

³ May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One – the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort – be praised. ⁴ For [He's] the One who comforts us during all our trials and enables us to comfort others who are undergoing trials through the comfort that we receive from Him. ⁵ And since we have received plenty of suffering because of the Anointed One, we've also received plenty of comfort through the Anointed One... may it ever be so!

⁶ [We want you to know that] when we are being tried, it's on behalf of your comfort and salvation. And we are comforted by the fact that the comfort [you receive] is helping you to endure the trials that we [all] share in suffering. ⁷ So our hope for you is firm, because we know that since you're sharing in the suffering, you'll also share in the comfort.

⁸ Brothers, we wanted to tell you of the trials that we had to endure while we were in [the province of] Asia. For we were under so much pressure that we thought there was no way out and we feared for our lives... ⁹ in fact, we believed that we had been condemned to death. But this taught us not to trust in ourselves, but in The God who raises the dead, ¹⁰ because He rescued us and has continued to rescue us from such great a thing as death... and we hope that He'll keep on rescuing us. ¹¹ You can help in this matter by praying for us, so that many faces will give thanks for the gifts we are so kindly being given.

¹² Yes, this is the thing about which we can boast and to which our consciences can testify: It wasn't with fleshly wisdom, but through God's loving care that we've been conducting ourselves in holy ways and in godly sincerity toward this system of things, and especially toward you.

¹³ Now, we're really writing to you concerning things about which you already know and understand, and which I hope that you will keep on recognizing to the end: ¹⁴ That we are something about which you can boast, just as you'll be for us in the Day of our Lord Jesus.

¹⁵ So it's with this type of confidence that I had plans to come to you... to give you another reason for joy. ¹⁶ I [planned to] come there on my way to Macedonia and to stop over on my way back, then to have you escort me part of the way toward Judea. ¹⁷ And when I hoped to do this, don't think that I did so lightly. Rather, believe that what I planned to do in the flesh is what I really planned to do, so that my yes would mean yes and my no would mean no.

¹⁸ Yes, you can trust in God that when we tell you yes, we don't mean no, ¹⁹ because the Son of The God (the Anointed Jesus) about whom Silvanus, Timothy, and I have preached to you didn't become yes, but really no; for his yes really meant yes. ²⁰ So all the promises of God – as many as there are – have become yes through him, and in him is the 'May it be so,' [which we say] to the glory of The God.

²¹ For the One who guarantees that we all belong His Anointed One, and the One who anointed us, is God. ²² And He's also the One who put His seal on us and who gave us the pledge of [His] Spirit that

we now have in our hearts.

²³ Therefore, I call God as a witness against myself, that the reason why I haven't come to you in Corinth yet is to spare you. ²⁴ For we aren't the masters of your faith, we're just co-workers for your joy, since your faith is what has enabled you to stand firm.

Chapter 2

¹ I've decided not to come to you again as long as I'm feeling sad about you. ² For if I've made you sad, who do I have to cheer me up other than those who've been saddened by me? ³ As the result, I'm writing this so that when I do get there, those over whom I should be rejoicing won't sadden me, since I'm confident that I have reasons to be joyful over you. ⁴ And I'm writing with great difficulty, pain of heart and tears, not to make you sadder, but to let you know of the special love that I have for you.

⁵ So if someone else has saddened you, he hasn't saddened me... therefore I won't be laying any further burdens on you, ⁶ since the discipline that the majority of you gave this man was sufficient. ⁷ Therefore, you can kindly forgive him and comfort him now, so that he won't somehow be swallowed up by his deep sadness... ⁸ yes, I'm telling you to let him know that you love him!

⁹ The reason why I wrote you [before] was to prove that you're obedient in everything, ¹⁰ and that if you forgive anyone for anything, I do too. For when I forgive someone on your behalf before the Anointed One (that is, if I should ever have anything to forgive), ¹¹ it's so that none are lost to the Opposer, since we know how he operates.

¹² Well, when I got to Troas to preach the good news about the Anointed One and found that a door was opened to me in the Lord, ¹³ I was deeply disturbed by the fact that I couldn't find Titus, my brother. So I left the others and traveled on to Macedonia. ¹⁴ And thanks to God, who (through the Anointed One) always leads us triumphantly and uses us to make the [sweet] smell of knowledge about Him known everywhere. ¹⁵ For [He has made us] the sweet smell of God and of His Anointed One to those who are perishing and to those who are being saved... ¹⁶ the smell of death to the dying and of life to the living!

So, who is qualified to do this work? ¹⁷ We aren't like others who are peddlers of the word of God. Rather, we speak sincerely from God and before God, through the Anointed One.

Chapter 3

¹ So now, do we have to introduce ourselves to you again, or do we (as do some men) need introductory letters either to you or from you? ² You are our letters that are written in our hearts and are recognized and being read by all men, ³ since you've proven to be a letter of the Anointed One whom we are serving. And you aren't written in ink, but in the Breath of the living God... not on tablets made of stone, but on tablets made of flesh... on hearts! ⁴ We are now even more confident of this, through the Anointed One and by The God.

⁵ No, we should never start thinking that anything comes from ourselves, because all of our qualifications come from The God. ⁶ For He's the One who qualifies us to be the ministers of a New Sacred Agreement, which isn't something that's written but comes from the Breath [of God], since the thing that was written kills, while the Breath [of God] gives life! ⁷ For if service to the written letters (which were engraved in stone and bring death) came with so much glory that the sons of IsraEl couldn't even look at Moses' face because of the shine (that was to pass away); ⁸ why shouldn't becoming servants to [something that comes from] the Breath [of God] come with much greater

glory? ⁹ And if service to something that condemns brought glory, how much more should serving something [that leads to] righteousness bring glory, ¹⁰ since that which was once so glorious has now lost its glory because of this more glorious thing? ¹¹ And if the thing that was to pass away came in great glory, then how much more will this new thing be glorified?

¹² So, since we now have such a hope, we can speak out clearly. ¹³ We don't have to do the same as Moses did, for he had to put a veil over his face so the sons of IsraEl wouldn't see something that was to be done away with in the end. ¹⁴ And this [veil] has hardened their minds down to this day, for the veil still hangs there as a covering whenever the Old Sacred Agreement is being read, though it has already been done away with by means of the Anointed One.

¹⁵ Yes, right down to this very day, whenever Moses is read, they still have a veil over their hearts... ¹⁶ but it is removed when they turn to the Lord. ¹⁷ For the Lord is [now a] spirit, and wherever the spirit of the Lord is, there's freedom! ¹⁸ Therefore, when we uncover our faces, each of us have the glory of the Lord... we reflect his glory like mirrors, and we are transformed from [the old] glory to [a new] glory that comes from the spirit of the Lord.

Chapter 4

¹ Because of this service that we've so mercifully been given, we haven't given up. ² Rather, what we have given up is those things that lead to shame! No, we aren't sneaking around and changing the word of God; rather, we're making the truth known! And before God, we're proving ourselves worthy to the consciences of all men. ³ So if the good news that we bring is hidden in any way, it's only hidden to those who are dying... ⁴ to the unbelievers, whose minds have been blinded by the god of this age, so that the light of the glorious good news about the Anointed One (who is the image of The God) is unable to shine through.

⁵ We aren't preaching about ourselves, but about the Anointed Jesus our Lord! And we've become your slaves for Jesus' sake, ⁶ because God said, 'Light will shine from the darkness.' And He has caused the light of knowledge about the glory of God to shine in our hearts through the face of Jesus the Anointed. ⁷ Yes, we store this treasure in [these] clay pots, so that the power may prove to be God's and not our own.

⁸ Therefore, although we've been under pressure in every conceivable way, we've never been cornered; although [there were times when] we didn't know a way out, we've never been left without a way; ⁹ although we've been persecuted, we've never been let down; and although we've been knocked down, we've never been destroyed. ¹⁰ For we always bear the death of Jesus' body, so that the life of Jesus can be seen in our bodies. ¹¹ [And that's why] those of us who are [still] living are always being handed over to death for Jesus' sake... so that the life of Jesus can be seen in our dying flesh. ¹² As the result, death is at work in us, while life [is at work] in you.

¹³ So we share the same spirit of faith; for it's written: 'Because I had faith, I spoke.' And this is why we're speaking about the things in which we believe! ¹⁴ For we know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us to be with Jesus... and when that happens, we'll be standing beside you! ¹⁵ Yes, everything is being done through you, so that this loving care can grow as [you] continue to grow, and there will be more giving of thanks to God's glory.

¹⁶ No, we aren't behaving badly. And although the man [you see] on the outside is wasting away, the man on the inside is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For the difficulties that [we currently have to endure] are far less than what the age-long glory is producing in us. ¹⁸ So, you should disregard the things that you can see and notice the things that you can't see. For the things that you can see are

temporary, while the things you can't see are age-long.

Chapter 5

¹ Here is one thing that we know for [sure]: If our earthly house (this temporary dwelling) is destroyed, we still have a dwelling from God that lasts through the ages... a house in the heavens that isn't made with hands ² over which we groan, because we long to be clothed in that house from heaven ³ so that we aren't found to be stripped naked. ⁴ Yes, while we are still in this temporary dwelling, we're groaning and under pressure, because we don't really want to take it off and put on the other, to allow that which is dying to be swallowed by life.

⁵ Now, the One who prepared us for this purpose is God, and He has given us an advance payment... His Breath. ⁶ Therefore we can be courageous, because we know that as long as we are at home in this body, we aren't at home with the Lord... ⁷ so we're walking by faith, not by something we can see. ⁸ Yes we can be courageous, for we'll be happy to leave this body so we can be at home with the Lord. ⁹ And we love the fact that whether we are in this home or whether we leave it, he is pleased with us. ¹⁰ However, everything about us must be revealed when we stand before the judgment seat of the Anointed One; for what we will each receive will be based on the things that we did while we were in this body, whether it's good or foul.

¹¹ So, since we have come to know the fear of the Lord, we continue to persuade men [to turn toward] God. And I hope that we have shown what we really are to your consciences, ¹² so that we don't have to prove ourselves to you again, and that we've really given you reasons to boast about us. For then you'll have something to offer to those who are more influenced by what we look like on the outside than by what's in [our] hearts. ¹³ So if we seem to be crazy, [we're crazy] to God, while we're sound in mind when it comes to you.

¹⁴ Indeed, we're all bound together by the love of the Anointed One; for we have concluded that he died for us all, since we are all dying. ¹⁵ Yes, he died for all of us so that none of the living might live for themselves anymore, but for the one who died for them and was raised.

¹⁶ So from now on, we don't know anyone by the flesh. And even if we knew the Anointed One in the flesh; we certainly don't know him that way anymore. ¹⁷ For all who are in the Anointed One are a new creation! Yes, the old things have passed away... but {Look!} now they've become new! ¹⁸ And it all comes from The God who has restored us to a good relationship with Himself through the Anointed One. Therefore, [God] has assigned us to be servants of a restored relationship with Him! ¹⁹ For through the Anointed One, God is bringing the world back into a good relationship with Himself by no longer holding their sins against them. And because He has put the message of this reconciliation within us, ²⁰ we've become the ambassadors of the Anointed One, and God is calling [people] through us. Yes, we are begging them through the Anointed One to come back to a [good] relationship with God, ²¹ since He made this one who didn't know sin to be sin for us, so that we could become the righteousness of God through him.

Chapter 6

¹ Moreover, since we are your fellow workers, we urge you not to waste the loving care of God that you've received. ² For He says:

'In a season of favor, I heard you,

And in a day of salvation, I came to your aid.'

Look! This is the season of favor! And look! This is the day of salvation!'

³ Therefore, we aren't doing anything that might offend anyone so that our service might remain spotless. ⁴ And we're taking our stand as God's servants in everything... by enduring many difficulties, by shortages of necessities, ⁵ by beatings, by imprisonment, by mobs, by hard work, by sleepless nights, by hunger, ⁶ by holiness, by knowledge, by patience, by loving care (through the Holy Breath), and by love that isn't judgmental. ⁷ We do this by telling the truth through the power of God by [using] the weapons of righteousness (the right-handed ones and the left-handed ones), ⁸ through glory and dishonor, through bad reputations and good reputations, as 'deceivers' who tell the truth, ⁹ as unknown but recognized among the dying (and yet, look... we're alive!), as those who were disciplined but not yet condemned to death, ¹⁰ as sad but always rejoicing, as poor but making many rich, and as having nothing while owning it all!

¹¹ Why, our mouths and our hearts have been spread wide open to you Corinthians! ¹² So you aren't having a hard time finding room in us; you're having a hard time making room [for us] in yourselves. ¹³ Just be fair with us! I'm telling you as [my] children: Make room for us!

¹⁴ You must stop joining yourselves unevenly (like different types of animals under the same yoke) with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and law-breaking have in common? Or what does light have in common with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between the Anointed One and the wicked one? What can a faithful person share with an unbeliever, ¹⁶ and what sharing does a holy dwelling of God have with idols?

Yes, recognize that we are the living, holy dwellings of The God. As God Himself said: *'I will live and walk among them... I'll be their God and they'll be My people.'* ¹⁷ So, come out from among them and separate yourselves, says Jehovah... *stop touching the unclean things, and I'll take you in!* ¹⁸ Then *I'll be your Father and you'll be My sons and daughters,* says Jehovah the Almighty.'

Chapter 7

¹ So, since we've been given these promises, loved ones; let's wash off all the filth of the flesh and the person we've been on the inside, and become perfectly holy in the fear of The God. ² And make room for us, because we haven't wronged anyone, corrupted anyone, or taken advantage of anyone. ³ I'm not saying this to condemn you, because (as I told you before) you're in our hearts, so we'll live together and die together!

⁴ I feel perfectly free to speak to you, because I have many reasons to boast about you, and I'm very comfortable [with you], for I overflow with joy over all the difficulties that we've shared.

⁵ Now, since we've arrived in Macedonia, our bodies haven't had any relief... for there have been problems over everything. On the outside there are fights, and on the inside there is fear. ⁶ However, The God who gives comfort to the lowly also provided comfort to us through the presence of Titus. ⁷ And it wasn't just his presence alone that brought us comfort, it was also because of the comfort that he felt over you, since he again brought us word of your longing, mourning, and zeal for me. And that made me very happy.

⁸ So if what I wrote in my [first] letter made you sad, I don't regret it. And even if I did regret it [at first], I see that my letter only saddened you for a little while. ⁹ However, now I'm rejoicing... not because you were saddened, but because you were saddened into repenting! You were saddened in a Godly way, so we didn't do any damage to you! ¹⁰ For being sad in a Godly way brings a repentance that saves (and there's nothing to regret about that), while the sadness of this world brings death. ¹¹ And look at what this sadness in a Godly way has accomplished... see how it speeded things up and gave us answers... how it caused indignation, fear, desire, zeal, and vengeance! Because after that,

you proved yourselves pure in every way in this matter!

¹² Now, I didn't write [that letter to] you because of the one who was acting unrighteously or because of the one who was being treated unrighteously. Rather, [I wrote it] to prove how earnestly you obey us in the sight of God... ¹³ which has given us much comfort! And now we have even more reasons to be joyful, because of the joy that this brought to Titus. For the man that he is within has been refreshed by all of you.

¹⁴ So if I have bragged to him about you, I haven't been given any reason to be ashamed of it, because everything that I said about you is true... yes, after we bragged about you to Titus, it has all proven to be true! ¹⁵ And he cares for you even more deeply now, as he remembers how well you've obeyed, and how all of you received him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ So I'm rejoicing and I'm encouraged in every way because of you!

Chapter 8

¹ Brothers, we want to tell you about how God's loving care has been shown toward the congregations in Macedonia. ² Although they are undergoing many trials and difficulties, their great joy and deep poverty brought out the richness of their generosity. ³ For as they were able (and I testify that it was more than they were able to do) ⁴ and of their own accord, they kept on begging us to [allow them to] have a share in contributing to the collection for the Holy Ones. ⁵ And it wasn't just as we had hoped they would do, but they gave first to the Lord and then to us, as it was God's will. ⁶ So this led us to encourage Titus (since he was the one who initiated it) to complete the collection among you. ⁷ Therefore, because you're prospering in everything – in your faith, words, knowledge, eagerness, and in our love for you – may you share your prosperity through similar [acts of] loving kindness.

⁸ I'm not saying this to pressure you; [I'm saying this] because these others have been so eager, and because I want to prove the genuineness of your love. ⁹ You know of the loving care that was shown by our Lord Jesus the Anointed One. For though he was rich, he became poor for your sakes, so you could become rich through his poverty.

¹⁰ This is my opinion and it's the best way to handle it: Last year, you were the first of those who wanted to give, and you even started to contribute. ¹¹ So now, finish what you started, that we might bring all of that eagerness and willingness to a climax. Just give from whatever you have on hand; ¹² for when [people] are already willing, it's best to accept what they have rather than what they don't have.

¹³ Now, I'm not trying to make it harder on you than for the others, ¹⁴ because everything equals out. If you can give more right now, that makes up for those who can give less. And if others can give more than you, that makes up for those [of you] who can give less. So everything balances out. ¹⁵ As it's written:

'The one with much didn't have too much,
And the one with little didn't lack.'

¹⁶ Now, thanks to God that He put the same earnestness [that I have] for you into the heart of Titus, ¹⁷ for he has responded to your encouragement and has decided to return to you quickly. ¹⁸ We're also sending a brother along with him whose praise in the good news has spread throughout all the congregations. ¹⁹ And he's the one that was appointed by the congregations to be our traveling companion and to distribute the gifts that are so willingly being donated for the glory of the Lord. ²⁰ That way, we can avoid having anyone complain about us over the generous contributions that are being handled by us. ²¹ For we are planning ahead to do good things not just in the sight of the Lord,

but also in the sight of men.

²² And of course; we're sending along our brother who has proven to be zealous so many times and in so many ways, but who is now even more eager because of his greater confidence in you.

²³ If there are any questions about Titus; he's my partner and co-worker for your interests. Or if [there are any questions] about [the rest of] our brothers; they are apostles to the congregations and a glory to the Anointed One. ²⁴ So now, prove your love for them that we've been boasting about to the congregations.

Chapter 9

¹ Regarding the collections for the Holy Ones; I didn't have to write you, ² for I know how eager you've been. I've even bragged to the Macedonians about you, telling them that Achaia has been ready for a year now, and your zeal has been an incentive to most of them. ³ So at this time, I'm sending the brothers [to you] to prove that our boasting about you hasn't been in vain... and I hope that you're ready, as I said you'd be. ⁴ Otherwise, if the Macedonians should come with me and find that you aren't ready, we'd be shamed by the assurances we gave them. ⁵ So, I thought it would be best to encourage the brothers to come to you ahead of time, in order for you to start collecting the generous gift that you promised. That way, what is given will for a fact be a generous gift and not something that we've extorted from you.

⁶ Remember that those who plant little will harvest little, while those who plant much will harvest much. ⁷ So may each of you do whatever you've resolved in your hearts (but not grudgingly or because you feel pressured), since God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ Moreover, God is able to show all His loving kindness toward you, so that you can have more than enough of everything and an abundance of good deeds! ⁹ As it is written:
'He has freely scattered gifts to the poor,
So His righteousness endures through the age.'

¹⁰ Therefore, may the One who supplies plenty of seeds to the farmer and enough bread to those who would eat supply (and even multiply) the seeds that you need for planting, and may He increase your harvests because of your righteousness, ¹¹ so that you will be made rich because of your generosity... yes, thank God for that! ¹² For the purpose of this community service isn't just to supply the needs of the Holy Ones abundantly, but also to [make you] rich through their many words of thanks to God.

¹³ Realize that the proof of the value of the service [that you are performing] is when others glorify God because of you (as you continue to obey and preach the good news about the Anointed One) over your generous contributions to them and to everyone else. ¹⁴ And this is why they're praying for you and longing [to see] you... because of the tremendous loving care that God has shown to them through you. ¹⁵ Thanks to God for His indescribable gifts!

Chapter 10

¹ Now, I Paul – whose appearance is considered lowly among you – am pleading with you [in the same] mild and obedient ways as did the Anointed One. And although I'm not there, I hope that I can be so bold as to say this to you: ² I beg that in my absence, I can unflinchingly dare to take on some of those [among you] who think of us as just walking in the flesh. ³ For although we are in fact just flesh, we don't fight in fleshly ways, ⁴ because the weapons that we use aren't fleshly... they come from the power of God and they can tear down fortifications! ⁵ And this is what we will use to tear down their ideas and all the high-minded things that they are raising against the knowledge of God. Yes, we can

capture all their thoughts and force them to obey the Anointed One, ⁶ and we are also ready to avenge any of the disobedience (whenever there is disobedience) ⁷ of those who are just considering our faces!

Now, if anyone trusts that he belongs to the Anointed One, let him remember this: As he belongs to the Anointed One, so do we! ⁸ Therefore, even if I do boast a little too much about the power that the Lord gave us to build you up (not to tear you down), ⁹ I'm not ashamed if I also give you the impression that I want to terrify you with my letters. ¹⁰ For it's a fact that some of you are saying, 'His letters are heavy and forceful, but when he's here, he looks weak and what he says has little value.' ¹¹ So may they be reminded that what we write about in letters when we're away, is what we're going to do when we get there!

¹² Notice that we don't dare to make any comparisons... we aren't comparing ourselves with those who think too much of themselves, because when they measure themselves (when they compare themselves against themselves), they aren't reaching the right conclusions. ¹³ However, we don't have to brag about how we measure up. Rather, we gauge everything by the ruler that God gave us to measure with... and that ruler reaches as far as you! ¹⁴ So we aren't stretching ourselves out too far, as though we can't reach you, because we were the first to come all the way to you [when we] preached the good news about the Anointed One. ¹⁵ Therefore, those braggarts can't measure [themselves against] the efforts of anyone else.

What we hope for is that as your faith grows, we will be recognized as great among you when you measure us by this ruler; for then we will [see more results] ¹⁶ as we go preaching the good news to regions that are far beyond you. And then there will also be no more boasting over our measurements by someone else's ruler. ¹⁷ 'Let those who boast, boast in Jehovah.' ¹⁸ For those who think of themselves as important aren't the ones who will be approved... just those who are recommended by our Lord!

Chapter 11

¹ I wish that you'd bear with me in my foolishness... but then, you are bearing with me. ² For I'm jealous over you with a Godly zeal, since I personally promised you in marriage as chaste virgins to a husband... yes, to stand beside the Anointed One. ³ However, I'm afraid that somehow, in the same way that the snake cunningly seduced Eve, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and chastity that we owe to the Anointed One. ⁴ For [I know that] if [someone] should come preaching about a Jesus other than the one that we preached to you, or if you should receive a spirit other than the one you've already received, or if [you hear] good news other than what you've [already] accepted, you seem to tolerate it too well.

⁵ Now, I don't think that I've done anything to prove myself inferior to your super-fine 'apostles.' ⁶ And even if I am an unskilled speaker, I'm certainly not [inferior] when it comes to knowledge, for I've shown this to you in everything and in every way!

⁷ Did I commit some sin by humbling myself so as to make you greater when I gladly preached the good news of God to you free of charge? ⁸ If so, then I must have robbed other congregations by accepting their provisions in order to serve you! ⁹ For when I was with you and I needed something, I didn't make myself a burden to anyone. Because, the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed more than adequately.

Yes, I've kept myself from being a burden to you in every way... and I'll keep on doing so! ¹⁰ By the Anointed One; it's a fact that nobody will put an end to this reason for my boasting in the area of

Achaia. ¹¹ Why not? Is it because I don't love you? God knows [that I do].

¹² So, what I'm doing is what I will continue to do in order to cut off the attacks from those who wish to attack [me]... those who want to be proclaimed our equals in this thing about which they're bragging. ¹³ For they are false apostles... deceivers who are trying to turn themselves into the Apostles of the Anointed One. ¹⁴ And this shouldn't come as [a great] surprise to you. For since the Opposer keeps turning himself into a messenger of light, ¹⁵ it should be expected that those who serve him would turn themselves into servants of righteousness. However, their end will show up what they're doing.

¹⁶ Allow me to tell you this once again: Don't let anyone think that I'm foolish! But even if you should choose to accept me while thinking that I'm foolish, that gives me a bit more reason to boast.

¹⁷ Now, I'm not saying this to follow the Lord's example, but foolishly as a braggart... ¹⁸ yes, since many [of you] are bragging as humans do, I'll boast also. ¹⁹ It seems that you're just too happy to put up with foolish people, because you're all so reasonable. ²⁰ In fact, you put up with anyone who enslaves, or who eats, or who takes, or who elevates himself, or who slaps you on the face! ²¹ Therefore, in dishonor, I will speak as though we had all been weak... and if anyone is daring, I'll foolishly say that I'm daring also!

²² Are they Hebrews? I'm one also! Are they IsraElites? Me too! Are they AbraHam's seed? So am I! ²³ Are they servants of the Anointed One? I reply like a crazy man; I'm even more so! For [I've] worked harder, been in prison more times, been beaten more than anyone else, and have often been near death! ²⁴ Why, I received forty strokes less one from the Judeans five times, ²⁵ I was beaten with rods three times, I was stoned once, I've been shipwrecked three times, and I've spent a night and a day in the sea!

²⁶ In my travels, I've often been in danger from rivers, from robbers, from those of [my own] race, and from gentiles. [I've been] in danger in cities, in deserts, at sea... and I've been in danger from false brothers! ²⁷ [Yet through all of this, I've continued to] work and labor hard. I've often been sleepless, hungry, thirsty, and starving... and many times [I've even been] cold and naked! ²⁸ Then, in addition to all these external things, there are the anxieties [that I feel] for the congregations that flood over me each day. ²⁹ Why, who is weak that doesn't make me weak, and who stumbles into a trap that doesn't set me on fire? ³⁰ So if there has to be bragging; then I'll boast about the things that show how weak I am!

³¹ Before the God and Father of the Lord Jesus (the One who is to be praised through the ages), [I can swear that] I'm not lying about these things. ³² For in Damascus, the governor under King Aretas posted guards around the city to arrest me; ³³ and as the result, [the brothers] had to lower me on a wicker basket through a window in the [city] wall to help me escape from his hands!

Chapter 12

¹ Yes, although it isn't good, I have to brag... please allow me to pass along some supernatural visions and revelations from [the] Lord:

² I know a man in the Anointed One who was caught away some fourteen years ago (whether [it happened] in the body or out of the body, and I don't know in what state – only God knows) into the third heaven. ³ Yes, I know such a man (whether [it happened] in the body or apart from the body I don't know – only God knows) ⁴ who was caught away into a paradise where he heard unspeakable things that are illegal for a man to discuss. ⁵ Yes, I will boast about a man like that, but I won't boast

about myself, other than about my own weaknesses. ⁶ Also, in this boasting, I won't do it foolishly... I'll just tell the truth. I'll hold back lest anyone should give me more credit than what they see in me or what they hear anyone say about me, ⁷ when it comes to the surpassing types of revelations that I've shown to you.

So that I wouldn't become too conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh... a messenger from the Opposer that keeps slapping me so I don't get too impressed with myself. ⁸ I've begged the Lord three times to remove it from me, ⁹ and He really answered me and said, 'My loving kindness is enough for you, for [your] strength is being perfected [by your] weakness!' Therefore, I'll gladly boast of my weaknesses, so the power of the Anointed One may cover me like a tent! ¹⁰ Yes, I [actually] appreciate the weaknesses, the insults, the [times] that I've done without, and the persecutions and difficulties that I've experienced on behalf of the Anointed One, because when I'm weak, that's when I'm [the most] powerful!

¹¹ So now I've become foolish... and you're the ones who've made me that way, because I should have been recommended by you! But even if I were nothing, I wouldn't be less than those super-fine 'apostles' in any way. ¹² Indeed, it was the proofs of [my Apostleship] that produced endurance in you by means of signs, omens, and powerful works. ¹³ So in what way have you received less than the rest of the congregations... other than the fact that I wasn't a burden to you? Kindly forgive me for this wrong!

¹⁴ {Look!} This is the third time that I've gotten ready to come to you, and [once again], I won't be coming as a burden to you, because I'm not looking for the things you have, but for you! For the children shouldn't be setting things aside for their parents; rather, parents [should be setting things aside] for their children! ¹⁵ And as for me; I will happily spend and be spent for your lives! Therefore, if I love you the most, why am I the one who is loved the least? ¹⁶ May that be as it is... I've never been a burden to you.

Was I sneaky and did I try to capture you through trickery, ¹⁷ or did I try to take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you? ¹⁸ When I urged Titus [to come to you] and I sent a brother along with him; did Titus take advantage of you in any way... don't we in fact both act the same way and follow in the same footsteps?

¹⁹ [I hope that] you've been thinking about all of this as we've been defending ourselves to you, for we are speaking [to you] before God [and] the Anointed One!

Loved ones; everything [we've done is] to build you up! ²⁰ Yet I'm afraid that when I arrive, I may not find you to be as I wish... for then I might not prove to be something that you'd wish for either. I don't want to find divisions, jealousy, anger, arguing, backbiting, whispering, pride, or disorder; ²¹ for if that happens, perhaps the next time I come I'll be humiliated by my God over you and then I'll have to mourn for the many who have sinned and not repented their uncleanness, immorality, and the dirty things that they're doing.

Chapter 13

¹ Now, this is the third time that I'll be coming to you. And since from the mouths of two or three witnesses everything is proven ² (as I told you before in my second visit); though I'm not there now, I'm giving this warning once again to those of you that [I found] sinning the last time (and to all the rest of you): When I come there next time, I won't be putting up with it! ³ Yet, here you are searching for the proofs that the Anointed One is speaking through me!

Realize that [Jesus] isn't weak toward you... [in fact], he's very powerful among you! ⁴ For although he was hung on a pole in weakness, he's now alive through the power of God! And likewise, although we are weak in him, we are alive in him through the power of God that's within you. ⁵ So keep testing yourselves to see whether you're really in the faith... yes, prove what you are! For, don't you understand that Jesus the Anointed One is in you... that is, as long as you have his approval? ⁶ And I truly hope you know that we haven't been disapproved!

⁷ Now, we keep praying to God that you don't do anything wrong. And we aren't doing this to make ourselves look like we're approved, but so that you may be doing what's better, even if that makes us look disapproved. ⁸ For we are unable to do anything *against* the truth; only *for* the truth. ⁹ Therefore, we rejoice whenever we are weak and you are strong, because that's what we're praying for... for you to be restored! ¹⁰ This is why I'm writing these things while I'm away... so that when I get there, I won't have to cut anyone off. And then [I can] use the authority that the Lord has given me to build you up, not tear you down!

¹¹ Finally brothers; Keep on rejoicing, growing to perfection, and being courageous. Also, be of the same mind and live peaceably, so that the God of love and peace will always be with you. ¹² Keep on greeting each other with a holy kiss. ¹³ All the Holy Ones send you their greetings.

¹⁴ May the loving care of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One, the love of God, and a sharing in the Holy Breath be with all of you.

Galatians

Written to the congregation in Galatia, Asia Minor by or for the Apostle Paul (possibly in Aramaic) about 50-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ From Paul (who was appointed an Apostle not by a man nor through a man, but through Jesus the Anointed One, and by God the Father who raised [Jesus] from the dead) ² as well as all the brothers who are with me, to the congregations of Galatia: ³ May you receive loving care and peace from God (our Father), and from the Lord Jesus the Anointed One... ⁴ the one who gave himself for our sins to save us from this wicked age because it was the Will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom all glory belongs through the ages of ages... may it be so.

⁶ I'm amazed that you're so quickly making the change from the One who called you by the loving care of the Anointed One, to a different type of good news. ⁷ It really isn't another [good news], it's just that certain ones among you are causing problems and have changed the good news about the Anointed One. ⁸ However, if we or even a messenger from heaven were to come preaching something to you as good news other than the good news that we've already preached to you; let him be cursed! ⁹ Let me say it again. Whoever preaches good news to you other than what you've already believed; let him be cursed!

¹⁰ Indeed, whose approval do you think I am presently seeking, that of pleasing God or of pleasing men? For if [I were just trying to please] men, I would still be servant of the Anointed One anyhow. ¹¹ So I want you to understand this, brothers: The good news that I preached as good news didn't come from men, ¹² because I didn't get it from men, nor did any man teach it [to me]. [It came] through a revelation from Jesus the Anointed One.

¹³ You've heard about the way that I used to act [while I was involved] in Judaism, for I fanatically persecuted the congregation of God and I was destroying it. ¹⁴ [I did this because] I was more advanced in Judaism than many others of my own age and race, and I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. ¹⁵ But when The God who took me from my mother's womb called [me] through His loving care ¹⁶ to reveal His Son through me so I could preach the good news about him to the gentiles; I didn't look for the advice of flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go to Jerusalem to see those who became Apostles before me. Rather, I went off to Arabia, and after that I returned to Damascus. ¹⁸ In fact I didn't go up to Jerusalem until some three years later, when I went to visit Cephas (Peter) and I stayed with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹ However, I didn't see any of the rest of the Apostles... just the Lord's brother, James.

²⁰ Look! I'm not lying to you about any of the things that I'm writing in the sight of God!

²¹ After that, I traveled to the provinces of Syria and Kilikia... ²² so those who were called by the Anointed One in Judea wouldn't have recognized my face. ²³ All they heard about me was that, 'The man who used to persecute us is now preaching the good news about the same faith that he once tried to destroy.' ²⁴ So they glorified The God because of me.

Chapter 2

¹ Then after fourteen years, I finally went to Jerusalem again, taking BarNabas and Titus along. ² And the reason why I went then was because of a revelation [that I had received]. So when I was there, I explained to the prominent ones about how I had been preaching to the gentiles; however, I did this privately, for fear that somehow I had been running in vain. ³ Yet, although Titus (who was with me)

was a Greek, they didn't force him to get circumcised then. ⁴ But they did bring in some false brothers who looked down on the freedom we have in the Anointed Jesus, and who wanted to make us their slaves. ⁵ However, we wouldn't give in to them, not even for an instant, so that the truth of the good news might continue among you!

⁶ And when it came to those who seemed to be important (whatever they used to be makes no difference to me, because God doesn't go by what a man appears to be on the outside), they didn't show me anything new. ⁷ In fact, it was just the opposite; for when they saw that I had been entrusted with the good news to the uncircumcised, as Peter was to those who are circumcised ⁸ (since the one who gave Peter the powers of an Apostleship to the circumcised also gave me such powers for the gentiles)... ⁹ yes, when they came to know of the loving care that had been shown to me, James, Cephas, and John (the ones who seemed to be the pillars) gave BarNabas and I their approval to go to the nations, while they would go to the circumcised. ¹⁰ They just told me to remember the poor, and I've tried hard to do that.

¹¹ Then when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, since I knew that he was wrong. ¹² Because, before certain men who came from James arrived, he used to eat with the gentiles. But after they arrived, he stopped associating [with them] and [started acting like a Jew], in fear of those who were circumcised. ¹³ As the result, all the rest of the Jews also joined in this performance, even influencing BarNabas to join in this hypocrisy! ¹⁴ So when I saw that they weren't following the path of the truth of the good news, I said to Cephas there in front of everyone: 'If you are a Jew who lives as the gentiles do, not as Jews do, then why are you forcing gentiles to act like Jews?' ¹⁵ For those of us who are natural Jews (not sinners from the nations) ¹⁶ know that a man isn't called righteous because of following the Law, but because of his faith in the Anointed Jesus. Even we had to put faith in the Anointed Jesus so we could be called righteous by our faith in him... not by following the Law, for no flesh will be declared righteous by following the Law!

¹⁷ 'Now, if we are seeking to be called righteous through the Anointed One and we are still found to be sinners; is the Anointed One just a servant to sin? May that never be so! ¹⁸ Yet, if I'm rebuilding the things that I once tore down, this proves that I'm still a sinner!

¹⁹ 'As for me; I died to the Law so that I could become alive to God. ²⁰ Yes, I was hung on a pole along with the Anointed One! Therefore, I'm no longer me that's alive... it's the Anointed One who is living within me. And the life that I'm now living in the flesh is being lived for the Son of The God, who loved me and handed himself over for me. ²¹ Therefore, I'm not going to push aside the loving care of God. For if righteousness comes through the Law, then the Anointed One died in vain.'

Chapter 3

¹ O you foolish Galatians... yes, you whose eyes have seen what was written about Jesus the Anointed One being impaled. Who has cast this evil spell over you? ² I just want to ask you this one thing: Did you receive [God's] Spirit because you were obeying the Law, or because you believed in the things that [you] heard?

³ Are you really so foolish? Did you start out in the Spirit just to end up in the flesh, ⁴ and did you go through so much suffering for no reason? And if there really wasn't any reason for it; ⁵ then, did the One who gave you His Spirit and who performs powerful works through you do this because you're obeying the Law, or because you've put faith in the things that you heard?

⁶ Remember that the reason why AbraHam was considered righteous, was because he put his faith in Jehovah! ⁷ So, don't you know that all those who have such faith are the sons of AbraHam?

⁸ Why, God gave the good news to AbraHam because He saw ahead of time that He would be calling gentiles righteous due to their faith. For He said, ‘All the nations will be blest because of you.’⁹ Therefore, those who have faith are being blest along with faithful AbraHam!

¹⁰ Now, everyone who is under the Law is under a curse, because it’s written: ‘Those who don’t follow and do everything that’s written in the scroll of the Law are cursed.’¹¹ So it’s obvious that no one is called righteous before God because of obeying the Law; ‘For, by their faith, the righteous will live.’

¹² However, the Law doesn’t have anything to do with faith; rather, obeying [the Law] is just a lifestyle.¹³ And the Anointed One bought our freedom from the Law’s curse by becoming a curse on our behalf. For it’s written: ‘Every man that is hung on a tree is cursed.’¹⁴ Therefore, the reason why this happened to him was so that the blessing of AbraHam could come through Jesus the Anointed One, and so that the gentiles could receive the promised Spirit... which [we in fact received] **because of our faith!**

¹⁵ Brothers, allow me to explain this in human terms: Nobody can change or destroy a valid agreement between men.¹⁶ And notice that the promise was given to ‘AbraHam and his seed.’ It doesn’t say, ‘to his seeds,’ as though there were many of them, but to just one, ‘his seed,’ who is the Anointed One!

¹⁷ Moreover, I say this: The Sacred Agreement that was confirmed four hundred and thirty years beforehand by The God, didn’t destroy [His Agreement with AbraHam]. Therefore, the promise [to AbraHam] hasn’t been done away with.¹⁸ However, if the inheritance came from [following] the Law, it couldn’t have come from the promise... and God kindly granted it to AbraHam **as a promise**.

¹⁹ So why [do we have] the Law? It was added to show us what stepping over the line was, until the seed (the one about whom the promise was given) would arrive. And it was entrusted into the hands of a mediator by [heavenly] messengers...²⁰ but there’s no need for a mediator when only one person is involved... and God is just one.

²¹ Then, did the Law override God’s promise [to AbraHam]? May that never happen! For if the Law had been provided to give [people] life, then what would have come through following the Law was righteousness.²² But following such scriptures just locked them all up in sin, so that the promise might be given to those who believe through their faith in Jesus the Anointed One.

²³ Yes, before faith arrived, we were all locked up and in prison to the Law until the things having to do with faith were to be revealed.²⁴ So the Law was the tutor that led us to the Anointed One and [to the promise] that we could be counted as righteous by our faith.²⁵ But now that the faith has arrived, we don’t need the tutor anymore!

²⁶ The fact is, you’ve all become sons of God through your faith in the Anointed Jesus.²⁷ Indeed, all who are baptized into the Anointed One have put on the Anointed One.²⁸ So there are no more Jews or Greeks, slaves or freemen, males or females, because you’re all in the Anointed Jesus.²⁹ And if you belong to the Anointed One; as the promise told us, you’re AbraHam’s seed and his heirs!

Chapter 4

¹ Now, let me say this: As long as the heir is a baby, he isn’t any different from a slave. For although he’s the master of everything,² he’s still under those who are in charge and under the manager of the house until a day arrives that is set by his father.³ And that’s how it used to be with us. Back when we

were [spiritual] babies, we were slaves to the elementary things of this world. ⁴ But when the time arrived, God sent his Son (who was under the Law and who came through a woman) ⁵ so he could buy those who were under the Law and adopt them as His sons. ⁶ And now that you're [His] sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, where it calls out, 'Papa... Father!' ⁷ So you're no longer slaves, but sons. And as sons, you're also heirs through God!

⁸ Why, back when you didn't know God, you were slaves to those who really aren't gods. ⁹ But now that you've come to know God (or rather, now that God has come to know you), why are you turning back to those weak and sorry rules... why do you want to become slaves to them once again? ¹⁰ For you've [gone back to] the observance of days, months, seasons, and years... ¹¹ so I'm afraid that all the work I've done on your behalf has been wasted!

¹² Brothers, I beg you: Become like me, because I used to be just like you! You've never done me any wrong, ¹³ and you surely recognized that I had a severe fleshly weakness when I preached the good news to you the first time. ¹⁴ Yet, although this problem must have created difficulties for you, you didn't treat it with contempt or spit on it in disgust. Rather, you received me like a messenger from God... like the Anointed Jesus.

¹⁵ So, where is all the joy that you [once] had? I can testify to the fact that if it had been possible, you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me! ¹⁶ But have I now become your enemy because I've told you the truth?

¹⁷ [Now, there are those who are] zealously chasing after you for bad reasons... for they want to snip you off and make you their zealous followers. ¹⁸ And it's good for you to always be zealously chased after (and not just when I'm with you), as long as it's for a good purpose.

¹⁹ O my little children; I'm enduring childbirth pains again until the Anointed One becomes strong in you. ²⁰ I wish that I could be there with you right now and talk in a different tone of voice, but I just don't know how to help you!

²¹ So tell me this, those of you who want to be under the Law: Don't you hear the Law? ²² It was written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and the other by the free woman. ²³ The one who came through the slave girl was born in the flesh, but the other ([who came] through the free woman) [was born] through a promise. ²⁴ Understand that this story is symbolic. For the two [women] symbolize two sacred agreements. [The first] one (like Hagar) came from Mount Sinai and bears children into slavery. ²⁵ So this Hagar means Sinai (a mountain in Arabia), and she symbolizes JeruSalem today who is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the JeruSalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it's written:

'So be glad, all you who are sterile,
And yell, O you who did not give birth...
Yes you, the one without birth pains!
For the children of the barren will be many...
Even more than those who have [their own] man!'

²⁸ Brothers, we are children of **the promise** the same as IsaAc was. ²⁹ And just as the one who was born in the flesh started persecuting the one who was born through the Spirit... that's what's happening now! ³⁰ What do the Scriptures say? 'Drive out the slave girl and her son, because the son of the slave girl will never be an heir with the son of the free woman!'

³¹ Therefore, brothers; We aren't the children of a slave girl, but of the free woman!

Chapter 5

¹ Understand that the Anointed One set us free so we can truly be free! So we should be standing erect and not allowing ourselves to be put under the yoke of slavery again!

² Look! I (Paul) am telling you that if you get circumcised, the Anointed One won't be of any use to you! ³ And I again testify to every man who gets circumcised, that he's thereafter obligated to obey the whole Law.

⁴ So those of you who are trying to be called righteous by the Law have voided the Anointed One, and you have fallen away from his loving care. ⁵ Indeed, it's by the spirit of faith that we are eagerly awaiting the hope of [being counted as] righteous! ⁶ So neither circumcision nor uncircumcision have any value to the Anointed Jesus... just faith that is motivated by love!

⁷ Now, since you've been running so well; who is it that's trying to keep you from obeying the truth? ⁸ Ideas like this aren't coming from the One who is calling you; ⁹ rather, it's a little yeast that is fermenting the whole ball [of dough]. ¹⁰ For I'm confident that you who are in the Lord wouldn't have even thought of such a thing. So the one who is causing all this agitation will have to face judgment, no matter who he may be!

¹¹ Brothers; if I were preaching circumcision, then why would I be persecuted, since the impaling pole wouldn't be a snare anymore! ¹² Oh, I wish that those who are stirring you up would cut on themselves!

¹³ You were called to be free, brothers! So don't use this freedom to serve your flesh; rather, slave for each other in love. ¹⁴ For the entire Law is fulfilled in the words, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' ¹⁵ However, if you keep on snapping at each other and chewing each other up; be careful that you don't swallow each other down!

¹⁶ I tell you this: If you keep walking by Spirit, you won't do any of the things that your flesh desires. ¹⁷ For what the flesh wants is at odds with what the Spirit wants, and the Spirit is at odds with the flesh... they are in opposition to each other, keeping you from doing the things that you may wish to do! ¹⁸ But if you are being led by the Spirit, you aren't under the Law!

¹⁹ Now, the things that the flesh does are known. They include sexual immorality, adultery, lewdness, ²⁰ worshipping idols, involvement in the occult, hatreds, quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, divisions, sects, ²¹ envying, getting drunk, wild partying, and things like that. I'm warning you now as I've warned you before, that those who do such things won't inherit God's Kingdom.

²² However, the fruitage of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, caring, goodness, faith, ²³ reasonableness, and self-control... and there are no laws against such things. ²⁴ So those who belong to the Anointed Jesus have hung their flesh on the pole along with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Therefore, if we are living by Spirit, let's walk in [the ways of the] Spirit... ²⁶ don't be conceited, and [don't] be challenging or envying each other!

Chapter 6

¹ Brothers, if someone ever gets caught up in doing bad things, those of you who are spiritual should try to restore that person in a reasonable way, as you keep an eye on yourselves so you aren't tempted also. ² If you'll carry each other's loads, you'll fulfill the law of the Anointed One. ³ Because, if

anyone thinks he's something when he's nothing, he's just fooling himself. ⁴ So let each of us prove [the value] of what we're doing to ourselves first, and then we'll have grounds for boasting to ourselves... but not to other people. ⁵ For each of us has to carry our own load.

⁶ Also, may those who are being taught the Word share the good things they have with those who are doing the teaching.

⁷ Now, don't make any mistake when it comes to this, for you can't mock God! Whatever a person is planting is what he's going to harvest. ⁸ Therefore, if he's planting [the desires] of his own flesh, he will harvest decay from the flesh. But if he's planting things that have to do with [God's] Breath, he'll harvest age-long life.

⁹ So, let's not misbehave... let's keep on doing what's right until that time arrives, because we'll harvest what we deserve if we don't tire out. ¹⁰ But until then, may we do good things for everyone... and especially for those who are related to us in the Faith.

¹¹ Look at these large letters that I have written with my own hand!

¹² Now, those who are urging you to get circumcised are appealing to your fleshly nature. [And the reason why they're doing this] is so that they won't be persecuted over the impaling pole of the Anointed Jesus. ¹³ So, despite the fact that they fail to obey the Law themselves, they want you to get circumcised so they can have reasons to boast over your flesh! ¹⁴ However, may I never find myself boasting over anything other than the impaling pole of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One; for to me, the whole world has been hung on a pole through him... as I have been to this world.

¹⁵ Why, circumcision isn't anything, nor is uncircumcision. Rather, [what matters is becoming] a new creation!

¹⁶ May peace and mercy be on all those who walk in line with this rule, and upon the IsraEl of God.

¹⁷ Finally, let no one undermine my work, because I have the brand of Jesus on my body.

¹⁸ May the loving care of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with you, my brothers. May it be so!

Ephesians

Written to the congregation in Ephesus, Asia Minor for the Apostle Paul (possibly by Tychikos and possibly in Aramaic) sometime around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an Apostle of the Anointed Jesus (by the Will of God), to the Holy Ones in Ephesus... those faithful ones in the Anointed Jesus; ² May you receive loving care and peace from God (our Father) and the Lord Jesus, the Anointed. ³ Yes, may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be praised, for He has blest us with every blessing of his Breath in the heavens, through the Anointed One, ⁴ and He chose us to be in him before the system of things came to be, so we could become holy and unblemished before Him in love. ⁵ For He envisioned us as adopted sons through Jesus the Anointed One, as it pleases His Will, ⁶ in praise of the glory of the loving care that [is shown by] the one through whom He shows His favor upon us... this one whom He loves. ⁷ It's through this one and his blood that our ransom has been paid, and it's through the richness of his loving care that our sins can be forgiven, ⁸ [providing us with] a great abundance of wisdom and good sense. ⁹ For He has allowed us to understand the mystery of His Will, according to His pleasure and which He purposed in Himself ¹⁰ for the management of His house at the appointed time, when He intends to bring everything in heaven and earth under the headship of the Anointed One.

¹¹ So, it is through [Jesus] that we have obtained the inheritance that was predetermined through [God's] purpose for him... this one through whom all things are accomplished according to [God's] council and Will, ¹² so that those who were the first to put faith in the Anointed One might give praise to his glory. ¹³ [For he's the one] through whom you heard the words of truth (the good news about your salvation), in whom you put faith, and who has sealed you with the promised Holy Breath, ¹⁴ which is the guarantee that he inherited us through the ransom that he paid to purchase us for his glory and praise.

¹⁵ And this is why, when I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and of your love for all the Holy Ones, ¹⁶ I haven't stopped giving thanks for you. Yes, I keep mentioning you in my prayers and ¹⁷ asking the God of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One (the glorious Father) to give you the spirit of wisdom and to reveal to you an accurate knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ so that the eyes of your hearts will be enlightened and you can know the glorious richness of the hope for which He has called you, and which He holds as an inheritance for the Holy Ones.

¹⁹ O how great His power is toward those of us who are believers, as it operates through the mightiness ²⁰ that He demonstrated in the case of the Anointed One, when He raised him from the dead and seated him at His right hand in the heavens, ²¹ far above every government, authority, power, lordship, and above every name that has been given not only in this age, but also in the one that is to come, ²² when He'll put everything under his feet and make him the head over everything to the called ones... ²³ those who are his body, his fullness, and the completeness [with which he is] filled.

Chapter 2

¹ For you have died to the ways of sin and error ² in which you once walked (the ways of this world), when you used to follow the ruler of the power of the air... the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience, ³ which is the way we were all once headed as we followed our human desires and did whatever our bodies wanted. Yes, because of the cravings that we once had, we were like everyone else... the natural children of [God's] wrath. ⁴ But due to the love that He has for us, God (who is so rich in mercy) ⁵ made us alive in the Anointed One while we were still dead in our failings. So it's by His loving kindness that we've been saved ⁶ and raised together, then seated together in the heavens in

the Anointed Jesus, ⁷ so that in ages to come, [God] can show the tremendous richness of His loving care, by the kindness that He's shown upon us through the Anointed Jesus.

⁸ Yes, it's because of [His] loving care that you've been saved by a faith that didn't come from within yourselves, but as a gift from God! ⁹ Yet it didn't come from anything that you've done, so you could boast. ¹⁰ Rather, we are His workmanship... we were created in the Anointed Jesus to do the good things that have been set out by God as the ways in which we should walk.

¹¹ Remember that though you were once gentiles in the flesh and were called *the uncircumcised* by those who were circumcised by hand in the flesh ¹² and were without the Anointed One (aliens to the citizens of Israel and strangers to the Sacred Agreement of the promise... you were godless and without any hope in this world), ¹³ now (through the Anointed Jesus) you who were once far away have come to be near through the blood of the Anointed One.

¹⁴ So, he is our peace; for he made the two ([Jews and Gentiles]) one by breaking down the wall that fenced them off from each other. ¹⁵ Through his flesh, he destroyed the hatred [that was brought about by] the Law of Commandments and rules, so that through himself he could take the two and create a new man, to bring about this peace. ¹⁶ Therefore, he brought both [types of] people back to God as one body through the impaling pole, using himself to destroy the hatred between them! ¹⁷ For when he came, he proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and to those who were nearby, ¹⁸ so that through him they can all access the Father in [the same] spirit.

¹⁹ As the result, you are no longer strangers and aliens; you are fellow citizens among the Holy Ones and fellow members of the House of God! ²⁰ You've been built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, whose cornerstone is the Anointed Jesus himself! ²¹ And through him, the whole building is being fitted together and growing into a Most Holy Place... yes, in the Lord, ²² you are being built into a place for The God to dwell in Spirit.

Chapter 3

¹ I give thanks that I (Paul) am a slave of the Anointed Jesus on your behalf... yes for you, the people of the nations. ² Perhaps you've heard about the responsibility that I (by the loving care of God) was given concerning you, ³ and of how this mystery was revealed to me (about which I wrote to you briefly in the past). ⁴ So as you read on, hopefully you can grasp [how well] I understand the mystery of the Anointed One.

⁵ [Though this mystery] wasn't revealed to past generations of the sons of men, it has now been revealed through his holy Apostles and Prophets by means of [God's] Breath... ⁶ that gentiles will also be fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise (in the Anointed Jesus), through the Good News. ⁷ And I became a servant of this through the gift that was given to me by the loving care of God, and in harmony with His Power.

⁸ This loving care was revealed to me (a man who is less than the least of all the Holy Ones), so that I should preach the good news about the unimaginable richness of the Anointed One to the gentiles, ⁹ and to shine a light on how this mystery that was hidden away through the ages in God (who created all things) works out, ¹⁰ so that governments and heavenly powers might learn about the vast wisdom of The God through His called ones, ¹¹ which has been His age-long purpose through the Anointed Jesus, our Lord. ¹² And it's through our confidence and faith in him that we have been given this direction and this freedom to speak.

¹³ It's also because of this that I'm asking you not to grow tired of the concern that I have for you,

because it glorifies you. ¹⁴ For it's over this that I thankfully bend my knees to the Father ¹⁵ (out of whom all lines in heaven and on earth get their paternal names) ¹⁶ to [ask Him to] grant you (by the richness of His glory) the power to become strong in His Spirit and to make the person that you are on the inside ¹⁷ alive in the Anointed One through the faith in your hearts, along with love, and to give you sufficient roots and foundation ¹⁸ to be able to understand (along with the rest of the Holy Ones) the width, the length, the height, and the depth... ¹⁹ to know the love of the Anointed One (which is more than you can comprehend) and to fill you with all the fullness that can only come from God.

²⁰ Now, to the One who (through His power that operates in us) can do far more than anything we can ask or even conceive; ²¹ may He be glorified by the called ones and by the Anointed Jesus into all generations through ages of ages... may it be so!

Chapter 4

¹ So as a prisoner in the Lord, I am urging you to be sure that you're worthy of the calling that you've received ² in all humility, gentleness, and patience, while you lovingly put up with each other. ³ Try hard to recognize the unifying force of [God's] Breath and its power to bring you together in peace. ⁴ For there's just one body and one Spirit, according to the one hope to which you were called (when you were called)... ⁵ there's just one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ and one God and Father of everyone, who is over all, through all, and in all.

⁷ Now, the amount of loving care that was shown to each of us depends upon how much of the Gift that the Anointed One measured out to us. ⁸ For He says:

'To the highest places, He has stepped up,
And carried captivity as a captive ...
Then, he gave gifts to the people.'

⁹ Now, when it says 'he stepped up,' this also means that he first stepped down to the lower places... to the earth. ¹⁰ So the one who stepped down also stepped back up – high above the skies – so he could bring everything to a completion. ¹¹ Then he gave some to be Apostles, some to be Prophets, some to be messengers of the Good News, and some to be shepherds and teachers, ¹² in order to prepare the Holy Ones for the work of serving and strengthening the body of the Anointed One ¹³ until we all become one in the faith and gain a full knowledge of the Son of God to the point where it's a complete man who fully measures up to the stature of the Anointed One... ¹⁴ so we won't be babies anymore, being tossed up and back by waves and being blown about by every spirit of the treacherous teachings of people who will use any means to do whatever is wrong.

¹⁵ So, while holding onto the truth (and in love), let's grow up in every way into this one who is the head... the Anointed One. ¹⁶ For he brings the body together... he assembles its parts and makes all the connections so as to supply each part with what it needs (depending on its function), that the whole body will grow and strengthen itself in love.

¹⁷ I tell you this and testify to it in the Lord: You must not continue in the path that the nations are following, because their thoughts are worthless, ¹⁸ their minds have been darkened to any understanding, and they are aliens to a Godly life because of their ignorance and [their] dull hearts. ¹⁹ For, since it no longer brings them any pain, they've given themselves over to living wasted lives and they're greedily doing filthy things.

²⁰ However, that isn't what you've learned to be true of the Anointed One ²¹ (if you for a fact did hear about him and were taught about him); because, truth comes through Jesus. ²² So, get rid of those old ways that are being corrupted by the enticements that come from desires, ²³ and renew the spirit of

your minds! ²⁴ Then put on the new person... [the one] that is created by God's Will in the righteousness and loyalty of the truth. ²⁵ Also, get rid of lying... you must always tell your neighbors the truth, because we're all fellow body parts of each other!

²⁶ [Yes, you can] get irritated, but don't sin... don't let the sun set on the reasons for your irritation, ²⁷ nor should you allow any room for the Slanderer. ²⁸ And if you're a thief; you shouldn't steal anymore. Rather, you should work hard and do good things with your hands, so you'll have something to share with the needy. ²⁹ Nor should you allow any foul words to come out of your mouths. Rather, use good words that are upbuilding (as they are needed) to show that you care about everyone who listens to you.

³⁰ Don't impede the Holy Breath of The God that you were sealed with on the Day that your ransom was paid! ³¹ Rather, get rid of all the bitterness, anger, wrath, screaming, and slandering, along with everything [else] that is bad, ³² and be kind to each other... be sympathetic and graciously forgive each other, as God (through the Anointed One) has graciously forgiven you.

Chapter 5

¹ Become imitators of God as His beloved children, ² and keep on walking in love, in the same way that the Anointed One loved you and gave himself up for you as an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice to The God.

³ Don't allow sexual immorality or any type of uncleanness or greediness to be even mentioned among you, as would be expected of holy people. ⁴ Nor [should you share in] shameful conduct, foolishness, or dirty jokes (which are all unbecoming), but rather, in the giving of thanks. ⁵ [For it's easy] to recognize those who are immoral, unclean, and greedy (which really amounts to being idol worshipers), and you know that they won't receive an inheritance in the Kingdom of the Anointed One and of The God.

⁶ So, don't allow anyone to seduce you into using empty words. For it's because of things like this that the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore, don't go along with them; ⁸ because, although you were once dark, you are now light in the Lord. So keep walking as children of the light! ⁹ For the fruitage of light is every sort of goodness, righteousness, and truth... ¹⁰ things that prove to be pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Don't share in the unproductive deeds of darkness. Rather, speak out against them!

¹² It's shameful to talk about things that are only done in private, ¹³ because everything that the light speaks against is being exposed, since the light shines on everything. ¹⁴ And this is why He said, 'Wake up, you who are sleeping, and lift yourselves from among the dead... then the Anointed One will shine upon you.' ¹⁵ So you must pay close attention to the ways that you're walking... that it's not like those who are foolish, but as those who are wise. ¹⁶ You must [set aside] time for yourselves [to do such things], because these are wicked days. ¹⁷ Don't be foolish, but start learning what the Lord's Will for us is. ¹⁸ And don't be getting drunk on wine, which leads down an unsavory path. Rather, fill yourselves with the Breath [of God], ¹⁹ and speak to each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs... sing and create music in your hearts to Jehovah ²⁰ in the name of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. Yes, always give thanks to our God and Father for everything!

²¹ You should also submit to each other as though you are fearing the Anointed One. ²² Women should submit to their men as they would to the Lord, ²³ because a man is the head of his woman as the Anointed One is the head of the congregation and the savior of that body. ²⁴ So, just as the congregation submits to the Anointed One; that's how women should [submit] to their men in

everything.

²⁵ Men; love your women as the Anointed One loved the congregation and gave himself up ²⁶ to make it holy. He washed it in a bath of water (so to speak), ²⁷ in order to present a glorious gathering to himself that doesn't have any spots, wrinkles, or any such things, but which is holy and without any blemishes. ²⁸ Yes, that's how the men should love their women... as their own bodies. So the man who loves his woman is really showing love for himself... ²⁹ and nobody ever hates his own flesh. Rather, they feed it and take pride in it, just as the Anointed One does the congregation.

³⁰ Likewise, we've become parts of [Jesus'] body... of his very flesh and his bones! ³¹ [And as the scriptures says]: 'A man will leave his father and mother and stick with his woman, and the two will become one flesh.'

³² Now, this is a great mystery, because I'm comparing [the relationship between men and their women] to the Anointed One and [his love for] the congregation! ³³ But, this is how each man should love his woman... as he does himself. And women should have a [Godly] fear of their men.

Chapter 6

¹ **Children;** Obey your parents in the Lord, because this is righteous. ² Honor your father and mother, for this is the first Commandment that came with a promise... ³ 'so that things will go well for you and you can live a long time on the earth.'

⁴ **Fathers;** Don't frustrate your children, but bring them up in discipline and the council of the Lord.

⁵ **Slaves;** Be obedient to those who are your fleshly masters with [Godly] fear and sincere hearts, as you would to the Anointed One. ⁶ Don't just put on a good show to please men; but as slaves of the Anointed One, do the will of God whole souled. ⁷ Be willing slaves as to the Lord (not of men), ⁸ because you know that whatever good you do will be rewarded by the Lord, whether you're a slave or a free man.

⁹ **Masters;** Keep on doing the same for [your slaves]... and don't be threatening them, because you know that there's a Master who's over both them and you in the heavens, and He doesn't recognize any difference [between you].

¹⁰ Finally, become powerful in the mightiness and strength of the Lord. ¹¹ Put on the complete suit of armor of The God, so you can resist the methods of the Slanderer. ¹² For our fight isn't against flesh and blood, but against the governments, the authorities, the mighty ones of this worldly darkness, and against the unseen wicked powers in the heavens. ¹³ So because of this, take up the complete armor of God in order to fight in that wicked day and still be found standing.

¹⁴ Yes, stand firm with your hips wrapped in the truth and wearing the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ Wrap your feet and prepare them with the good news of peace. ¹⁶ And above all else, pick up the large shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked one. ¹⁷ Also, accept the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit... the things that are spoken by God.

¹⁸ Keep on praying and begging [God] about everything in Spirit throughout each season. Be aware of this and never stop petitioning [God] on behalf of all the Holy Ones. ¹⁹ And [pray] for me also... that the words may be given to me to open my mouth and speak freely so as to make the mystery of the good news known. ²⁰ For that's why I'm now an ambassador in chains... so that I can speak out boldly about these things and to say the things that I'm supposed to say.

²¹ Now, so you can know how I'm getting along and what I'm doing; TychiKos (a beloved brother and faithful servant of the Lord) will explain everything to you. ²² This is why I'm sending him to you... to let you know what's happening to us and to comfort your hearts.

²³ Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus the Anointed One. ²⁴ May all those who have an uncorrupted love for our Lord Jesus the Anointed One receive [His] loving care.

Philippians

Written to the congregation in Philippi, Greece for the Apostle Paul (possibly by Timothy and possibly in Aramaic) sometime around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul and Timothy, slaves of the Anointed Jesus; to all the Holy Ones in the Anointed Jesus [who are] in Philippi, along with the overseers and servants; ² May you have kindness and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus, the Anointed One.

³ I thank my God every time you're mentioned, ⁴ and I'm constantly begging [God] on your behalf... begging with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in [sharing] the good news from the first day until now. ⁶ I'm confident that the one who started this good work among you will continue to perfect it until the Day of Jesus the Anointed One.

⁷ It's a righteous thing for me to think this way about all of you, and I keep you in my heart both when I'm in chains and when I'm defending and confirming the good news, for all of you are sharers in my loving care. ⁸ God is my witness as to how much I long for all of you with the same tender affection that the Anointed Jesus has. ⁹ And this is what I keep praying: That your love can continue to grow more and more, along with your higher knowledge and understanding; ¹⁰ and that you will keep on proving the most excellent things, so that you might be found pure and blameless until the day of the Anointed One... ¹¹ being filled with righteous fruit (through the Anointed Jesus) to God's glory and praise.

¹² Now, I want you to know this, brothers: I'm seeing results from the things that I'm doing for the advancement of the good news. ¹³ Why, my imprisonment because of the Anointed One has become public knowledge among the entire Praetorian Guard and everyone else [here]. ¹⁴ Also, because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord are now more confident and they are showing more courage and fearlessness when teaching the Word of God.

¹⁵ Unfortunately, it's true that some are preaching the Anointed One out of envy and rivalry. However, many others are doing it for good motives... ¹⁶ out of love, because they know that [the reason why] I'm lying here is to defend the good news. ¹⁷ Yet none of the rest are doing it for good reasons; for they're preaching the Anointed One by arguing, and they think that this will create more problems for me while I'm in prison. ¹⁸ Why? It doesn't make any difference, for whether they're just pretending or they're being sincere, the Anointed One is being made known, and I rejoice over this. In fact, I'll keep on rejoicing, ¹⁹ because I know that through your earnest prayers and a [generous] supply of the spirit of Jesus the Anointed One, I will be saved. ²⁰ I eagerly hope (and don't expect to be disappointed) that I will soon be able to speak freely about the Anointed One as before, and even more so, whether my body is dead or alive.

²¹ To me, life is the Anointed One and my reward is death. ²² However, if I can keep on living in the flesh, I consider this to be the fruitage of my work. Which do I prefer? I won't say, ²³ for I'm obsessed by the two. What I really want is to be released [from this body] and to be with the Anointed One, since this is surely the best. ²⁴ However for your sakes, it's better for me to remain in the flesh. ²⁵ And because I'm confident of this, I know that I will survive and still be with all of you, so I can help you to grow in the joy of the faith... ²⁶ and then your reasons for pride in the Anointed Jesus will grow because of me, due to the fact that I'll be coming to you again.

²⁷ Just behave in a way that's worthy of the good news about the Anointed One, so that regardless of whether I'm coming to visit or I'm far away, I can hear [good] things about you... such as that you're

all standing firm with the same motivations, and that you're serving the faith of the good news side-by-side as a single person, ²⁸ not being frightened by those who oppose you. Such [fine conduct on your part] proves all the others to be worthy of destruction, while you are worthy of salvation by God, ²⁹ since you've been given the privilege of not only putting faith in Him, but also of suffering for the sake of the Anointed One. ³⁰ Yes, you've had to struggle with the same things that you saw me having to [struggle with], and which you're now hearing are happening to me again.

Chapter 2

¹ Therefore, if there is any encouragement in the Anointed One, any consoling love, any fellowship of the Spirit, any depth of heart or compassion ² (anything that would make my joy in you complete), [it would be to hear that] you all agree and share the same love, that you've become as one person who is thinking the same thoughts, ³ [that you aren't] doing anything out of spite or pride but that you humbly believe all the others to be better than you, ⁴ and that you're not just watching out for yourselves, but for the best interests of each other.

⁵ Keep this attitude in you that the Anointed Jesus had. ⁶ For although he once existed in the same form as God, he didn't consider trying to make himself equal to God. ⁷ Rather, he emptied himself into the shape of a slave and became a man. ⁸ And when he found himself shaped as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death... yes, to death on a pole. ⁹ This is why God promoted him to a superior position and granted him a reputation that is far above every other name, ¹⁰ so that in the name of Jesus every knee in heaven, on earth, and under the ground should bend, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus the Anointed One is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² So, my loved ones; In the same way that you have always obeyed (not just when I'm there but also while I'm away), keep on working toward your own salvation in fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is indeed God who is working through you to accomplish His work and His Will, as He pleases. ¹⁴ Therefore, do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵ so you can be found blameless and innocent children of God who are free from the accusations of this crooked and twisted generation, among whom you are shining as lights to the world!

¹⁶ Also, hang onto the life-giving words, so that I can boast in the Day of the Anointed One that I didn't run without reason or labor in vain. ¹⁷ And then, even if I am being poured out as a drink offering sacrifice over the welfare of your faith, I can be thankful and rejoice with all of you... ¹⁸ as I want you to be glad and rejoice along with me!

¹⁹ I hope (in the Lord Jesus) to send Timothy to you soon, so I can be encouraged by hearing about how you're getting along. ²⁰ For I have no one else here who shares this same spirit and who genuinely cares about your needs. ²¹ All the rest are just watching out for their own interests... not those of the Anointed Jesus. ²² But you recognize how well [Timothy] has proven himself; for he has slaved with me as a child with his father when it comes to promoting the good news. ²³ So this is the man that I hope to send to you, just as soon as I see where I really stand in this situation I'm in. ²⁴ However, I'm confident in the Lord that I'll soon be able to come and see you myself.

²⁵ I also considered it necessary to return EpaPhraditus (my brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier, but your envoy and social worker for my assistance) to you, ²⁶ because he's been longing to see all of you, and he's been concerned over the fact that you learned about his illness. ²⁷ Yes, he was indeed ill, almost to the point of death! However, The God had mercy on him... and not just on him, but on me too, so I wouldn't be grieved with sadness!

²⁸ Therefore, I'm sending him to you immediately, so that when you see him, you can once again

rejoice... and I can be less anxious also. ²⁹ Give him your customary welcome in the Lord with all joy... and remember his reputation! ³⁰ For he came very close to being killed while doing the Lord's work, and he has exposed his life to great danger in order to make up for your not being here to provide for my welfare.

Chapter 3

¹ Finally, my brothers; keep on rejoicing in the Lord. The fact that I'm writing these same things to you again is no trouble for me, and it's for your safety. ² Just watch out for the dogs, for those who are doing wicked things, and for those who cut the flesh! ³ Indeed, we are the circumcision to those who are serving the Spirit of God and finding glory in the Anointed Jesus, but not to those who are putting their trust in the flesh.

⁴ I'm someone who has every reason for confidence in the flesh... and if anyone else thinks he has a reason for confidence in the flesh, I have even more reasons! ⁵ [For I was] circumcised on the eighth day, [I'm] of the race of IsraEl, of the tribe of BenJamin, and a Hebrew from among Hebrews. When it comes to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ when it comes to zeal, a persecutor of the called ones; when it comes to righteousness by following the Law, one who has proven himself blameless! ⁷ Yet, the things that I [once] considered my assets are what I now consider my shortcomings because of the Anointed One. ⁸ For now I consider everything a loss compared to the superiority of the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus, my Lord.

Because of him, I've accepted the loss everything and consider it all so much garbage, so I can gain the Anointed One ⁹ and to be found in him. But this isn't because of my own righteousness due to following the Law; rather, it comes from my faith that he is the Anointed of God! For my righteousness [is now based on my] faith ¹⁰ and knowledge of him and in the power of his resurrection. Therefore, I've been willing to share in his sufferings and resign myself to a death like his, ¹¹ so that I can somehow be found worthy of an out-resurrection from the dead.

¹² [I'm not saying] that I've made it yet or that I'm already perfect, just that I'm chasing after it... I'm trying to grab hold of that for which the Anointed Jesus grabbed hold of me!

¹³ Brothers, I don't think of myself as having achieved it yet, but I am doing this one thing: [I'm] forgetting the things in the past and stretching to reach out for the things that are ahead... ¹⁴ I'm running toward the goal, the prize of the higher calling from God, through the Anointed Jesus. ¹⁵ And may all of us who are mature start thinking this same way... for if your thinking is inclined any other way, God will [soon] reveal this to you.

¹⁶ Nevertheless, we've gained all of this by following the rule: We should walk together in the same mind. ¹⁷ So, become imitators of me, brothers, and consider those who are walking as you've been doing to be the pattern for each of us.

¹⁸ Yet, there are many that I used to talk to you about that I now mention with tears, because they've become enemies of the Anointed One's impaling pole. ¹⁹ So they'll end up being destroyed, because their bellies have become their gods and the things they are proud of are the things that shame them, since all they think about is earthly things! ²⁰ But as for us; we possess a citizenship in the heavens, from which we're eagerly awaiting our Savior, the Lord Jesus the Anointed, ²¹ who will transform our humiliated bodies and mold them into his own glorious body, in the same way that he's able to make all things subject to himself.

Chapter 4

¹ So my brothers who are loved and longed for (my joy and my victory garland); keep standing just as you are in the Lord, my loved ones!

² I encourage EuOdia and SynTyche to think the same way in the Lord. ³ And I'm asking [the rest of] you who have truly shared under my same yoke to stick by these women who have worked so hard, side by side with me in the good news... along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are [written] in the Scroll of Life.

⁴ Always rejoice in the Lord! I'll say it again: Rejoice... ⁵ and let everyone know how reasonable you can be! Since the Lord is close [to you], ⁶ don't be anxious about anything! But through prayers and heart-felt petitions (along with the giving of thanks), make your requests known to God; ⁷ and then the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, will guard your hearts and your reasoning, through the Anointed Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers; Keep thinking about whatever things are true, serious, righteous, chaste, lovable, well spoken of, virtuous, and praiseworthy. ⁹ And if you keep doing the things that you learned, accepted, heard, and saw through me, the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰ I'm so joyful in the Lord that you've finally started thinking about my needs once again. It's not that you've forgotten me, it's just that you haven't had much opportunity. ¹¹ I'm not saying this because I'm in need, for I've learned to be very self-sufficient... ¹² I know how to be poor and I know how to have plenty. For in everything and in every way, I've learned the secrets of how to have enough to eat and how to go hungry, how to have plenty and how to do without. ¹³ Yes, I have the strength for everything by the One who gives me my power.

¹⁴ However, you have acted well by sharing with me during my difficulties. ¹⁵ In fact, you Philippians may remember how, back in the early [days] of the good news (after I left Macedonia), not a single congregation was willing to share with me in the matter of giving and receiving, other than you. ¹⁶ For even [when I was] in Thessalonica, you sent something to help with my needs... not just once but twice!

¹⁷ It's not that I'm begging for such gifts; I'm just looking for the fruitage of becoming a greater part of your conversations. ¹⁸ I've received everything that I need from you, which is more than enough! I've been filled with the sweet-smelling odor of a sacrifice that is acceptable and very pleasing to God, now that I've received these things from you through EpaPhraditus. ¹⁹ So be assured that my God will in turn fully supply all your needs from His great wealth, through the glory of the Anointed Jesus.

²⁰ Now, may our God and Father be glorified for ages of ages... may it be so.

²¹ Give my greetings to all the Holy Ones in the Anointed Jesus. The brothers who are with me also send you their greetings. ²² Yes, all the Holy Ones – and especially those of the house of Caesar – send you their greetings. ²³ May the kindness of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with the spirit [you're showing].

Colossians

Written to the congregation in Colossae for the Apostle Paul (possibly by Timothy and possibly in Aramaic) sometime around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an Apostle of the Anointed Jesus by the Will of God, and Timothy our brother, ² to the holy and faithful brothers in the Anointed One at Colossae; May you have loving care and peace from our Father, God.

³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One, when we are praying for you, ⁴ since we've heard of your faith in the Anointed Jesus and of the love you have for all the Holy Ones ⁵ through the hope that has been reserved for you in the heavens. This is the same hope that you were taught when the truth of the good news ⁶ was first brought to you. [And today] it's producing fruit and increasing throughout the entire world, the same as it has been doing among you since the day you first heard of it and came to an accurate understanding about the truth of God's loving care, ⁷ [through the hand of] EpaPhras our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful servant of the Anointed One on our behalf. ⁸ And he's the one who told us of the love that you have through the Breath [of God].

⁹ As the result, from the day we heard [this about you], we haven't stopped praying for you and asking for you to be filled with a complete knowledge of [God's] Will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. ¹⁰ For we want you to walk in a way that's worthy of the Lord and to be completely pleasing as you keep on producing the fruit of all sorts of good works, growing in a full knowledge of God ¹¹ and getting stronger in the power of His Glorious Might, so you can endure everything joyfully and patiently, ¹² while you thank the Father who qualified you to receive a portion of the inheritance of the Holy Ones in the light. ¹³ For He is drawing us to Himself out of the power of darkness and changing us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.

¹⁴ Now, the ransom price that frees us from our sins has already been paid by [Jesus], ¹⁵ who is the image of the invisible God and the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For it was through him that everything in heaven and on the earth was created, both the things that are visible and the things that are invisible... it was all created through him and for him, regardless of whether [it involves] thrones, or rulerships, or governments, or powers, ¹⁷ since he was before everything and everything came into existence through him, ¹⁸ and now he's the head of the body of the congregation, the beginning, and the first to be born from the dead, so that he would be first in everything. ¹⁹ Yes, [God] saw that it was good for him to be the completion of everything, ²⁰ and He's using [Jesus] to bring it all back into a peaceful good relationship with Himself through his blood [that was shed] on the pole, whether these things are heavenly or earthly.

²¹ So although at one time you were just aliens and enemies (since all you thought about was doing wicked things), ²² [Jesus] has restored your relationship with [God] by means of the death of [his] fleshly body. [This was done so that] you could be presented to Him as holy, without any blemishes, and free from all accusations... ²³ that is, as long as you stay firmly founded and deeply rooted in the faith and aren't diverted from the hope of the good news that you were taught and which is being preached in all creation under heaven (of which I, Paul, am a servant). ²⁴ So even as I'm here suffering, I'm rejoicing over you.

Yes, right now my flesh is finishing whatever may have been lacking during the difficult time that the Anointed One endured, and I'm doing this on behalf of his body, the congregation, ²⁵ which is what I'm serving. For this is the obligation that God assigned to me for your sakes, to fulfill His Word ²⁶ about the mystery that was hidden from past ages and generations, but which has now been made

clear to His Holy Ones. ²⁷ For it was God's Will to allow you [people] of the nations to understand the glorious richness of this mystery, so that the Anointed One would also be in you and [give you the same] hope of glory ²⁸ that we've been advertising about him to you! Yes, we've been teaching you his wisdom and putting his mind into each person, so that we can present every man as being complete in the Anointed One. ²⁹ This is why I'm working so hard and struggling... so [Jesus] can demonstrate his power and his ways of doing things through me.

Chapter 2

¹ I want you to realize what a great struggle I'm undergoing on your behalf, as well as for those in LaoDikea and for all those who haven't met me face to face yet. ² And I want your hearts to be comforted over this, so you can be brought together in love and be provided with a rich and sure understanding, as well as an accurate knowledge of that great mystery of God... the Anointed One. ³ For hidden in him are the treasures of all wisdom and knowledge.

⁴ I've wanted to explain this to you so that no one can mislead you with strong arguments [to the contrary]. ⁵ For although I'm not there in the flesh, I'm with you in spirit.

I'm also rejoicing, because I've noticed the ways that you've come into line with and become firm in the Anointed One. ⁶ Therefore, since you've accepted the Anointed Jesus (our Lord), [you must] keep on walking with him... ⁷ becoming rooted and built up in him, and growing firmer in your belief in the things that you were taught. [Yes, I want you to] overflow with these things whenever you're giving thanks!

⁸ Watch out so that no one carries you off as a captive into the philosophies and empty hopes of human traditions, because these base things of the world don't come from the Anointed One. ⁹ For in him lives all the fullness of the divine body... ¹⁰ and you're also part of the fullness of this one who is the head over all governments and powers, ¹¹ for you were circumcised into him with a circumcision that was done without hands when you stripped away your fleshly bodies though the circumcision of the Anointed One. ¹² Then you were all buried with him when [you went] under the water, and you were all raised together by your faith in what God (who raised him from the dead) has done in you. ¹³ For that's when you died to your errors and to the uncircumcised state of your flesh and became alive with him, and he kindly forgave all your errors ¹⁴ by wiping away the handwritten Laws that held you down and oppressed you... he lifted them out of the way and nailed them on the pole, ¹⁵ which stripped away the governments and powers, and openly displayed that this is how he had conquered them.

¹⁶ So, don't allow anyone to judge you over [what you] eat or drink, or over your views of festivals like the New Moons or Sabbaths; ¹⁷ for these are just shadows of things to come, while the realities belong to the Anointed One.

¹⁸ And don't allow anyone to steal your prize by suggesting some lowly form of angel worship and making strong claims of things that [he says] he has seen. For [this man has become] overly impressed with something he just imagined in the flesh, ¹⁹ and he's no longer hanging onto the head... the one who holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, so that it keeps growing with the [type of] growth that comes from God.

²⁰ However, since you've already died to the base things of this world along with the Anointed One, why is it that you (as though you're still living in this world) are putting yourselves under such laws as ²¹ 'don't feel it,' 'don't taste it,' or 'don't touch it' ²² when it comes to things that are just going to be consumed... for these are the commands and teachings of men! ²³ And although choosing such a

form of worship may sound wise with all its humility and mistreatment of the body, it has no value when it comes to meeting the needs of the flesh!

Chapter 3

¹ Rather, since you've been raised with the Anointed One, you should now be searching for the things that come from above, from the right hand of God, where the Anointed One is sitting... ² and these things that are from above are no part of this world. ³ Then (since you've already died and your life has been hidden away in the Anointed One and in God) ⁴ when the Anointed One (who is our life) reveals himself, you'll also be seen with him in his glory!

⁵ Therefore, deaden your earthly [body parts] to sexual immorality, unclean passions, desires for bad things, and greediness (which is idolatry); ⁶ for it's due to such things that the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ And though that may have been the way you acted back when you used to live for such things, ⁸ you must now remove all the wrath, anger, badness, slander, and obscenities from your mouths... ⁹ and not lie to each other! Yes, you must now take off the old person and the things that he did, ¹⁰ and put on the new person that is being remade with a complete knowledge in the image of his Creator. ¹¹ So, there are no more Greeks or Jews, circumcised or uncircumcised, foreigners, Scythians, slaves, or freemen... there is just the Anointed One, who is everything and in all of you! ¹² Then as God's chosen people who are holy and loved, you must put on the caring traits of empathy, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Also, keep on putting up with each other and forgiving each other kindly, whenever anyone has a reason to complain. Yes, just as the Lord kindly forgave you, you do the same... ¹⁴ and add love to all of that, because it's the perfect unifying force.

¹⁵ Let the peace of the Anointed One serve as the judge in your hearts, because it's calling [all of] you into one body. So be thankful and ¹⁶ allow the words of the Anointed One to live in you richly and in all wisdom, as you kindly teach and remind each other through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Yes, sing to God from your hearts! ¹⁷ And no matter what you're saying or doing, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, continuously thanking God (the Father) through him.

¹⁸ Women should always obey [their husbands], since this is proper [for those who are] in the Lord.

¹⁹ Men should love their [wives] and not be bitterly angry with them.

²⁰ Children should obey their parents in everything, because this is pleasing to the Lord.

²¹ Fathers shouldn't [demand too much of] their children, so they don't discourage them.

²² Slaves should obey those who are their fleshly masters in everything... not just putting on a good show to please men, but [doing everything] sincerely and from the heart, in the fear of the Lord.

²³ Yes, whatever you're doing, work at it wholeheartedly as though [you're doing it] for the Lord and not for men. ²⁴ And because you know that you'll be rewarded with an inheritance from the Lord, you should slave for the Lord (the Anointed One), ²⁵ since the unrighteous will be [judged] impartially for the unrighteous things that they're doing.

Chapter 4

¹ Also, those who are masters should act righteously and fairly with their slaves, because we know that we all have a Master in the heavens.

² Keep on praying, staying alert, and giving thanks. ³ Also, keep praying for us... that God may open doors for us to speak and tell others about the mystery of the Anointed One; for that's the reason why I'm [here in] shackles... ⁴ to display whatever it is that I'm supposed to say.

⁵ Keep on walking wisely when it comes to those on the outside, and keep an eye out for opportunities.

⁶ Be respectful in everything you say... season everything with salt and know how to [give the best] answer to each person.

⁷ TychiKos (my dear brother, faithful servant, and fellow slave in the Lord) will tell you everything that's happening with me. ⁸ That's why I'm sending him to you... to keep you abreast of what's going on and to comfort your hearts. ⁹ [I'm also sending] Onesimus, my faithful and loved brother who came from you, who will tell you all the rest.

¹⁰ AristArchus (my fellow prisoner) sends you his greetings, as does Mark (BarNabas' cousin). He's the one that you were told to welcome if he ever comes to [visit] you... ¹¹ and so does Jesus (who's also called Justus). All of them are circumcised, but they are also my fellow workers for the Kingdom of God, and they've done so much to comfort me.

¹² EpaPhras (who came from you), a slave of the Anointed Jesus, sends you his greetings. He always puts a lot of effort into his prayers for you, asking that you might become perfect in the stand that you're taking and [that you'll] completely carry out the Will of God. ¹³ I can testify to the fact that he goes to a lot of effort on your behalf, as well as for those at LaoDikea and HierApolis.

¹⁴ Luke (the beloved physician) sends you his greetings, and so does Demas. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers at LaoDikea, as well as to Nympha and the called ones in her home.

¹⁶ After this letter has been read among you, also arrange for it to be read in the LaoDikean congregation... and you read the one from LaoDikea. ¹⁷ Also, tell ArchHippus to keep an eye on the service assignment that he accepted in the Lord and to make sure that he fulfills it.⁷

¹⁸ Here is my greeting (Paul's) in my own hand. Remember me in prison. May [God's] loving care be with you.

1 Thessalonians

Written to the congregation in Thessaloniki, Greece (possibly in Aramaic) for Paul around 52-CE by either Timothy or Silvanus.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the called ones among the Thessalonians who are in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus the Anointed; May you have peace and [God's] loving care.

² We always thank God when we mention you in our prayers, ³ because we never forget your faithful work, loving labors, and endurance that comes from [your] confidence in our Lord Jesus the Anointed, [who stands] before our God and Father. ⁴ We know that He chose you, our brothers who are loved by God, ⁵ because the good news that we are preaching didn't become just words to you, but power, Holy Breath, and a strong conviction, since you recognized what sort of men we became to you for your sakes.

⁶ Then you started acting like us and like the Lord, because you accepted the Word in the joy of [God's] Holy Breath despite many difficulties, ⁷ and you became examples to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ For you've preached the Word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has been spread everywhere... so we don't have to say any more, ⁹ since everyone is talking about the way we first came to you and of how you turned away from idols, then [turned toward] The God... yes, to slave for a God who's living and true. ¹⁰ And [they speak of how you're] awaiting His Son from the heavens whom He raised from the dead... this Jesus, who has drawn us to himself and away from the coming wrath.

Chapter 2

¹ Brothers, you know that our visit with you hasn't gone without results. ² For although we had just suffered and been mistreated in Philippi (as you well know), our God gave us the boldness to speak to you about the good news of our God... though with a lot of difficulty. ³ Because, the encouragement we give doesn't come from errors, uncleanness, or deceit. ⁴ And since God has proven us fit to be entrusted with the good news, we don't speak just to please men, but [to please] God, who proves what's in our hearts.

⁵ So, as God is my witness (and as you well know), we didn't come to you with flattering words or as pretending to be in need of anything, ⁶ nor have we looked for glory from men... no, not from you or from anyone else (though as Apostles of the Anointed One, we are empowered to be such a burden). ⁷ Rather, we came to you as gently as a mother who feeds and cares for her children. ⁸ And because we cared for you so much, we were not only happy to share the good news of God with you, but also our lives, since you've become so dear to us.

⁹ Brothers, surely you remember how we toiled and labored... how we worked hard night and day so we wouldn't put an expensive burden on anyone, as we preached the good news about The God to you. ¹⁰ And both you and God are our witnesses as to how loyal, righteous, and free from blame we became to you believers. ¹¹ For each of you must recognize how we kept on encouraging you, consoling you, and testifying to you, just as a father does to his own children. ¹² [We did this] so that you would keep on walking in a way that's worthy of The God who's calling you to His Kingdom and glory.

¹³ And we keep on thanking God, because, when you accepted the word of God that you heard from us, you didn't accept it as the word of men, but just as it truthfully is, the Word of God, which is at

work in you believers. ¹⁴ Yes, you became our imitators and our brothers in the same way as those who were called by The God in Judea and are in the Anointed Jesus, because you started suffering at the hands of your own countrymen, just as the [Called Ones] did at the hands of the Judeans ¹⁵ who killed the Lord Jesus and the Prophets, and who persecuted us. These men aren't pleasing to God, for they are opposing all men ¹⁶ by trying to keep us from speaking to the gentiles so we can save them. As the result, they're always filled to the brim with their sins, and in the end they will receive His wrath.

¹⁷ As for us, brothers; We're forced to be orphans to you for a short time... in body, but not in our hearts, for we anxiously desire to see your faces. ¹⁸ That's why I wanted to come to you (yes me, Paul) on two different occasions. However, the Opposer kept on cutting us off. ¹⁹ For when our Lord Jesus arrives and we're standing before him; why would we have any hope, or joy, or a garland of which we can boast, if it were not for you? ²⁰ Because you – yes you – are our glory and joy!

Chapter 3

¹ So, when we couldn't bear it any longer, we arranged to be sent to Athens alone. ² Then we sent Timothy – our brother and God's servant in the good news about the Anointed One – to strengthen and comfort you in your faith, ³ so that none of you would become discouraged by all these difficulties. However, you know that we were all appointed [to endure] things such as this. ⁴ Yes, when we were there with you, we warned you that we were about to suffer persecution (as you well know is now happening). ⁵ And it's because I just couldn't stand [not knowing how you were faring] that I sent [Timothy] to see how your faith [is bearing up], and whether the Tempter has put you to the test and brought all our hard work [on your behalf] to nothing.

⁶ But now that Timothy has returned from you, he has brought us the good news about your faithfulness and love; and [he's told us] how you keep us in your fond memories and of how you're always longing to see us, just as we are [longing to see] you. ⁷ And that's why, brothers, despite all our own needs and difficulties, we find comfort in you and in the faith that you're showing. ⁸ Because, if you're standing firm in the Lord, we are alive! ⁹ So, what sort of thanks can we offer to God for you in return for all the joy that we now have because of you, before our God? ¹⁰ Therefore, we will keep on begging night and day to see your faces and to correct anything that may be lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now, may our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus straighten our road to you. ¹² May the Lord cause you to grow and to have more than enough love for each other and for all, just as we have for you. ¹³ And may he make your hearts firm in holiness, without any blame before our God and Father when our Lord Jesus appears with all his Holy Ones... may it be so!

Chapter 4

¹ Finally brothers; We ask and urge you by the Lord Jesus to follow in the path of the things you learned from us and to keep on pleasing God. Although you're already doing this, you must do it even more so! ² For you are aware of these orders that we gave you through the Lord Jesus: ³ 'It is God's Will [for you] to be holy and to stay free from sexual immorality.' ⁴ So, you must each learn how to take control of yourselves in holiness and honor... ⁵ not in passionate desires like those of the nations who don't know God! ⁶ Nobody should overstep the limits or take advantage of his brother in this matter, for the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we warned you before and explained completely... ⁷ God didn't call us to uncleanness, but to holiness! ⁸ So those of you who [choose to] disregard this [warning] aren't disregarding a man, but The God who put His Holy Breath in you.

⁹ Yet, when it comes to the matter of brotherly love, there's no need for us to write you, because God

has taught you to love each other...¹⁰ and you're showing this to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we're now urging you brothers to become even better at it!¹¹ Also, pledge yourselves to living quietly, to minding your own business, and to working for a living (just as we've instructed you to do),¹² so you will always be acting in an appropriate way toward those on the outside, and that you won't ever be in need of anything.

¹³ Brothers, we want you to understand the situation of those who are sleeping [in death], so you aren't saddened like those who don't have any hope.¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and was resurrected, we must also believe that The God will (through Jesus) lead back those who have fallen asleep.

¹⁵ Understand that what we are saying to you is the word of the Lord... that those who are still living at the appearance of the Lord will definitely not go ahead of those who have fallen asleep.¹⁶ Because, the Lord himself will come down from the sky and give the command in the voice of the highest messenger [of God] and with God's trumpet; then those who have died in the Anointed One will be the first who are resurrected.¹⁷ And after that, the living (those of us who are still left at that time) will be snatched into the clouds along with them for a meeting with the Lord in the air... and thereafter, we'll always be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Keep comforting each other with these words.

Chapter 5

¹ Now, when it comes to the times and seasons brothers, nothing needs to be written to you,² because you know very well that the Lord's Day is coming as a thief in the night.³ And whenever they're saying 'Peace and security,' destruction will come on them instantly like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they won't escape.⁴ Therefore brothers; since you aren't in the dark, don't let that Day [sneak up] on you like a thief.⁵ For you're all sons of light and sons of the day... you don't belong to the night or to darkness!

⁶ As the result, we shouldn't be falling asleep like all the rest. Rather, we should be staying awake and remaining sober;⁷ for those who are sleeping, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.⁸ But may those of us who belong to the day stay sober, as we put on the breastplate of faith and love and wear our hope of salvation like a helmet.⁹ Because, The God didn't destine us for His wrath, but so that we might gain salvation through our Lord Jesus the Anointed One¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we remain alert or we fall asleep [in death], we'll all live together with him!¹¹ Keep on comforting each other with these words and continue to build each other up, just as you're already doing.

¹² Now brothers; We're asking you to give [special] recognition to those who are working so hard among you by taking the lead over you in the Lord and in counseling you.¹³ Give them extraordinary loving consideration because of what they're doing, and be at peace with each other!

¹⁴ We also urge you brothers to reprimand the disorderly, to comfort the depressed, to support the weak, and to be patient with everyone.¹⁵ Also, make sure that no one is trying to get even with anyone else over bad things... keep on searching for the best interest of each other and for all the rest!¹⁶ Keep on rejoicing,¹⁷ praying constantly,¹⁸ and giving thanks for everything, because this is God's Will for you in the Anointed Jesus!¹⁹ Don't put out the fire of [God's] Breath²⁰ or ignore the prophecies,²¹ and prove everything... then hang onto whatever is good²² and avoid anything that appears to be wicked!

²³ May the God of peace make you completely holy and sound in every way – in spirit, soul, and body – and may He find you blameless, so that you can be preserved when our Lord Jesus the Anointed

One arrives. ²⁴ For the One who is calling you is faithful, and He'll make it happen.

²⁵ Brothers; continue to pray for us, ²⁶ and keep on greeting all the brothers with a holy kiss.

²⁷ Now, I'm putting you under oath in the Lord to read this letter to all the brothers.

²⁸ May the loving care of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with all of you.

2 Thessalonians

Written to the congregation in Thessaloniki, Greece on behalf of Paul (possibly in Aramaic) by either Timothy or Sylvanus between 52 and 54-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the called ones among the Thessalonians who are in God our Father and in the Lord Jesus the Anointed; ² May you have loving care and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus the Anointed.

³ We're always obligated to give thanks to God for you, brothers, which is appropriate because of the super growth of your faith and [because of] the love that you have for each other, which keeps on growing. ⁴ We also take special pride in you among all the called ones of God because of the endurance and faith that you've shown through all the persecutions and difficulties that you've been enduring. ⁵ So, the righteous judgment of God is being revealed in that you're being counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

⁶ And it's a righteous thing for God to repay those who are persecuting you by crushing them, ⁷ while providing relief to you who are suffering this persecution (and to us also) when the Lord Jesus is revealed in the sky with his powerful messengers ⁸ in a flaming fire. Then he'll bring vengeance upon all those who don't know God and those who aren't obeying the good news about our Lord Jesus. ⁹ In justice, they'll be repaid with age-long ruin away from the face of the Lord and the glory of his might ¹⁰ when he arrives to be glorified among his Holy Ones and to be marveled at by all of you who are found to be believers in that day, because you've put faith in the testimony that we provided.

¹¹ We're also always praying this for you: That our God may count you worthy of the calling and that He might fulfill in you all [His] good intentions through powerful deeds of faith, ¹² so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you (and you in him), through the loving care of our God and of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One.

Chapter 2

¹ However, brothers; regarding the appearance of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One and our being gathered to him: We urge you ² not to quickly lose hope or to be disturbed by [something from the] spirit, or by words, or [by things written] in a letter that may have come through us, indicating that the Lord's Day has arrived. ³ Don't allow anyone to mislead you in any way, because [that day] won't arrive until after there has been a great turning away and a revealing of the lawless man (the son of destruction), ⁴ who opposes and puts himself higher than all others that are called gods or things of worship, and who seats himself in the Most Holy Place (gr. *Naos*) of The God, where he publicly displays himself as being a god. ⁵ Don't you remember that I used to warn you of such things while I was still with you?

⁶ So understand that is what's holding everything up is the revealing of this one at the [proper] time. ⁷ Indeed, the mystery of this lawless one is already at work, for everything is being held up until he is no longer among us. ⁸ For that's when this lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy and bring to nothing with the breath from his mouth when he arrives.

⁹ This one will come with the works of the Opposer, using great powers, lying signs, false wonders, ¹⁰ and with every sort of deceit of the unrighteous (those who will perish for not loving the truth that they received and which would have saved them)! ¹¹ For The God will send them delusions so they'll start believing whatever is false ¹² and they'll prefer unrighteousness to believing the truth... which is

what will condemn them.

¹³ However, we are obliged to always thank God for you brothers who are loved by the Lord, since God chose you for salvation from the beginning through the holiness of the Spirit [because of] your belief in the truth. ¹⁴ This is why He called you through the good news that we brought to you... so that you might also receive the glory of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One.

¹⁵ Therefore, brothers; Stand firm and hang onto the traditions that you were taught by word [of mouth] and in the letters that we sent to you. ¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus the Anointed One himself and God (our Father who loved us and kindly gave us comfort and good hope in this age) ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and make you firm in all good words and good deeds!

Chapter 3

¹ Finally brothers... pray for us! Pray that the word of the Lord may be glorified and spread rapidly, just as it is currently being done among you. ² And [pray] that we may be delivered from unruly and wicked men, because the Faith isn't for everyone. ³ However, you can trust that the Lord will make you firm and guard you from the Wicked One.

⁴ We also have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are following – and will continue to follow – the commandments that we've given to you. ⁵ So, may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of The God and into the steadfast ways of the Anointed One.

⁶ Also brothers; We're warning you in the name of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One that you should draw away from any brother who is walking disorderly and not following the traditions that you've received from us, ⁷ since it's important for you all to imitate us. Because you know very well that we weren't lazy when we were among you, ⁸ and we didn't ask anyone to provide us with food. Rather, we worked hard day and night so we wouldn't be a burden on any of you. ⁹ This isn't because we aren't authorized to [ask for such things], but because we wanted to set an example for you to imitate. ¹⁰ So when we were with you, we told you: 'If anyone isn't willing to work, don't feed him.'

¹¹ However, we're now hearing that some among you aren't following these instructions and they aren't working at all... they're meddling in other people's affairs. ¹² So we are warning them and inviting them through the Lord Jesus the Anointed One to be quiet and go to work so they'll be able to eat their own bread.

¹³ Brothers, don't give up when it comes to doing what's good! ¹⁴ But if there is anyone who isn't willing to obey the things we're writing about in this letter, take note of it and don't keep company with him to shame him. ¹⁵ However, don't think of him as an enemy; rather, council him as a brother.

¹⁶ Now, may the Lord of peace himself give you peace in every way throughout all time. Yes, may the Lord be with all of you.

¹⁷ [Here's] my greeting in my own (Paul's) hand. Every letter proves it, because this is the way I write.

¹⁸ May the loving care of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with all of you.

1 Timothy

A letter from Paul to Timothy, which is thought to have been written (possibly in Aramaic) around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an Apostle of the Anointed Jesus by the authorization of God our Savior and of the Anointed Jesus [who is] our hope; ² to Timothy, a genuine child in the faith. May you find loving care, mercy, and peace from God the Father and [from] the Anointed Jesus, our Lord.

³ [Please] stay in Ephesus as I had encouraged you to do, while I travel on to Macedonia. For I want you to give orders to some who are there not to be teaching something that's different ⁴ or to be paying attention to myths and genealogies, because there's no end to these things, and such research detracts from the job of serving the needs of the Faith in the household of God. ⁵ Rather, what we want to [encourage them to do] is to love [each other] with a clean heart and a good conscience, and to have a faith that isn't judgmental. ⁶ For because of these teachings, some are being misled into foolish discussions. ⁷ And though they want to be teachers of the Law, they don't have any idea what they're talking about, and they don't understand the effects that all of this will have.

⁸ Now, we know that the Law is good... as long as it's used for legal purposes. ⁹ But recognize that the Law wasn't laid out for the righteous, but for the lawless and undisciplined, the godless and sinners, the disloyal and unclean, those who would slap their fathers and mothers, murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who have sex with men, the presumptuous, the liars and promise breakers, and all the rest who go against the wholesome teachings ¹¹ that come from the glorious good news with which our Blessed God has entrusted to us.

¹² I'm so grateful to the Anointed Jesus (our Lord) who has considered me faithful, given me this authority, and made me his servant, ¹³ [despite the fact that] I used to be a slanderer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. However, I was just ignorant and I acted [that way] because I didn't believe... and then I was shown mercy ¹⁴ by the loving kindness of our Lord, through the faith and love of the Anointed Jesus.

¹⁵ Therefore, when we say that the Anointed Jesus came into the world to save sinners; these words are faithful and deserve to be believed, because I was the foremost of them! ¹⁶ And the reason why I was shown mercy was so that the Anointed Jesus might demonstrate all of his patience and use me as a prime example of someone who can still put faith in him and receive age-long life. ¹⁷ So, to the King of the Ages [who is] incorruptible and invisible (the only God), may there be honor and glory into the ages of ages... may it be so!

¹⁸ Now, this is the responsibility that I'm laying on you, my son Timothy: As the prophecies about you foretold (that you would be a soldier in a good war); ¹⁹ hang onto your faith and good conscience... for some have pushed theirs aside and experienced shipwreck. ²⁰ This includes Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I've handed over to the Opposer, so they can be taught not to blaspheme.

Chapter 2

¹ First, I'm encouraging you to beg, pray, ask on behalf of, and give thanks [to God] for all sorts of men – ² for kings and for all those in high offices – that we can go on living a calm and quiet life, devoutly and seriously; ³ for this is good and acceptable in the eyes of our Savior, God, ⁴ because He wants all men to be saved and to come to a complete knowledge of the truth.

⁵ Understand that there's just one God, and there's just one mediator between God and men ([who was] a man), the Anointed Jesus. ⁶ For he offered himself as the ransom price on behalf of everyone at just the right time in proof of this. ⁷ Yes, this is the reason why I was made a preacher, an Apostle (I'm not lying, I'm telling the truth), and a teacher to the gentiles about the Faith and the Truth! ⁸ So, I want to pray that all men everywhere would raise their hands in holiness and set aside their anger and arguments.

⁹ **(Questionable verses:)** *Likewise, all women should dress themselves modestly and adorn themselves sensibly, not with fancy hairstyles or in gold and pearls or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but in ways befitting women who have promised to worship God and to do everything that's good. ¹¹ Yes, the women should learn quietly and obediently, ¹² for I don't allow them to teach or to act independently from men, but to [listen] quietly... ¹³ because Adam was created first, then Eve. ¹⁴ Also, Adam wasn't deceived, but the woman was thoroughly deceived and went beyond [what she was told]. ¹⁵ However, [the women] will be kept safe through childbirth, as long as they remain in the Faith in love, holiness, and sensibleness.*

Chapter 3

¹ You can believe that if someone is reaching out to be an overseer, he's looking for good work. ² However, an overseer must be [someone who] has not been charged [with misconduct]... a one-woman man who is moderate in habits, sensible, orderly, friendly to strangers, and a teacher. ³ He should not be addicted to alcohol or headstrong, but [someone who is] willing to give in. Nor should he be a quarrelsome or greedy person. ⁴ He should be taking the lead in his own family and have children who obey him seriously. ⁵ For if any man doesn't know how to take the lead in his own family, how can he take care of God's congregation?

⁶ He must not be a newly-converted man, for fear that he might become too proud and fall into the judgment of the Slanderer. ⁷ And those outside [the congregation] should also speak well of him, so he doesn't fall into disgrace and into the Slanderer's snare.

⁸ The servants should also be serious, not deceitful or excessive drinkers, and not looking for easy money, ⁹ but those who hold the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience. ¹⁰ Let them prove themselves first, and if they do well, allow them to serve.

¹¹ Women should likewise be serious and not slanderous, but moderate in their habits and faithful in everything.

¹² Servants should be one-woman men and be taking the lead over their households and children. ¹³ And thereafter, those who serve well will gain a good position in the faith and have opportunities to speak out boldly, through the Anointed Jesus.

¹⁴ I'm writing these things to you, although I'm hoping to come to you shortly. ¹⁵ However, just in case I'm delayed, you'll know how you should conduct yourself in God's household (the Congregation of the living God) as a pillar and supporter of the truth.

¹⁶ Admittedly, this sacred [thing that we are] devoted to is a great mystery. For he was shown in the flesh, was found righteous in spirit, was seen by messengers, was preached about among the nations, was believed in the world, and was taken up in glory.⁷

Chapter 4

¹ However, the Spirit definitely says that some will leave the faith in the future and pay attention to wicked spirits and the teachings of demons, ² as well as to hypocritical men who are liars and whose consciences are seared as with branding irons. ³ These will forbid marriage and the eating of food that God created to be eaten appreciatively by all those who have faith and who understand the truth. ⁴ For every creation of God is good, and nothing should be thrown away. So if we thank Him for it, ⁵ it becomes holy by what we say to God in our prayers.

⁶ So if you'll explain these things to the brothers, you'll prove yourself a fine servant of the Anointed Jesus... and [you'll] grow strong on the words of the Faith, as well as on the fine teachings that you're following so closely.

⁷ You must avoid worldly fables and old-wives tales, and train yourself to be a reverent person! ⁸ For though physical exercise does a little good, learning [Godly] reverence is good for all things, because it holds the promise of life, both now and in that which is coming. ⁹ Yes, what I'm saying is trustworthy and deserves [your special] attention, ¹⁰ for it's the reason why we're struggling and working so hard as we continue to put faith in a living God who is the Savior of all men (but mostly of the faithful).

¹¹ So, instruct and teach... ¹² and don't allow anyone to look down on you because you're young. Rather, become an example to the faithful in what you say, in what you do, in your love, in your faith, and in your purity!

¹³ Until I get there, work at public reading, at giving council, and on your teaching ability. ¹⁴ Don't be careless with the gift in you that was given through prophecy when the elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Think hard on these things... get wrapped up in them, so that everyone can see the progress you're making. ¹⁶ Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching, and stick with it; for if you do that, you'll save yourself and those who are listening to you!

Chapter 5

¹ Don't be too harsh with older men... speak to them as you would to fathers, to younger men as to brothers, ² to older women as to mothers, and to younger women as sisters, with all purity.

³ Show honor to the widows who are really living as widows. ⁴ However, if a widow has children or grandchildren; let them first learn the lesson of how to show deep respect inside their own families by paying what they owe to their parents and grandparents... for in God's sight, that's the right thing to do.

⁵ Now, an actual widow who has been left on her own puts her hope in God, so she keeps begging to [God] in her prayers both night and day. ⁶ But [the widow] who lives for herself and for pleasure is already dead while she's still alive.

⁷ Yes, keep on telling them this, so they'll be found blameless: ⁸ 'If anyone doesn't provide for [those who are] his own – and especially for those in his own household – he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever!'

⁹ Put a widow on the list if:

- She's more than sixty years old
- She's had just one husband

- She's done good things that can be attested to
- She's raised children
- She's been hospitable
- She's washed the feet of the Holy Ones · She's provided for those in difficulty
- She's followed the course of doing all sorts of good deeds.

¹¹ On the other hand, turn down younger widows. For when they feel the sexual urge, they leave the Anointed One because they want to marry... ¹² and they're judged for this, because they set aside the faith that they had at first, ¹³ while learning wasteful habits such as going around and doing a lot of visiting. They not only waste time, they also gossip, meddle in other people's affairs, and talk about things that they shouldn't. ¹⁴ I prefer to see younger widows marry, have children, and manage a home. That way, the Opposer isn't given something over which he can gleefully gloat. ¹⁵ Yet, some of them have already turned to following the Slanderer.

¹⁶ So if any believing woman has a widow [in her family], she should take care of this herself, so the congregation won't have to handle the burden. That way, [the congregation] can help those [who are really in need].

¹⁷ Let the elders who take the lead in a fine way be considered worthy of a double honor... especially those who work hard at speaking and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scriptures tell us: 'You shouldn't muzzle a bull when it's threshing grain,' and, 'A worker deserves his pay.'¹⁹ [Nor should you] accept an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses... ²⁰ but expose those who are guilty of sins before all onlookers, so the rest of them will also be in fear.

²¹ Before God, the Anointed Jesus, and the chosen messengers, I solemnly charge you to do these things! However, don't make a judgment before you've heard all the evidence, and never decide because you're biased one way or the other. ²² Also, don't be too quick to lay your hands on any man [to appoint him to a responsibility], so you aren't found to be a sharer in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure!

²³ And don't just drink water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and for your frequent illnesses.

²⁴ [Remember that] the sins of some men are done in the open and lead directly to judgment. However, the [sins] of the rest will eventually become known. ²⁵ For just as many good deeds become widely known, [sins] can't usually be kept hidden either.

Chapter 6

¹ Those who are in bondage as slaves should consider their masters worthy of all honor, so the Name of God and our teachings won't be slandered. ² And those who have believing owners shouldn't think less of them because they are brothers. Rather, let them really be slaves, because those who work hard are considered faithful and are loved in return. Keep on teaching these things and giving this encouragement!

³ Now, if anyone teaches something different and doesn't follow these life-giving words (which are those of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One), or doesn't teach deep respect for God, ⁴ he's just blowing smoke, he doesn't understand anything well, and he has become mentally diseased with doubts and debates over words... the results of which are envying, arguing, slandering, wicked suspicions, ⁵ and 'making mountains out of mole hills.' They are men with corrupt minds that have been robbed of the truth... and they're also those who imply that we should earn a profit from this worship.

⁶ Yet, it's still a fact that we do gain much profit from this worship... that is, if we pay our own way. ⁷ For none of us brought anything into the world and we can't carry anything out. ⁸ So if we have enough to eat and enough to wear, we should be satisfied with that. ⁹ However, those who want to be rich fall into temptation, snares, and many foolish and damaging desires, which drag men down into destruction and ruin... ¹⁰ for the love of money is the root of everything that's bad, and when some have reached out for it, they were led away from the faith and into error, stabbing themselves all over and causing themselves a lot of pain.

¹¹ But you, O man of God; flee from these things and pursue righteousness, reverence, faith, love, endurance, and inner strength. ¹² Wrestle the fine match of the faith and put on the age-long life to which you were called to and about which you offered such a fine confession before so many witnesses!

¹³ I'm ordering you in the sight of The God through whom all lives may be saved and of the Anointed Jesus (who gave such a fine confession before Pontius Pilate) ¹⁴ to obey these instructions flawlessly and blamelessly until the appearance of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One! ¹⁵ For he will appear at his own set time... this praised and only sovereign; the King of those who rule as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords; ¹⁶ the one who alone has immortality and who lives in unapproachable light; the one whom no man has seen or can see. May he have honor and age-long power... may it be so!

¹⁷ Give orders to those who are rich in this age not to think too much of themselves and not to trust in their wealth (which is fickle), but in God who brings [the type of] wealth to us that we can truly enjoy. ¹⁸ [Teach them to] work at being good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ as they safely store away for themselves the treasures of a fine foundation in that which is coming, so they can put on the real life.

²⁰ O Timothy; Guard this hope and turn away from all the worldly babbling, as well as all that is falsely called 'knowledge;' ²¹ for it's through [such things] that some who once showed promise in the faith have been turned aside.

May [God's] loving care be with you.

2 Timothy

A letter from Paul to Timothy (possibly written by Luke), which is thought to have been written (possibly in Aramaic) around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an Apostle of the Anointed Jesus by the Will of God and by the promise of life in the Anointed Jesus, ² to my loved child Timothy; May you find loving care, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from the Anointed Jesus, our Lord.

³ I'm thankful to The God, whom I'm worshiping with a clean conscience (as did my forefathers), that I never forget you in my prayers, which I offer night and day. ⁴ I remember you with tears and I long to see you, so that I can be filled with joy. ⁵ For I fondly remember the unhypocritical faith that your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice had first, and which I'm confident that you have also. So this is the reason why I want to remind you to rekindle the gift of God that you received when I first laid my hands on you.

⁷ Since God didn't give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and good sense, ⁸ don't be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord... or of me, a prisoner for his sake. So by the power of God, come and share with us in suffering evil for the good news. ⁹ For He didn't save us or call us to holiness because of anything that we've done, but because it has been His Will to show us His loving kindness through Jesus the Anointed One since before age-long time. ¹⁰ And all of this can now be seen through the coming of our Savior the Anointed Jesus, who has done away with death and is shining a light on life and freedom from corruption through this good news, ¹¹ of which I was appointed a preacher, an Apostle, and a teacher.

¹² This is the reason why I'm suffering these things and why I'm unashamed... because I really know this one in whom I've put my faith, and I'm confident that he'll guard everything that I've entrusted to him until that Day. ¹³ Likewise, you should hang onto the healthy words that you heard from me and which I laid out for you through the love that is in the Anointed Jesus, ¹⁴ and you should guard these things that you've been given through the Holy Breath that dwells within each of us!

¹⁵ I'm sure that you're aware of the fact that all those in the [province of] Asia have turned their backs on me, and especially PhyGelus and HermoGenes. ¹⁶ But may the Lord's mercy rest on the household of Onesiphorus, because he has often brought me refreshment and he's never been ashamed of my chains. ¹⁷ Then, even when he came to Rome, he diligently started searching for me and quickly found me. ¹⁸ So may Jehovah grant him mercy from the Lord in that Day. Yes, it would be good if you knew all the services that he provided for me in Ephesus.

Chapter 2

¹ However, as for you, my child; Keep growing stronger in the loving care of the Anointed Jesus, ² and keep on teaching the things (that you heard from so many witnesses while you were with me) to faithful men who are qualified to teach others. ³ Then as a fine soldier of the Anointed Jesus, [be prepared to] endure the hardships. ⁴ For no soldier can just go on living his life as he once did, since he wants to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ And the same is true of an athlete... he can't win the prize unless he plays by the rules. ⁶ However, the hardworking field-hand must also be the first to eat the fruit. ⁷ If you'll visualize what I'm saying, the Lord will truly give you insight into everything.

⁸ Remember that the good news I've been preaching teaches us that Jesus the Anointed (the seed of David) was raised from the dead! ⁹ And it's over this that I'm being persecuted and imprisoned like a

criminal. However, the word of God hasn't been locked up with me, ¹⁰ and the reason why I keep on enduring all of this is for the sake of the elected ones... so they can gain the salvation that comes from being in the Anointed Jesus and receiving age-long glory. ¹¹ For you can believe the saying, *If we die together, we'll also live together;* ¹² *and if we hang on, we'll also rule together as kings!* But if we deny this, he'll deny us. ¹³ Yet, even if we're unfaithful, he'll be faithful, because he can't deny himself.

¹⁴ I want you to keep on reminding [the brothers] about these things, and I want you to instruct them in the sight of God not to be arguing over words, for this is just a waste of time and it's a snare to those who listen to it.

¹⁵ As for you; zealously keep on seeking God's approval, so you can be accepted by Him as a workman who has nothing to be ashamed of and who lays out the truth in straight ways. ¹⁶ Avoid speaking about worldly and foolish topics, because this leads [people] away from pure worship, ¹⁷ and whatever is said [spreads like] a field of gangrene! That's what happened to Hymenaeus and Philetos; ¹⁸ they got away from the truth and started teaching that the resurrection has already happened, which misdirected the faith of some. ¹⁹ However, you have a solid foundation in God and you have His seal [of approval]. So as we were told: 'Jehovah knows those who [respect Him],' and, 'Let everyone who speaks in the Name of the Lord stop doing what's unrighteous.'

²⁰ Now, in a large house there are not only containers that are made of gold and silver, but also those [that are made] of wood and pottery... because some were made for honorable purposes, while others were made for dishonorable purposes. ²¹ Likewise, if anyone chooses to be clean, he must remove [everything that's dishonorable] from himself so he can become a container for an honorable purpose that is holy and useful to his master, and he must ready himself to do every sort of good work.

²² So, flee from the desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with all the rest of those who are calling on the Lord with a clean heart. ²³ However, avoid foolish and ignorant questions, because you know that they just create fights... ²⁴ and a slave of the Lord shouldn't be fighting. Rather, we should be gentle with everyone, we should be good teachers, and we should know how to keep our composure in bad [situations], ²⁵ so we can calmly teach those who disagree... for perhaps God will lead them to repentance and to an accurate knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ so that they may escape the Slanderer's snares and return to their good senses, once they realize how they've been lured into his cage.

Chapter 3

¹ Recognize that the last days will bring fierce times. ² For people will just love themselves and money, and they'll be braggarts, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, and disloyal. ³ They won't have any natural (family) love, they'll be disagreeable, they'll be slanderers who don't have any self-control, and they'll be wild people who won't love anything that's good. ⁴ They'll also be betrayers who are headstrong and proud, and who care more for pleasures than for God. ⁵ So although they'll practice some form of religion, they'll deny its power.

You should reject people like this, ⁶ because it's from among such ones that certain men will arise who will work their way into homes and seduce weak women that are loaded down with sins (because they have so many desires) ⁷ and who will always be just students that can never come to a higher knowledge of truth.

⁸ So, whenever you must deal with men who are resisting the truth and who are corrupting their own minds (making themselves worthless when it comes to the faith), follow the example of Moses when

he opposed JanNes and JamBres, ⁹ so they can't make any more inroads. Then (as happened [to JanNes and JamBres]) their unreasonableness will become plain to everyone.

¹⁰ Now, you've closely followed my teachings, my directions, my purposes, my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. ¹¹ [However, you've also had to share in] my persecution and my sufferings (such as the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra) and you've endured the same types of opposition that I've had to endure (from which the Lord has delivered me). ¹² But understand that everyone who wants to worship God through the Anointed Jesus is going to be persecuted, ¹³ because wicked and deceitful men will just get worse and worse, misleading and being misled.

¹⁴ As for you; stick with the things that you've learned and were convinced to believe... and remember from whom you learned them. ¹⁵ For you've been familiar with the Holy Writings since you were a child, and they can make you wise for salvation through your faith in the Anointed Jesus. ¹⁶ [Remember that] all the Holy Writings were inspired by God and they are good for teaching, for correcting, for setting things straight, and for providing righteous discipline... ¹⁷ they qualify a man of God by providing him with whatever he needs to do every sort of good work.

Chapter 4

¹ So I solemnly charge you in the sight of God and the Anointed Jesus (who's going to judge the living and the dead when he manifests himself and his Kingdom) ² to keep on preaching the Word! Keep doing it in good times and bad, as you offer criticism, evaluate, and encourage... but do this patiently and with all your teaching skills. ³ For the time is coming when they won't put up with life-giving teachings anymore. Rather, they will prefer to follow their own desires and they'll gather teachers for themselves who will tell them whatever they wish to hear. ⁴ Yes, they'll stop listening to the truth, but they'll all show up when it comes to listening to fables.

⁵ As for you; be serious about everything, endure what's bad, preach the good news, and completely carry out your service!

⁶ Meanwhile, though I'm already being poured out as a drink offering and the time for my departure (death) is almost here; ⁷ I can say that I've wrestled the fine match, I've finished the race, and I've obeyed the faith. ⁸ So, all that's left for me now is to lay down my gold crown, which the Lord (who isn't over just me, but is over everyone who loves the way in which he showed himself) will return to me in that Day.

⁹ Hurry... come to me quickly! ¹⁰ For Demas has let me down and gone to Thessalonica (since he still loves this system of things), Kreskes has gone to Galatia, Titus has gone to Dalmatia, ¹¹ and Luke is the only one who is here with me. So, go find Mark and bring him with you, because his services are very useful to me. ¹² Oh yes, I also sent Tychikus off to Ephesus. ¹³ And when you come here, bring along the robe that I left with Carpus in Troas... and the scrolls (especially the parchments).

¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith has testified against me and said many bad things. But the Lord will repay him for what he has done. ¹⁵ So watch out for him, because he really opposes everything that we say!

¹⁶ Unfortunately, nobody stayed with me during my first court hearing... but though they all left me, I don't want this held against them, ¹⁷ because the Lord stood by me. Yes, he gave me strength, so that the preaching might be completed through me and that all the gentiles might hear it. As the result, I was virtually saved from the lion's mouth! ¹⁸ But for a fact, the Lord will continue to save me from

every sort of wickedness and bring me into his heavenly Kingdom. May he be glorified through the ages of ages... may it be so!

¹⁹ Give my greetings to Priska and Aquila, and to the household of Onesiphorus.

²⁰ Erastus stayed in Corinth and I left Trophimus at Miletus, because he was sick.

²¹ Hurry and get here before winter arrives!

EuBoulos sends you his greetings, as do Poudes, Linos, Klaudia, and all the brothers.

²² May the Lord bless the spirit you're showing, and may his loving care be with all of you.

Titus

A letter from Paul to Titus, which is thought to have been written (possibly in Aramaic) around 62-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ From Paul, a slave of God, an Apostle of Jesus the Anointed One, and a follower of the faith of God's elected who have a complete knowledge of truth... those whose reverence ² is based on the hope of age-long life, which The God (who doesn't lie) promised ages ago, ³ and from the one who in his own due time made his word known through an important message that was entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior, ⁴ to Titus, a true child in the faith that we hold in common: May you have loving care and peace from God the Father and from the Anointed Jesus, our Savior.

⁵ The reason why I left you in Crete is so that you could straighten out some of the problems there, and for you to appoint elders in each city, as I instructed you. ⁶ [So, choose those who] have not been charged with misconduct... one-woman men who have believing children that aren't rebellious or accused of being beyond hope; ⁷ because, as a manager of the household of God, an overseer must be blameless. [He can't be] selfish, quick tempered, a heavy drinker, a fighter, or a greedy person. ⁸ Rather, [he should be] hospitable, a faithful friend, levelheaded, righteous, devout, self-controlled, ⁹ [and someone who] lives by the word of truth so he can teach and encourage those who are strong, while exposing the wrongs of those who contradict. ¹⁰ For there are many who are rebellious and deceitful windbags (most of whom are circumcised) ¹¹ and whose mouths need to be sealed. They're the ones who are dishonestly making money by teaching things that they shouldn't, and they're misleading entire households.

¹² It was one of their own prophets that said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons' ... ¹³ and that's a fact! This is why you'll have to be tough when it comes to exposing their wrong ways, so they can become healthy in the faith and stop ¹⁴ paying attention to Jewish myths or to the rules of men, which are turning them from the truth. ¹⁵ For though everything is clean to those who are clean, nothing is clean for those who are dirty and faithless, because both their minds and their consciences are dirty. ¹⁶ And although they claim to know God, everything they do disproves it, because they are disgusting, disobedient, and unqualified to do anything worthwhile.

Chapter 2

¹ You however, keep on talking about the correct, healthy teachings. ² Encourage the older men to be free from excesses and to be serious, levelheaded, and healthy in their faith, love, and endurance, ³ the older women to behave as though they had just entered a holy place... not to be slanderers or alcoholics, but teachers of things that are good, ⁴ the younger women to love their husbands and their children... ⁵ to be level headed, pure, homemakers, and good people who are willing to obey their men so that God's Word won't be spoken of shamefully, ⁶ and give younger men the same encouragement... to be levelheaded. ⁷ [Teach them to] become good examples in all sorts of good deeds, to be serious and blameless in their teaching, ⁸ and to speak in wholesome ways, so that nobody can condemn them and so that those who oppose us will have nothing bad to say about us.

⁹ Teach those who are slaves to obey their masters in everything... to please them well, to not talk back, ¹⁰ and not to steal things! They should show that they are faithful in doing whatever is right, so they can adorn the teachings of God (our Savior) in everything. ¹¹ For, the reason why God's loving care has been displayed is so that they all might be saved. ¹² And once they've rejected all the godlessness and worldly desires, they must be taught how to live sensibly, righteously, and devoutly in this age, ¹³ as they await the blest hope and the manifestations of the glory of the great God and

Savior of us, the Anointed Jesus, ¹⁴ who handed himself up in order to free us by ransom from lawlessness, and to bring forth a clean people for himself who are zealous in doing whatever is good.

¹⁵ Yes, I'm authorizing you to talk about such things, as well as to encourage and correct... and don't let anyone ignore you!

Chapter 3

¹ Keep reminding them to be obedient and to submit to governments and powers... to always be willing and ready to do good things! ² They shouldn't slander anyone or want to fight with anyone. [Rather, they should] be willing to give in to [the wishes of] others and to be humble before everyone.

³ For though at one time we were all senseless disobedient sinners who were slaves to our own desires in badness and envy (disgusting [people] who hated each other); ⁴ when God (our Savior) showed His loving care for mankind ⁵ (not because of our own righteousness, but because of His own mercy), He saved us through the bath that re-created us and made us new by His Holy Breath. ⁶ Then He poured plenty of it over us (through Jesus, our Anointed Savior) ⁷ so that after we were counted as righteous by His loving care, we might become heirs who have the hope of age-long life.

⁸ You can believe these things... and these are the instructions that I want you to keep on giving them, so that those who have come to believe in The God will stand firm in doing what's right! Yes, these are good and helpful things that you must teach them.

⁹ Avoid foolish questions, genealogies, arguments, and fights over the Law, for such things don't do any good and they're just a waste of time. ¹⁰ And if someone continues to promote a sect after you've reasoned with him a first and a second time, reject him! ¹¹ [Do this] because you know that those who turn from The Way are self-condemned sinners!

¹² After I send Artemas or TychiKos to you, try hard to come to me here in NikoPolis, because this is where I've decided to spend the winter. ¹³ Hurry and send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos... and make sure they have everything they need. ¹⁴ Let our [brothers] learn how to do good things by providing for their needs, so their efforts won't be wasted.

¹⁵ All of those who are with me send you their greetings. Give my greetings to all those in the faith who truly care about us.

May [God's] loving care be with all of you.

Philemon

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, a prisoner for the sake of the Anointed Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to our beloved fellow worker PhileMoni, ² our sister ApPhia, our fellow soldier ArcHippus, and to the called ones in your homes; ³ May you receive loving care and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus the Anointed One.

⁴ I always give thanks to my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I keep hearing about the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus and of the love that you have for all the Holy Ones. ⁶ [So I pray] that we can also share the faith that's in you, as you come to know more about the good things that we're doing through the Anointed One. ⁷ For I have felt so much joy and comfort, our brother, over the loving things that you've done to bring refreshment to the hearts of the holy ones. ⁸ And this is the reason why I feel free in the Anointed One to lay an obligation upon you to do something that would be very becoming... ⁹ or should I say that I'm encouraging you because of your love, seeing that I am who I am (Paul, an old man and now a prisoner for the sake of the Anointed Jesus)?

¹⁰ The encouragement that I wish to offer is in regard to my child (someone to whom I've become a father while I've been in prison) OneSimon. ¹¹ For although he was once useless to you, now he's useful to both you and me... ¹² and I'm returning this one to you for whom I now care so deeply.

¹³ Actually, I would rather keep him here for myself instead of sending him to you, so he can continue to serve my needs while I'm in the shackles that I'm wearing for the sake of the good news. ¹⁴ However, I don't wish to do anything without your consent, because I don't want any good deed that you may wish to do, to be done because you were forced into it... but rather, because you really want to do it.

¹⁵ Perhaps that's the reason why he was able to break away from you for a little while... so you could have him back in this age ¹⁶ no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, as a beloved brother. He's especially that to me, but now much more so to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me a worthy associate, welcome him kindly, as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ And if he did you any wrong or if he owes you anything, charge it to my account. ¹⁹ I (Paul) am writing this in my own hand and telling you that I'll pay you back... of course, let me remind you that you already owe me. ²⁰ Yes, brother; May I request some profit from you in the Lord... please offer me this refreshment, as in the tender mercies of the Anointed One!

²¹ Now, I'm writing you in full confidence that you'll go along with my request, and I'm sure that you'll do even more than what I've suggested. ²² In addition, prepare a place for me to stay, because I hope that (because of all your prayers) I'll soon be free for your sakes.

²³ EpaPhras (my fellow captive in the Anointed One) sends you his greetings, as do ²⁴ Mark, AristArchus, Demas, and Luke, my co-workers.

²⁵ May the loving kindness of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One be upon the spirit that you show.

Hebrews

Paul's most scholarly work, written for him by an unknown disciple (possibly Luke and possibly in Aramaic) to the congregation in Jerusalem around 65-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ A long time ago, God spoke to our fathers through the Prophets in many places and in many ways. ² And in the last part of these days, He spoke to us through a Son whom He has made the heir to everything... the one that He used to create the ages, ³ who shines with the same glory, is the exact image of His being, and is who responsible for everything that was said through His power. Then, after he cleansed us of our sins, this one sat down at the right hand of the Great One in the highest places, ⁴ and he has now become so much greater than the [other] messengers [of God] and so different that he has inherited a [special] name among them.

⁵ For example; to which of His [other] messengers did [God] ever say, 'You're my son; today I have fathered you.' Or, 'I will become his Father and he will become My son.' ⁶ And again (when He sent His firstborn into [man's] habitation), He said, 'Let all the messengers of God bow low before him.'

⁷ [Also notice that] when He spoke of these messengers, He said that made them spirits and His public servants as flames of fire. ⁸ But when He spoke of His Son, [He said], 'God is your throne through the age of the ages, and the scepter of you kingship is the scepter of righteousness. ⁹ So, because you loved righteousness and hated wickedness, The God (your God) has [anointed] you with the oil of great joy among those who are your companions.' ¹⁰ And, 'In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth and [you] made the heavens with your hands. ¹¹ But though they'll pass away, you will still remain; for like clothes, they will grow old. ¹² Then, as [you would do to] a robe, you will wrap them up and repair them. Yes, you're the one and your years will never end.'

¹³ And to which one of His [other] messengers did He ever say, 'Sit here at My right until I set your enemies as a stool for your feet?' ¹⁴ Yet, the rest are all divinely-authorized spirits... public servants that are being sent to serve the needs of those who will inherit salvation!

Chapter 2

¹ This is why it's necessary for us to pay extraordinary attention to the things that we've heard, so we don't drift away! ² Because, if these words that were spoken through [God's] messengers should prove to be true, and the reward for all errors and disobedient acts is going to be strictly enforced, ³ how can we escape so great a thing if we have neglected our salvation, which began with and was received by those who heard it being confirmed upon us by the Lord?

⁴ Why, even God joined in this testimony by providing signs, omens, many powerful deeds, and by distributing His Holy Breath as He wished. ⁵ But He didn't entrust the habitation [of man] that is coming (the one that I'm talking about) to the hands of [His] messengers. ⁶ For someone somewhere testified to this fact when he asked, 'Just what is man that You should remember him, or the Son of Man that You should watch over him?' ⁷ Though You made him just a little lower than [Your] messengers, You then crowned him with glory and honor, and You put him over everything that You made with Your hands, ⁸ then You put everything under his feet.' So when [God] put everything under [his feet], He didn't leave anything over which he isn't in charge... however, we don't see everything obeying him yet.

⁹ So although he was made lower than [God's] messengers for a little while, we can see that after Jesus suffered and died, he was crowned with glory and honor so that (because of God's loving care)

he might taste death for us all!

¹⁰ Yes, it was fitting that this one through whom and for whom everything exists – this primary leader [who is responsible for] our salvation – should bring many sons to glory and make them perfect through his sufferings. ¹¹ And because the one who is holy and those whom he makes holy are one, he isn't ashamed to call them his brothers, ¹² saying, 'I will report Your Name to **my brothers**.' And again, 'In the midst of the called ones, I'll sing Your praises.' ¹³ And again, 'In Him, I will put all my trust.' And again, '{Look!} The children God gave me, and I...'

¹⁴ So, since his 'children' share in his blood and flesh, he shares [with them] in the same way, so that through his death he can finish off the one who has the power [to bring] death, the Slanderer, ¹⁵ and to set free all of those who have spent their lives as slaves to the fear of death.

¹⁶ So [when he came], he really didn't take on [the shape] of one of [God's] messengers somewhere. Rather, he took [the shape of] AbraHam's seed... ¹⁷ for he was obligated to become like his brothers in every way so that he could become a merciful and faithful High Priest before God and offer a sacrifice to cover their sins. ¹⁸ And because he suffered and was tempted, he is also able to help those who are still being tempted.

Chapter 3

¹ Therefore, holy brothers who are partakers of the heavenly calling; consider this Apostle and High Priest of our confessions, Jesus. ² For he was faithful to the One who made him just like Mose (the person whom [God] [appointed to be over] His whole House). ³ However, [Jesus] was considered to be worthy of a greater glory than Moses, because the one who builds the house receives more honor there. ⁴ Of course, every house is built by someone, but the One who built everything is God.

⁵ Now, this Moses was truly a faithful, willing servant within His whole House, [and he served] as a witness to things that were going to be said. ⁶ However, the Anointed One is the Son who is over [God's] House... **and we are that House** as long as we keep on boasting of our hope and hanging on to it until the end! ⁷ This is why it was said through [God's] Holy Breath: 'If you should hear His voice today, ⁸ don't harden your hearts as they did in the bitter day of testing in the desert. ⁹ For that's when your fathers put Me to the test to prove [My power], although they had already witnessed what I had done for [the past] forty years! ¹⁰ And this is the reason why I became so disgusted with that generation and said, *Their hearts are always wandering and they've never understood My ways*. ¹¹ So in My rage, I swore that they would never enter My rest!'

¹² Therefore brothers, watch out... be careful that none of your hearts ever become so wicked and unbelieving that they cause you to pull away from the Living God! ¹³ Rather, you must encourage each other every day – including today – so that none of you will ever become hardened and be tempted to sin. ¹⁴ For, as long as we hang onto this position from the time we start believing until the end, we remain sharers in the Anointed One. ¹⁵ And that's why it was said, 'If you should hear His voice today, don't harden your hearts as happened in the bitter day of testing in the desert.'

¹⁶ So, who was it that heard [God's voice] and brought Him this bitterness? Wasn't it all those who left Egypt under Moses? ¹⁷ Then, who was it that He became disgusted with for forty years? Wasn't it with those who had sinned and whose carcasses fell in the desert? ¹⁸ And who was it that He said wouldn't enter His rest? Wasn't it those who disobeyed? ¹⁹ As you can see, they couldn't enter [His rest] because they didn't have enough faith!

Chapter 4

¹ Therefore, we should fear that some of us might be left behind when it comes to the promise of entering His rest, ² because we've also had the good news preached to us the same as they did... and they failed to benefit from what they heard, because they didn't share in the faith of those who were paying attention!

³ Now, we have in fact entered the rest of those who have believed... those about whom He also said, 'So in My anger, I swore that they would never enter My rest!' Yet His work [had actually been finished] since the founding of the arrangement! ⁴ For in one place He said this about the seventh day: '**God rested** from all His works on the seventh day.' ⁵ And [this is the period He was talking about when He said], 'They will never enter My rest.' ⁶ So from this we must conclude that some **will** enter it, while those to whom this good news was first given **didn't enter it** because of their disobedience.

⁷ Also notice that He mentioned a particular day, 'today,' in David's [psalm]. For He went on to say (as I mentioned before), 'If you should hear His voice **today**, ⁸ don't harden your hearts.'

⁸ Now, if they had already been led to this place of rest by JoShua, [God] wouldn't have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So the Sabbath that the people of God must observe is something that is yet to come. ¹⁰ Then those who enter His rest will also have to rest from the things they're doing, just as God rested from [the things] He [was doing]. ¹¹ Therefore, let us all do everything we can to enter that rest, so that none of us will fail because of disobedience!

¹² Why, the Word of God is alive, it's at work, and it's sharper than any two-edged sword... it cuts so fine that it can separate the breath from the breather, as well as his joints from his marrow; so it has become the judge of the thoughts and desires of [our] hearts. ¹³ Therefore, nothing in creation is invisible to His eyes... everything is naked and open before the One who sent us His Word!

¹⁴ So in view of the fact that we have such a great High Priest who has passed [into] the heavens – Jesus, the Son of God – let's keep talking about him! ¹⁵ For we don't have a High Priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses; rather, we have one who has been tested in every way just like us, [but who didn't] sin! ¹⁶ Therefore, we should boldly approach his throne of loving kindness and speak freely, so we can receive his mercy, loving care, and aid whenever we need it.

Chapter 5

¹ Now, all High Priests are selected from among men, and then they're appointed over men and assigned to doing the things of God, such as offering the gifts and the sacrifices for sins. ² However, [the Priests] feel a kinship with those who don't understand and who make mistakes, since they're also surrounded by their own weaknesses. ³ And this is why they have to make offerings not only for the sins of the people, but also for themselves!

⁴ Yet, no man can take this honor on himself; he can only be called to [the Priesthood] by God, as Aaron was. ⁵ Likewise, the Anointed One didn't glorify himself to the position of High Priest. That was done by the One who said to him, 'You're My Son... today I have fathered you!' ⁶ And He said in another place: 'You're a Priest through the ages in the order of MelchiZedek.'

⁷ However, during the time that he was here in the flesh, [Jesus] begged and pleaded with the One who was able to save him from death, calling out with tears... and he was drawn close and listened to, because of his faithfulness. ⁸ So, although he was the Son, he learned obedience from the things that he suffered. ⁹ Then after his [training] was finished, he became the source of age-long salvation

for all those who would obey him, ¹⁰ which is when God made him a High Priest in the line of MelchiZedek.

¹¹ Now, we have so much to say about him that will be hard to explain, since you've become so slow in your hearing. ¹² For though you should be teachers in view of the time, you now need someone to go back and teach you the basics of God's Word again... you've become people who need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Yes, those who are unfamiliar with righteous teachings are [in fact] babies who need milk to survive, ¹⁴ while those who have trained their senses to recognize the difference between right and wrong have become adults who can eat solid food.

Chapter 6

¹ Therefore, let's go beyond the basics of the Anointed One and move on toward maturity! Let's not go back and lay a new foundation on such matters as repenting over bad deeds, having faith in God, ² or about baptisms, ordinations, the resurrection of the dead, or the age-long judgments. ³ Yes, let's [go beyond the basics], if God will allow it.

⁴ It's impossible for those who have been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, been partakers in [God's] Holy Breath, ⁵ and savored the Word of God and the power of the coming age ⁶ to be revived and make them repent once they've fallen away; for they would have to hang the Son of God back up on the pole and subject him to shame once again! ⁷ They're like a piece of land that should give birth to green plants after drinking in all the rain that falls upon it and after being cultivated by those who hope to receive its blessings from God. ⁸ But if such a piece of land just produces thorns and thistles, it will be rejected (almost cursed), and in the end it will be burned off!

⁹ Now, despite all that I've said; When it comes to you, my loved ones, we believe that you will receive better things and salvation, ¹⁰ because God isn't unrighteous and He won't forget the things that you've done, the love that you've shown for His Name, or the ways that you've served the needs of the Holy Ones (and [how you] keep on doing so). ¹¹ However, what we want is for each of you to show a real zeal when it comes to hanging onto that in which we've been putting our hope in all the way to the end... ¹² we don't want you to become lazy! Rather, we want you to imitate those who through faith and patience will inherit the promises!

¹³ For when God gave his promise to AbraHam (and because He couldn't swear by anyone greater, He swore by Himself), ¹⁴ He said: 'When it comes to blessings, I will bless you, and when it comes to growth, I will make you grow.' ¹⁵ Then by being patient, [AbraHam] received what he was promised.

¹⁶ Now, men always swear by the greater one when they make agreements in order to ensure the thing that was promised. ¹⁷ So when God wanted to show the heirs of the promise how unchangeable His words are, He agreed to it with an oath, ¹⁸ so that through two unchangeable things about which God cannot lie, those of us who are fleeing would have a strong incentive to hang onto the hope that He's laid before us. ¹⁹ And this should be the sure and stable anchor for our lives, since it goes through the inner curtain [to the Most Holy], ²⁰ which is where Jesus entered as the age-long High Priest in the line of MelchiZedek.

Chapter 7

¹ This MelchiZedek (who was the king of Salem and a Priest of the Most High God) is the one who met AbraHam as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and who blest him. ² Then AbraHam shared a tenth of all that [he had captured] with him.

Notice that [the name *MelchiZedek*] translates as **King of Righteousness**... and as the king of Salem (Peace), he's also **the King of Peace**.³ And notice that there are no genealogical records of him, so he was [virtually] without a father or mother, for there is no [record] of the beginning of his days or of the end of his life. And in the same way; as the Son of God, [Jesus] remains a Priest throughout all time.

⁴ Now, do you see how great this man was to whom [our] family head AbraHam gave a tenth of the best things from his loot?

⁵ So, while it's true that the sons of Levi were [also] made Priests and they were commanded by the Law to collect a tithe from the people (who were their brothers, because they all came from the loins of AbraHam),⁶ this man (whose genealogy we can't trace) took ten percent **from AbraHam himself!** Then he blest the one to whom the promise was given, AbraHam,⁷ and you can't argue the fact that the lesser one is always blest by the greater!⁸ Therefore, when mortal men receive the tithes in that place today, they are testifying that he's still alive.⁹ And we can also say that Levi received those tithes through AbraHam,¹⁰ since he was in the loins of his forefather when MelchiZedek met with him!

¹¹ Now, if perfection could have come through the Levite Priesthood and the Law, we wouldn't have needed another Priest to come in the line of MelchiZedek (someone who isn't of the line of Aaron).¹² However, since the Priesthood has been changed, there must also be a change in the Law,¹³ since this man that we're talking about was a member of another tribe... one from which no one has ever served at the Altar.¹⁴ For we all recognize that our Lord came out of Judah, a tribe that Moses never spoke of as Priests!¹⁵ And this makes it even more obvious that a new Priest has arisen who is like MelchiZedek,¹⁶ because he didn't become [a Priest] by the Law of human commandments, but by the power of a life that can't be destroyed!¹⁷ And in witness to this fact, it was said: 'You are a Priest through the ages in the order of MelchiZedek.'

¹⁸ Therefore, the Commandments that we were given have obviously been set aside, because they were weak and they didn't do any good,¹⁹ since the Law didn't make anyone perfect. All it did was lead us to a better hope that's [now] drawing us closer to God.

²⁰ [Notice that the Old Law] came without a sworn oath,²¹ and those who became its Priests [were appointed] without a sworn oath. For no one else has had an oath sworn about him like the one that said, 'Jehovah has sworn (and He won't change His mind): *You are a Priest through the ages.*'

²² Therefore, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better Sacred Agreement,²³ because [under the old Agreement] many had to become Priests, since their deaths prevented them from continuing [in that position].²⁴ However, he is through the ages, and the Priesthood that he holds is permanent.²⁵ So he's able to save those who approach The God through him, because he will always be alive to intercede for them!

²⁶ Yes, he has truly become a High Priest for us that is loyal, righteous, pure, and removed from among the sinners, since he's now higher than the heavens.²⁷ And unlike former High Priests who had to offer sacrifices daily (first for their own sins and then for those of the people), he did this just once when he offered himself!²⁸ For the Law appointed men as High Priests who had weaknesses. But the promise that came with a sworn oath (and which supersedes the Law) appointed a Son who has age-long perfection.

Chapter 8

¹ So the point I'm making is this: We already have such a High Priest, and he's sitting at the right hand of the throne of Majesty in the heavens, ² where He's handling Priestly duties at the Most Holy in the real Tent that was built by the Lord, not by men. ³ And since every High Priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, it was necessary for him to have something to offer also. ⁴ However, he likely wouldn't have been a Priest if he were here on the earth, since there are already those who are appointed by the Law to offer the gifts. ⁵ But when they handle their Priestly duties, what they're doing is following a pattern that is just a shadow of how these sacred duties are being handled in the heavens! For when Moses was about to finish the [Sacred] Tent, He was given a divine warning that said: 'Be sure to assemble everything by the pattern you were shown on the mountain.'

⁶ However, [Jesus] has received a much better Priestly assignment, because he's also the mediator of a better Sacred Agreement, which was legally established on better promises. ⁷ If there hadn't been problems with the first [Agreement], there would have been no reason to search for a second one. ⁸ But [God] had a problem with the people, for He said:

*'{Look!} The time is coming, says Jehovah,
When I'll make a new Sacred Agreement
With the Houses of IsraEl and Judah,*

*⁹ That's unlike the Agreement that I made with their fathers
When I took them by the hand and led them from Egypt;
For, they didn't keep their side of [the bargain],
And I stopped caring for them, says Jehovah.*

*¹⁰ 'This is the Agreement that I'm going to make
With the House of IsraEl at that time, says Jehovah,
I'll put My laws in their minds
And in their hearts, I will write them;
Then, they'll be My people and I'll be their God.*

*¹¹ 'At that time, all those who live in the land,
Won't have to teach their neighbors and brothers,
Or tell them to know of Jehovah.
For from their least to their greatest, they'll know Me.*

*¹² 'To their unrighteous ways, I'll show mercy,
And I will forget all their sins.'*

¹³ So when He spoke of a New Sacred Agreement, He made the old one obsolete. And now that which was made obsolete is growing old and is about to disappear!

Chapter 9

¹ Indeed, the first regulations for worship involved a worldly Holy Place. ² So they prepared this first Tent, which contained both the [sacred] lampstand and the table for the showbread, and this was called *the Holy*. ³ Then behind the curtain was a second Tent that was called *the Most Holy*. ⁴ It contained a gold incense holder and the Chest of the Sacred Agreement, which was completely overlaid with gold and held the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that grew buds, and the Tablets of the [Sacred] Agreement. ⁵ Then over it were the glorious cherubs that cast a shadow on the cover. So now, let's discuss some of the details of these things.

⁶ After they were all constructed, the Priests entered the first Tent regularly to perform their sacred duties. ⁷ However, the second [tent] was only entered once a year, and just by the High Priest. But even he couldn't enter it without blood, which he had to offer both for himself and for the sins of the peoples' ignorance.

⁸ Now, the Holy Breath makes it clear that the entrance to the Most Holy couldn't be seen while the first Tent was standing... ⁹ and this is an illustration of the time in which we are now living. So with this illustration in mind, [remember that] the gifts and sacrifices that were offered couldn't make the conscience of the one who was serving there perfect, ¹⁰ for that whole thing had to do with food, drink, and types of cleansing, which were fleshly, legal requirements [that would last] until the time for setting things straight would be imposed.

¹¹ Then when the Anointed One came as the High Priest of good things through the greater and more perfect Tent that wasn't made by [human] hands (that is, it wasn't part of this creation), ¹² he didn't enter the Most Holy with the blood of goats and young bulls; rather, [he entered] the Holy Place with his own blood once and for all time so as to provide an age-long ransom for us!

¹³ Now, if the blood of goats and bulls or the ashes of a heifer that are sprinkled on those who've become unclean can make their flesh holy and clean; ¹⁴ how much more will [this be true of] the blood of the Anointed One! For through the age-long spirit of himself that he offered spotlessly to God, he purifies our consciences from our dead deeds so we can start serving the living God. ¹⁵ And because of this, he is the mediator of a New Sacred Agreement that redeems us from the death that came from [failing to obey] the first Agreement, and so that those who have been called could receive the promised age-long inheritance!

¹⁶ [Understand that] whenever there's [any sort of an] agreement, death is part of the bargain for the one who agrees to it, ¹⁷ since an agreement that lasts until death is something that has been proven. However, it isn't as strong while the one who made the agreement is still living. ¹⁸ [And this is why] that first [Sacred Agreement] had to be made with blood! ¹⁹ So after Moses explained all the Commandments of the Law to the people, he took the blood of young bulls and goats, mixed it with water, and then [he] used scarlet wool and hyssop to sprinkle the scroll and all the people. ²⁰ And he said: 'This is the blood of the Sacred Agreement that God has made with you.' ²¹ Then he sprinkled the blood on the Tent and over all the things that were used for worship.

²² Yes, according to the Law, almost everything is cleansed by blood. So unless blood is spilled, there is no forgiving. ²³ And this is why it was necessary for the heavenly things that are symbolized by [the earthly things] to be cleansed that way.

However, heavenly things require better sacrifices. ²⁴ So the Anointed One didn't enter a Most Holy that was made with hands (which is just a copy of the real thing); rather, he actually entered heaven itself to stand before The God on our behalf! ²⁵ Nor does he have to offer himself often, as the High Priest who enters the Most Holy each year must do with blood that isn't his own. ²⁶ Otherwise, [Jesus] would have been required to suffer many times from the founding of the arrangement.

But now he has displayed himself at the end of the age and offered himself in order to do away with sins just once through his sacrifice. ²⁷ And as men must die just once (which is followed by a judgment); ²⁸ the Anointed One was also offered just once to carry the sins of many. So the next time he's seen by those who are so eagerly awaiting him, they'll be free from sin and ready for salvation!

Chapter 10

¹ Therefore, since the Law isn't the reality, but just a shadow of good things to come; the sacrifices that are offered annually will never make the one who brings them perfect. ² For if that were true, they wouldn't have to be offered anymore, since those who are cleansed would no longer have sins on their consciences! ³ However, these sacrifices remind us of our sins year after year, ⁴ because the blood of bulls and goats can't remove sins! ⁵ And it was because of this that, when he came into the world, he said, 'You didn't want sacrifices and offerings. So You prepared a body for me, ⁶ because You found no delight in burnt offerings and sin offerings.' ⁷ Then he said, 'Look! I have come to do Your Will, O God... in the knob of the scroll it was written about me.'

⁸ So notice that after he first said, 'You didn't want or approve of sacrifices and offerings, or burnt offerings and sin offerings' (which are being offered in observance of the Law); ⁹ he went on to say, 'Look, I have come to do Your Will.' So, he removed the first one to establish the second! ¹⁰ And it's because of this *Will* that we've been made holy through that single offering of the body of Jesus, the Anointed One!

¹¹ Now, all the Priests take their stations each day in Temple service, and they offer the same sacrifices over and over... which can never take sins away completely. ¹² However, he offered just one sacrifice for sins through the ages... and then he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ where he's awaiting [the time when] his enemies will be set as a stool for his feet. ¹⁴ Indeed, he made this single offering so as to bring those who are being made holy to perfection forever. ¹⁵ And the Holy Breath testifies to us about this, for first it said, ¹⁶ *'This is the Sacred Agreement that I will make with them in those days,* says Jehovah: *I will put My Laws in their hearts and I'll write them in their minds.'* ¹⁷ [Then it says,] 'I will be merciful toward their lawless acts, and I will forget their sins.' ¹⁸ So when such things are forgotten, there is no more need for sin offerings!

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers; We can confidently say that we have an entrance to the Most Holy Place through the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ because he has worked out a way through the curtain for us... a sacrificial but living way, through his flesh. ²¹ And since we now have such a great Priest who is over the House of God, ²² let's approach him with honest hearts and complete faith, since we've rinsed our wicked conscience from our hearts when we washed our bodies in clean water. ²³ Therefore, let's hang onto the confession of our hope and not give up, because the One who gave us this promise is faithful. ²⁴ And let's keep reminding ourselves to help each other to grow in love and in good deeds.

²⁵ Also, don't stop meeting together as some have made it their custom. Rather, let's keep on encouraging each other... and [do this] even more as we see the Day drawing near. ²⁶ But understand that if we still choose to follow a sinful course after coming to an accurate knowledge of the truth, there are no more sacrifices left for our sins. ²⁷ For all [that remains] is the fear and anticipation of judgment, along with the roar of the fiery zeal that's going to consume those who oppose us.

²⁸ Now, if anyone ignored the Law of Moses and two or three testified against him, he was to die without compassion. ²⁹ So how much more worthy of punishment do you think a person will be if he tramples on the Son of God, or if he considers the blood of the Sacred Agreement that made him holy as something unclean, or if he has outraged the loving care of the Breath [of God] by treating it with contempt? ³⁰ For we know who it was that said, 'Vengeance is Mine... I will repay!' And again, 'Jehovah will judge His people.' ³¹ So it's a fearsome thing to fall into the hands of the Living God!

³² I want you to think back to the days, just after you came to an understanding and were enduring so much suffering, what a hard fight it was. ³³ Why, sometimes it was just like being in an arena where you were being insulted and persecuted (along with [many] others who shared your experience). ³⁴

Back then, you were so sympathetic toward those who were in prison. And even when [all] the things you owned were taken away, you were joyful... because you knew that you had something better and longer lasting!

³⁵ So, don't throw away your willingness to speak out, because you've paid too much to earn it! ³⁶ You need to hang on, so that after you've done God's Will, you can walk off with [the prize] that you were promised! ³⁷ For in just a little while the one who is coming will be here, and he won't be late! ³⁸ 'But My righteous ones will live because of their faith,' and, 'If he gives up, My soul finds no pleasure in him.' ³⁹ Therefore, we don't want to be the type that gives up just to be destroyed. Rather, let's be the type that has the faith that will save our lives!

Chapter 11

¹ Faith is expecting the things that you're hoping for, and being convinced of things that you have yet to see... ² and we can testify that the ancient ones [had such faith]. ³ Likewise, our faith teaches us that the ages were set in place by the Word of God, and from that which was not, the things that we now see have appeared!

⁴ So it was because of his faith that Abel offered a greater sacrifice to God than did Cain. And the One who witnessed his righteousness and who saw the gifts that he offered, was God. So although [Abel] is dead, he is still speaking.

⁵ And it was because of his faith that Enoch was transported so as not to see death... no, he couldn't be found, because God transported him. However, before he was transported, he proved that he had pleased God well.

⁶ You see, it's impossible to please God well without faith, because, whoever wants to come to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who are eagerly searching for Him.

⁷ It was because of [his] faith in a Divine Warning about things which were not yet seen, that Noah was moved by fear to build a chest so as to save his [family]. And through this righteous act of faith, he condemned that arrangement and became its heir.

⁸ It was because of his faith that AbraHam obeyed when he was called and went off to a place that he was about to receive as an inheritance... yet when he left, he had no idea where he was going! ⁹ Then by faith, he lived in tents in the land he was promised like an alien in a foreign country, along with IsaAc and Jacob (who were heirs of that same promise). ¹⁰ For he was awaiting the founding of a city that was to be designed and built by God.

¹¹ It was by her faith that Sarah received the power to conceive a seed when she was barren and when it was too late [in life] for her to do so. However, she considered the One who gave her the promise to be trustworthy. ¹² So from [this woman] who was sexually dead came a huge number... like the stars in the skies or the countless grains of sand on the seashore!

¹³ Yes, all of these people died faithful, without having received the promises. However, they saw it from afar and embraced it, confessing that they were strangers and aliens in their own land. ¹⁴ And indeed, when people talk like that, they show that they are seeking their own country. ¹⁵ If they were remembering [the place] where they came from, they might have had the opportunity to return to it... ¹⁶ but they were reaching out for something better... something that's under the influence of the heavens. As the result, God isn't ashamed of them or to be called their God. In fact, He has prepared a city for them!

¹⁷ It was also by his faith that AbraHam offered up IsaAc when he was being tested. And he did this [despite the fact that IsaAc] was the only-conceived son who was to receive the promises... ¹⁸ the one of whom [God] had said, 'What will be called your seed will come through IsaAc!' ¹⁹ But [AbraHam] trusted that God would be able to raise him from the dead. And in effect, that's where he got him.

²⁰ It was also because of his faith that IsaAc blest Jacob and Esau concerning future things. ²¹ And it was because of his faith that Jacob blest each of the sons of JoSeph before he died, bowing low as he leaned on his cane. ²² Then JoSeph, when he was getting close to his end, showed his faith when he talked about the exodus of the sons of IsraEl and gave them instructions regarding his bones.

²³ The parents of Moses showed faith when they hid him for three months after his birth, because they saw that the young child was beautiful, and they weren't afraid of the king's decree. ²⁴ Then after he became great, Moses showed his faith by refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter... ²⁵ yes, he chose to be treated badly with the people of God rather than spending his time enjoying sinful pleasures. ²⁶ [He did this] because he considered the insults of being the anointed as far more valuable than all the treasures of Egypt... and he was looking to the future for his reward!

²⁷ It was by his faith that he then left Egypt... no, not because he feared the king's anger; rather, he was hanging on as though he could see something that was invisible! ²⁸ Then by faith, he arranged for the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer wouldn't touch [IsraEl's] firstborn.

²⁹ It was by their faith that [the IsraElites] thereafter passed through the Red Sea as though it were dry land. But when the Egyptians tried that, they were swallowed down. ³⁰ And it was also by their faith that the walls of Jericho fell after they had circled them for seven days. ³¹ And it was by her faith (when she peacefully welcomed the spies [into her home]) that the prostitute RaHab didn't die along with those who were disobedient.

³² What more can I say? I don't have enough time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Sampson, JephThah, or David... or about SamuEl and the Prophets. ³³ Yet, by their faith they defeated kingdoms in war, did righteous things, received the promises, fenced off the mouths of lions, ³⁴ overcame the force of fire, and escaped the edge of the sword. Nor [can I tell] of all the weak ones who were made powerful and became mighty enough in war to drive off foreign armies.

³⁵ [It was also by faith] that women received their dead through a resurrection. And while some were being tortured, they wouldn't allow a ransom to be paid on their behalf, so that they might receive a better resurrection.

³⁶ Yes, others were mocked and tried with whips... and even put in shackles and in prisons! ³⁷ They were tried, stoned, sawed in half, and slaughtered with swords... and some had to dress themselves in sheepskins and goatskins as they were in need, oppressed, and mistreated. ³⁸ So although the world didn't deserve them, they were forced to wander the deserts, mountains, caves, and peepholes of the earth. ³⁹ Yet their faith speaks well of them, though they never received the promise! ⁴⁰ And because God has foreseen something better for us, they won't be made perfect apart from us.

Chapter 12

¹ So, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, we should each get rid of the things that are weighing us down and set aside any entangling sins, then just hang on and keep running the difficult course that's ahead of us, ² as we keep on looking toward the founder and perfecter of our faith, Jesus, who (because he realized the joy that was before him) endured the impaling pole and

despised its shame, so he could sit at the right hand of the throne of The God!

³ So, let's pay close attention to his example and notice how he was able to endure all of that at the hands of sinners (who just condemned themselves), so we don't get tired and give up on our lives! ⁴ For to this point, none of us have had to struggle against sin to the point of bleeding.

⁵ And don't forget the encouragement that was given to you as [His] sons, that said, 'My son; Don't treat the discipline of Jehovah lightly, and don't try to avoid being corrected by Him. ⁶ For God disciplines those whom He Loves and He whips those whom He accepts as His sons.'

⁷ Understand that the only reason you've made it this far is because of [His] discipline... which proves that God is treating you as His sons! After all, which son isn't disciplined by his father? ⁸ For if you haven't been disciplined [by God], you aren't one of us... you're not His sons, you're bastards!

⁹ We all once had fleshly fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them. Therefore, shouldn't we obey the Father who gave us His Breath even more... so we can live?

¹⁰ Yes, for a brief period [in our lives, our fathers] used to discipline us over things that seemed right to them. However, [now] we're being brought [before God] to be partakers of His Holiness! ¹¹ And while it's true that this discipline doesn't make us joyful when we receive it (it makes us sad); later on, those who learn from it harvest the fruit of peace and righteousness. ¹² So, straighten up those drooping arms, firm up those shaky knees, ¹³ and make sure that the tracks you're making with your feet are straight... be healed rather than lame!

¹⁴ Try to make peace with everyone and to become holy; for without that, no one can see the Lord. ¹⁵ Therefore, make sure that none of you are falling short of God's loving care, and that no bitter roots are sprouting up to create trouble and make any of you unclean.

¹⁶ [Of course, I'm comparing you to people] who are immoral or worldly, like Esau, who gave away his rights as the firstborn for a single meal. ¹⁷ Remember that he changed his mind later and wanted to inherit the blessing; but despite the fact that he tearfully tried to reclaim it, he was rejected.

¹⁸ Now, [this mountain] that you've approached can't be felt, nor is there any fire burning, or darkness, or fog, or thunderstorm, ¹⁹ or the sound of trumpets blowing, or any voice speaking... a voice that the people begged not to have to listen to ²⁰ and which they couldn't bear when they heard it say so clearly, 'If so much as a wild animal touches this mountain, it must be stoned!' ²¹ Yes, it was such a frightening scene that even Moses admitted, 'I'm terrified and shaking!' ²² But what you've approached is Mount Zion... the City of the Living God. It's Heavenly JeruSalem, where millions of [God's] messengers ²³ are attending a convention of the gathering of the firstborn whose names have been written in the heavens by God, who is the judge of them all. [You've approached] the unseen force of those who are righteous and who have been made perfect, ²⁴ and [you've approached] Jesus, the mediator of a New Sacred Agreement, whose sacrificial blood speaks out better than Abel's.

²⁵ Therefore, let's be sure that we aren't also found begging not to have to listen to the One who is speaking. For since those who begged not to listen to the One who gave that divine warning here on the earth had to listen to it anyhow, how much more should we refuse to turn away from the One who's speaking to us from the heavens!

²⁶ Back then, His voice just shook the ground! But now He has promised: 'Next time, I'll not only shake the ground, [I'll also shake] the sky!' ²⁷ And when He spoke of *the next time*, He implied that the

only things to be shaken are the [temporary] creations [of mankind]... yes, they will be done away with, while the things that aren't shaken will remain.

²⁸ So in view of the fact that we're going to receive a Kingdom that won't be shaken; let's show how much we care by serving God pleasingly in fear and deep reverence... ²⁹ because our God is a consuming fire!

Chapter 13

¹ Therefore, you should love your brothers... ² and don't forget to care about even the ones that you don't know! For it was because some did this that they unknowingly showed hospitality to [God's] messengers! ³ And don't forget those who are in prison... act as though you're locked up with them! Also, [don't forget] those who are being persecuted... [act as though it's happening to] your own bodies!

⁴ Also, make sure that your marriages are kept honorable and that your beds remain clean, because God is going to judge the sexually immoral and the adulterers.

⁵ Live your lives free from the love of money... be satisfied with the things that you have, because He promised: 'I won't forget you and I'll never let you down.' ⁶ So let's be courageous and say: 'Because Jehovah's my helper, I will not fear; For, what can men do to me?'

⁷ Listen to those who are taking the lead among you and speaking to you about the Word of God. Then, as you see the results of their conduct, imitate their faith.

⁸ [Remember that] Jesus the Anointed One was the same yesterday as he is today and will be through the ages. ⁹ So, don't allow yourselves to be misled by various strange teachings.

Indeed, it's better for [your] hearts to be strengthened by [God's] loving care than by what you eat... for such things are no benefit at all to those who are walking in The Way. ¹⁰ Rather, we have an Altar from which we may eat that those who serve at [the Temple] may not eat.

¹¹ Also, as the High Priest [in the Temple] carries the blood of [sacrificial] animals into the Holy Place to serve as sin offerings, and their bodies are thereafter burned up outside of the camp; ¹² Jesus suffered outside of the [city] gate to make people holy with his blood. ¹³ So, let's all go to him outside the camp, bearing all the bad things that were said about him. ¹⁴ And since the city that's there isn't going to last, we should all be seeking the one that's coming!

¹⁵ It is through him that we should be continuously offering the fruit of our lips along with everything else as sacrifices of praise to God, in praise of His Name! ¹⁶ And we should never forget to do good things such as sharing whatever we have with others! Because, these are the types of sacrifices that are pleasing to God.

¹⁷ Also, have confidence in those who are taking the lead among you and submit to them, because they're watching over your lives, so that they may do this with joy not with groaning, since that would be hazardous to you.

¹⁸ In addition, keep praying for us. We feel that our consciences are clear, since we've acted properly in everything. ¹⁹ And I especially want to encourage you to do this, so that I can be returned to you a bit sooner.

²⁰ Now, may the God of peace who raised the great Shepherd – our Lord Jesus – from the dead with the blood of an age-long Sacred Agreement ²¹ use everything that's good to make any adjustments that are necessary for you to do His Will. And may the One who is working within us (through Jesus the Anointed One) in order to accomplish everything that He sees to be good, be glorified into the ages of ages... may it be so.

²² Now, I urge you brothers to live up to these words of encouragement, although I really haven't written much.

²³ By the way, I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released, and if he gets here soon, I'll come to see you.

²⁴ Give my greetings to all those who are taking the lead among you and to all the Holy Ones.

Those in Italy send you their greetings.

James

A letter for general circulation among Jewish believers by James, the brother of Jude and half-brother of Jesus through Mary. Likely written in Aramaic sometime before 66-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One, to the twelve tribes that are scattered about; Rejoice!

² Consider it all A joyful experience, my brothers, when you have to endure various types of trials, ³ because you know that this proving of your faith helps you to endure. ⁴ So, may your endurance reach its goal of making you perfect and complete in every way, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you are lacking in wisdom, continue to ask God and it will be given to you, because He provides it easily and without scolding anyone. ⁶ However, you must believe [that you'll receive it] and not have any doubts, for those who doubt are like waves of the sea that are driven and blown about by the wind. ⁷ Such a person shouldn't expect to receive anything at all from the Lord, ⁸ because of his unsureness and lack of faith.

⁹ Let the lowly brother boast of his high standing, ¹⁰ and let the rich one boast his lowliness, because he too will pass away like a flower in a field. ¹¹ For when the sun comes up and puts out all its heat, the plant withers, the flower drops off, and its beauty fades... which is how the rich man will fade away in his journey through life. ¹² But the man who endures his trials is blest, because when he's approved, he'll receive the crown of life that the Lord promised to all those who love him.

¹³ May no one who is being tried ever say, 'I'm being tried by God,' for God doesn't send bad things to try us. In fact, He doesn't try anyone. ¹⁴ Rather, we are each being tried by our own desires, which bait us and lead us on. ¹⁵ Then when a desire becomes pregnant, it gives birth to sin. And once the sin is committed, it ends in death.

¹⁶ Don't allow anyone to mislead you, my beloved brothers; ¹⁷ every good deed and every perfect gift comes to us from above. It comes down from the Father of the Lights, who doesn't change any more than a shadow when it turns. ¹⁸ And because it was His Will, He gave birth to us through the message of truth, so we could be some of the first fruitage of His creation.

¹⁹ Recognize this, my beloved brothers: Every man must be eager to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry, ²⁰ because a man's anger doesn't make him righteous with God. ²¹ So, once you've gotten rid of all the filth and badness, humbly allow the Word to grow within you... because it can save your lives. ²² Yes, become a person who does what the Word [directs him to do]. Don't [be someone who just] hears, [for people like that] are just fooling themselves.

²³ And if anyone is a hearer but not a doer, he's like the man who looks into a mirror at the face he was born with ²⁴ and carefully considers himself, then leaves and immediately forgets what sort of man he is. ²⁵ However, the one who gazes into the perfect Law that belongs to a free people – and then keeps on looking into it – isn't someone who listens and forgets, but someone who takes action! This man will be blest in whatever he does.

²⁶ Now, if someone thinks of himself as devout, but misleads his heart by not putting a bridle on his tongue, his worship is worthless. ²⁷ For what our God and Father views as clean, pure worship is this: [providing aid] to orphans and widows when they're in need and keeping ourselves free from the

stains of this system of things.

Chapter 2

¹ My brothers; Don't show favoritism when it comes to the glorious faith of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One. ² For if a man who is wearing a gold ring and fine clothes should enter your synagogue, then someone whose clothes are filthy also enters, ³ do you favor the one that's wearing the fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good place to sit?' Then do you say to the poor one, 'Stand [over there],' or, 'Sit here under my footstool?' ⁴ If so, aren't you showing favoritism among yourselves and judging from evil thoughts?

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers! Didn't God choose the poor of this system of things to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom that He promised to those who love Him? ⁶ Yet you are dishonoring the poor! Aren't the rich the ones who are oppressing you and dragging you into courts? ⁷ And aren't they the ones who speak badly of the good name by which you are called?

⁸ Now, if you're obeying the royal law of the Scriptures that says, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself,' you're doing well. ⁹ But if you're showing favoritism, you're sinning and the Law convicts you of being its violator! ¹⁰ For if someone who is trying to obey the Law fails in just one little part of it, he has broken the whole thing. ¹¹ Because, the One who said, 'You must not commit adultery,' also said, 'You must not murder.' So if you aren't committing adultery but you murder someone, you've broken the whole Law.

¹² Therefore, speak and behave as though you're about to be judged by the law of a free people; ¹³ because, the merciless will be judged without mercy, since mercy is an important part of justice.

¹⁴ What good does it do, my brothers, if someone says he has faith, but isn't moved to do anything about it. Can his faith save him? ¹⁵ [For example], if a brother or sister doesn't have clothing or enough food for each day, ¹⁶ and you were to tell him, 'Go in peace; be warm and well fed'... if you don't give him what he needs to survive, what good have you done? ¹⁷ So, faith without good deeds, is dead!

¹⁸ Now, someone can say, 'Though you may do good deeds, I have [more] faith!' Well, you show me your faith without good deeds and I'll show you my faith by the good things that I do. ¹⁹ So, you have faith say that there's just one God, don't you? That's good... but so do the demons! Yes, they believe and it frightens them!

²⁰ I want you to know, O empty man, that faith apart from [good] deeds is dead! ²¹ For, wasn't our father AbraHam called righteous because of the things that he did... such as when he offered up his son IsaAc on the altar? ²² Yes, you can see how his faith worked along with his deeds, and that it was his deeds that perfected his faith. ²³ So the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'AbraHam believed in The God, and for this he was considered to be righteous and God's friend.' ²⁴ So you see; a man is pronounced righteous by the things he does, not by his faith alone.

²⁵ The same thing was true of RaHab the prostitute. For she was called righteous because she took the messengers in and then sent them out by another way. ²⁶ So, just as a body that isn't breathing is dead, faith without good deeds is dead.

Chapter 3

¹ Brothers, not many of you should become teachers, because you know that [teachers] will be held more accountable... ² and we all make a lot of mistakes! But if there is a man who doesn't stumble in

his words, he's perfect and can lead his whole body with a bridle.

³ Now, if we put a bridle in the mouth of a horse to make it obey us, we can control its whole body. ⁴ {Look!} But even large boats that are driven by strong winds are steered wherever the pilot wishes by very small rudders... ⁵ and that's how the tongue is! Though it's just a little body part, it can boast about big things... and look at how little a flame it takes to set a whole forest on fire! ⁶ So, the tongue is a fire in a world of unrighteousness. It sits among our body members as the corrupter of the whole body, which sets the natural ways on fire... and what sets them ablaze is the garbage dump!

⁷ Though every sort of wild animal, flying creature, slithering thing, and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by men, ⁸ no man can tame the tongue... for it won't stop saying bad things and it's full of deadly poison. ⁹ We can use it to praise our Lord and Father, or to curse men who came into existence in God's image... ¹⁰ so out of the same mouth comes both blessings and curses.

There's no need for things like this to keep happening, my brothers! ¹¹ Are there any fountains that bubble up both sweet and bitter [water]? ¹² And fig trees can't produce olives, grapevines can't produce figs, and you can't get sweet water from salt water, can you my brothers!

¹³ So, who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show that he has the inner strength that comes from wisdom by the way that he acts and by the things that he does. ¹⁴ But if you are bitterly jealous, and in your hearts you just want to argue; don't be too proud of this and don't lie about the facts. ¹⁵ This isn't wisdom that comes from above; it's earthly, animalistic, and demonic. ¹⁶ For where you find jealousy and arguing, you'll also find disorder and everything that's foul. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, and full of mercy and good fruitage. It isn't hypocritical or prejudiced, ¹⁸ because the seeds of the fruit of righteousness are planted in peace by the peacemakers!

Chapter 4

¹ So, where are all these fights and wars among you coming from? Aren't they the result of battles that are being fought in your body parts over [sensual] pleasures? ² You want, but you can't have. You're jealous and murderous, but that doesn't get you anything. You're fighting and waging war, but you haven't received because you haven't asked. ³ Then when you do ask, you don't receive, because you're asking for the wrong reasons. For all you're really interested in is pleasure!

⁴ Adulteresses, don't you know that if you're a friend of the world you're an enemy of God? So whoever wants to be a friend of the world is putting himself down as God's enemy. ⁵ For, what do you think the scripture means that says, 'The spirit within us yearns with envy?'

⁶ Now, the loving care that He sends to us is greater than of all that, for we were told: 'God shows loving-care for the lowly, but He opposes the haughty.' ⁷ So, let's do what God says... resist the Opposer and he'll run from you! ⁸ Yes, draw closer to God and He'll draw closer to you!

You must wash your hands, you sinners, and those of you who can't make up your minds should purify your hearts! ⁹ Otherwise you'll be crying, moaning, and miserable... your laughter will be turned into moaning and your joy will be turned into sadness! ¹⁰ Yes, humble yourselves in the eyes of the Lord and He will lift you higher!

¹¹ Brothers, stop complaining about each other, because those who speak against or judge their brothers are speaking against and judging the Law. And if you're judging the Law, you aren't someone who's under it, you're its judge... ¹² and there's just one Lawgiver and Judge who can either

save or destroy. So, who are you to be judging your neighbor?

¹³ And those of you who say, 'Today or tomorrow I'm going to travel to this city or that, and I'll spend a year there doing business and making profits'... ¹⁴ you don't even know what's going to happen in your life tomorrow, because you're just a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears! ¹⁵ Shouldn't you rather be saying, 'If it's the Lord's will, I will live and do this or that.' ¹⁶ But now you're taking pride in things that you just assume to be true, and being proud over such things is wickedness. ¹⁷ Because, whenever you know what's right and you don't do it, that's a sin to you!

Chapter 5

¹ So go on, you who are rich; cry and bawl over the miseries that you'll have to endure! ² For your wealth will rot away, your clothes will be moth-eaten, ³ your gold and silver will corrode, and whatever remains will testify against you and eat your flesh like the fire that you have treasured away in the last days.

⁴ Look! The wages that you refused to pay the workers who harvested your fields are crying out, and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of Jehovah of Armies. ⁵ For you've lived on the earth just to satisfy yourselves... yes, you're nourishing your hearts on self-indulgence for the day of slaughter! ⁶ And since you even condemned and murdered the Righteous One, won't He stand and oppose you?

⁷ Brothers, let's be patient until the Lord arrives. {Look!} For as the farmer harvests the precious fruitage of the ground after patiently waiting for both the early and late rains; ⁸ we must also be patient – but with determined hearts – because the appearance of the Lord is drawing near.

⁹ Brothers, stop moaning about each other, so you won't be judged. For look... the judge is now standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers, you should learn from the examples of the Prophets who spoke in the Name of the Lord about how to suffer bad things and how to be patient. ¹¹ For we call those who endured, blest! You've all heard of the endurance of Job and you saw how the Lord ended it... and this proves that Jehovah is very kind and merciful.

¹² But above all, my brothers; Stop swearing oaths by heaven, or by the earth, or by anything else. Just let your yes mean yes and your no mean no, so you don't fail when you're being judged!

¹³ Are there any among you who are being persecuted? Let them keep praying! Are there any among you who are cheerful? Let them sing psalms! ¹⁴ Are there any among you who are weak? Let them call the elders and have them pray over them, as they rub them with oil in the name of the Lord! ¹⁵ Then their faithful prayers will rescue the weak and the Lord will lift them and forgive any sins that they've committed.

¹⁶ So, admit your sins to each other and pray that each one of you will be healed, because prayer has a lot of power when it's working through a righteous person. ¹⁷ For though EliJah was a man with passions like ours; when he prayed and asked for it not to rain, it didn't rain in the land for three and a half years. ¹⁸ Then when he prayed again, the skies poured with rain, causing the ground to produce its fruitage.

¹⁹ My brothers; whenever someone is led astray from the truth and someone else leads him back; ²⁰ recognize that the one who turns the sinner from the error of his ways will save his own life from

death... and it will cover many of his own sins as well.

1 Peter

Written from Babylon by Silvanus for Jesus' Apostle Peter, possibly in Aramaic, sometime before 66-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Peter, an Apostle of Jesus the Anointed One, to the elected ones among the scattered (Jews) that are living in Pontus, Galatia, CappaDokia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia, ² who by the foreknowledge of The God and Father and by the holiness of [His] Breath are obedient and sprinkled with the blood of Jesus the Anointed One; May loving care and peace be multiplied among you.

³ Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One, who according to His great mercy fathered within us the hope of life by resurrecting Jesus the Anointed One from the dead, ⁴ so that an undying, incorruptible, and enduring inheritance would be placed on reserve for you in the heavens. ⁵ Yes, you who are being guarded by faith through the power of God for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in this final season, ⁶ and in which you are rejoicing.

So, although you are currently being grieved by various trials, ⁷ understand they are happening to you to prove your faith (which is much something more valuable than gold that is refined and proven by fire), and so that you will be found to be a reason for praise, honor, and glory at the revealing of Jesus the Anointed One. ⁸ For although you've never seen him you've loved him, and although you can't see him you've believed in him and are rejoicing with an unspeakable and glorified joy, ⁹ for you are carrying off for yourselves the reward of faith in the salvation of your souls!

¹⁰ When it comes to this salvation; understand that the Prophets (those who prophesied that this loving-kindness would be shown to you) used to seek and search, ¹¹ trying (through the spirit of the anointing that was in them) to determine the exact time and circumstances of the sufferings of the Anointed One and of his being glorified (which they knew about even back then). ¹² However, it wasn't revealed to them as it has been to you, for they were just servants of these things that have now been revealed to you by those who proclaimed the good news to you through the Holy Breath that was sent from heaven, and into which even the messengers [of God] have wished to peer!

¹³ As the result, prepare your minds to understand, and become perfectly sober when it comes to your hope of the loving kindness that will be conveyed to you at the revelation of Jesus the Anointed One.

¹⁴ And as obedient children, don't go back to being what you used to be by desiring ignorant things. ¹⁵ Rather, like the Holy One who called you, become holy in all your ways. ¹⁶ For it is written: 'You must be holy, because I am holy!'

¹⁷ So if you are calling on this One (who doesn't discriminate but judges each one by the things that they're doing) as though He's your Father; you should conduct yourselves in fear during this period of your existence. ¹⁸ For you must recognize that the ransom that was paid to release you from the worthless way of life that you learned from your fathers wasn't paid for with things that waste away like silver or gold. ¹⁹ Rather, it was paid for with the precious blood of a spotless and perfect lamb... the Anointed One. ²⁰ And though he was known before the founding of the cosmos, he has finally been revealed for your sakes during this period, ²¹ so that through him you will come to believe in The God who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and that you will put all your faith and hope in that God.

²² Then, after you have purified your lives by [learning how to] obey the truth, you must also learn to love each other intensely... yes, develop a sincere brotherly love out of a pure heart! ²³ For you weren't born again as seeds that are planted [in the ground] and will perish, but as something that's

imperishable through the enduring Word of the living God. ²⁴ [As it is said]:

'All flesh is like grass

And its glory is like the flowers in a field.

But though grass dries up and its flowers will drop,

²⁵ God's Word lasts through the ages.'

Yes, these are the words that we have preached to you as good news.

Chapter 2

¹ As the result, get rid of all your badness, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slandering. ² Then like newborn babies, develop a taste for the pure milk of the Word, which will help you to grow to salvation... ³ that is, if you have indeed tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ Approach him as though he's a living block of stone that was for a fact rejected by men but chosen as something precious by God, ⁵ upon which you are being built as living blocks into a spiritual [Temple] – as a Holy Priesthood – to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus the Anointed One. ⁶ For the Scripture says: '{Look!} I am laying in Zion a select and precious cornerstone, and all who put faith in it will never be shamed.'

⁷ Yes, you have put faith in this 'precious thing' in whom others don't believe... the block that the builders rejected but which has become the head of the corner... ⁸ the stumbling block and snare to those who stumble over the words because of the disobedient ways to which they've appointed. ⁹ Yes, you're a chosen race, a royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, and a people who were specially selected to announce the virtues of the One who called you out of darkness and into His wonderful light. ¹⁰ So although you once weren't a nation (gr. *laos* or *people*), you're now a nation of God. And although you were once shown no mercy, you're the ones who are now being shown mercy.

¹¹ My loved ones; I want to encourage you who are foreigners and exiles not to indulge in the things that your bodies might crave and which fight a battle against your inner person. ¹² Yes, while you're [living] among the gentiles, behave yourselves, so that when they condemn you and say bad things about you, they can see the good things that you're doing and then glorify The God in the Day that He arrives for His inspection.

¹³ Also, you must obey every office that men have created (through the Lord), regardless of whether the one who is over you is a king, ¹⁴ or [just] a governor that has been sent [by the king] to punish criminals and to praise those who do good things. ¹⁵ Because, it's God's Will for you to do good things, so that you can put a muzzle on the ignorant accusations of unreasonable men. ¹⁶ And although you're a free people; as slaves of God, don't use your freedom as a cover-up for doing things that are bad! ¹⁷ Rather, be respectful to everyone, love your brothers, fear God, and show special respect for the king.

¹⁸ Those of you who are household servants should obey and fear your masters... and not just those who are good and reasonable, but also those that are hard to please. ¹⁹ For if a person with a Godly conscience has to put up with the grief of having to suffer for something he didn't do, it shows a lot of inner strength. ²⁰ So if you aren't being slapped for doing something that was wrong and you [choose to] put up with suffering when you've only done good things, this shows your inner strength to God. ²¹ And for a fact, this is the [course] to which you were called. Because, the Anointed One suffered on your behalf as an example, so that you would follow in his tracks. ²² For though he wasn't guilty of any sin and his mouth didn't tell any lies; ²³ when they shouted bad things at him, he didn't shout back, and when he was suffering, he didn't threaten anyone. He just left himself [in the hands of] the One who judges righteously. ²⁴ Then he bore our sins on his body when he was hung on the tree... and that's when the sins died so that we could thereafter be counted as righteous. For, 'by his wounds, you

were healed.¹ ²⁵ And though you were once sheep that had strayed, you have now returned to the shepherd who is watching over your lives.

Chapter 3

¹ Also, you women should obey your [husbands], so that those who aren't obeying The Word can be won over without words through your fine conduct, ² when they see the fear that you're showing by being pure. ³ Don't let your beauty come from fancy hairstyles, gold jewelry, or the way you arrange your clothes, ⁴ but from that what is hidden in your heart... let it be the type of clean, quiet, and mild personality that is valuable in the eyes of The God. ⁵ Indeed, this is how holy women in the past who put their hope in God have been beautifying themselves... by obeying their [husbands], ⁶ just as Sarah used to obey AbraHam, calling him 'lord.' You should become her children in doing good things, so you'll have nothing to fear.

⁷ And you men should be wise when it comes to living with [your wives]... treat them as you would a delicate vase, and show them the type of honor that should be shown to women who are fellow heirs of the gift of life, so it doesn't affect your prayers.

⁸ And finally, you should all share the same attitude when it comes to being sympathetic, loving your brothers, caring for each other, being humble, ⁹ and by not trying to get even or trade insults. Rather, you should bestow blessings, since you were called to The Way so you could inherit blessings.

¹⁰ Yes, may those of you who love life and want to see good days keep your tongues from saying bad things and your lips from telling lies... ¹¹ turn away from what's bad and do what's good, as you search for and chase after peace! ¹² [For it's written]:
'Jehovah watches out for the righteous,
And He listens when they are crying to Him...
But He opposes those who are doing what's bad.'

¹³ So, who will treat you badly if you're zealous for doing what's right? ¹⁴ But remember that even if you have to suffer for doing something righteous, you'll be blest! So, don't be afraid or even be bothered by such things! ¹⁵ Rather, make the Anointed One the Holy Lord in your hearts, and always be ready to make a defense before anyone who demands to know why you have this hope. However, do it calmly and with [Godly] fear.

¹⁶ Yes, keep a clean conscience so that anyone who may accuse you and speak out against you will be shamed by your fine conduct. ¹⁷ And remember that it's better for you to suffer for doing something good (if that's God's Will) than for doing something that's bad. ¹⁸ For even the Anointed One died (once and for all time) over sins as someone who is righteous on behalf of those who are unrighteous, in order to lead you to God. And then, though his flesh was in fact destroyed, he was brought to life as a spirit, ¹⁹ whereupon he preached to the spirits who had been imprisoned ²⁰ because of their disobedience, as God patiently waited for the chest to be built during the time of Noah, in which a few people (eight souls) would then be saved through the water.

²¹ And this is the same type of thing that's now saving you... [I'm talking about] baptism, the purpose of which isn't to get rid of the filth of the flesh, but to ask God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus the Anointed One, ²² who is currently at God's right hand in the heavens, where all the angels, and all the authorities and powers must obey him.

Chapter 4

¹ So, since the Anointed One suffered in the flesh, you'd best start thinking about fighting the same battle. For someone who has suffered in the flesh has stopped sinning ² and doesn't live for human desires anymore, but to do God's Will for the rest of his life in the flesh. ³ And enough time has elapsed for you to have resolved the types of things that the gentiles desire... for they go their own immoral ways, following their desires, drinking too much wine, partying, getting drunk, and worshiping disgusting idols. ⁴ Then, because you don't go along with them and follow them into the same deadly course down into the sewer, they slander you. ⁵ However, they will have to answer to the One who is ready to judge both the living and the dead. ⁶ Indeed, this is why we are preaching the good news to those who are the dead... so that they may be judged in the flesh but live to God in the spirit!

⁷ So, since the end of everything has drawn closer, you should become more sensible and sober-minded when it comes to prayer. ⁸ And more than anything else, you should be reaching out to each other in love, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Yes, be hospitable to each other without grumbling; ¹⁰ and as each of you has received a gift, use [that gift] to serve each other as good managers of the abundant loving kindnesses of God, ¹¹ so that whenever anyone speaks the Word of God, or whenever anyone serves through the strength that is supplied by The God, He may be glorified by it all through Jesus the Anointed One... may He have glory and power through ages of ages... may it be so.

¹² Loved ones; You shouldn't think it strange that there's a fire blazing among you and testing you, as though what's happening to you is something that's very unusual. ¹³ Rather, as you [find yourselves] sharing in the sufferings of the Anointed One, rejoice! Because, when his glory is revealed, you will once again be happy and cry out in joy! ¹⁴ For if you're being slandered over the name of the Anointed One, you are truly blest, because [this proves that] God's glory and Breath have come to rest upon you.

¹⁵ Although none of you should ever have to suffer for being a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or for not minding your own business; ¹⁶ if you're suffering because of being a Christian, you should never be ashamed of it! Rather, you should keep on glorifying God in that name. ¹⁷ For the time of judgment has arrived... and it's starting with the House of God. So if it's starting with us first; how will those who don't obey the good news of God end up? ¹⁸ For if the righteous are just barely being saved, where will those who are godless and the sinners make a showing?' ¹⁹ So let those who are (by God's will) suffering, gladly entrust their souls to the faithful Creator by doing whatever is good.

Chapter 5

¹ I encourage the elders among you (my fellow elders and witnesses of the sufferings of the Anointed One who will share in the glory that's soon to be revealed) ² to shepherd the flock of God that has been entrusted to you. Don't do this because you **have to**, but because you **want to**! No, don't do it to make a lot of money, but because you want to help! ³ And don't [set yourselves up as] rulers over those who have been entrusted to your care, but become examples to the flock. ⁴ Then when the Chief Shepherd is revealed, you'll walk away with the enduring garland of glory!

⁵ And the same [is true] for you younger men; Obey the elders! All of you should be humble to each other. In fact, tie humility to yourselves with knots, because God opposes those who think too much of themselves, while He's kind to those who are humble. ⁶ Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so He can eventually raise you to a higher position. ⁷ Throw all your worries upon Him, because He really cares about you!

⁸ Also, be serious and stay alert, because your accuser (the Slanderer) is roaming about like a roaring lion that is looking for someone to swallow down. ⁹ Oppose him by taking a solid stand for the faith, and realize that the things you're suffering in this system of things are also happening throughout the entire brotherhood... ¹⁰ and that the God of all loving kindness will call you to age-long glory in the Anointed Jesus. Then after you have suffered a little while on His behalf, He will prepare you, establish you, strengthen you, and firmly set your foundation! ¹¹ Yes, to Him be the power through the ages... may it be so!

¹² I'm sending what I consider these few words that I wrote through Silvanus (a faithful brother) to encourage you and to testify to the fact that you are standing in the true loving-care of The God.

¹³ I send you greetings from the woman who was chosen along with you, and from Mark (my son), from Babylon. ¹⁴ Greet each other with a kiss of love!

Peace to all of you in the Anointed One.

2 Peter

Written for Jesus' Apostle Peter, possibly in Aramaic, sometime before his death in or near Babylon around 66-CE.

Chapter 1

¹ Simon Peter, a slave and Apostle of Jesus the Anointed One, to those who are all precious to us and who have received their share of faith by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus the Anointed One; ² May you grow in loving care and peace by coming to a higher knowledge of The God, and of our Lord Jesus. ³ For He has granted us all of His Divine Power when it comes to [clean] living and godliness through the knowledge of the one who called us to his own glory and virtue, ⁴ and through whom He has given us the most precious and greatest promises, so that through these you might become sharers in the divine nature, now that you've left the corrupt desires of this system of things. ⁵ And after you've zealously done all of this, add virtue to your faith, knowledge to [your] virtue, ⁶ self-control to [your] knowledge, endurance to [your] self-control, piety to [your] endurance, ⁷ brotherly-love to [your] piety, and pure love to [your] brotherly love. ⁸ For if you're filled and overflowing with these things, they will keep you from being lazy or from failing to produce fruitage when it comes to gaining a higher knowledge of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One.

⁹ However, there are those in whom these qualities are not present, for they've proven to be short-sighted and forgotten how they had once been purified, so they've returned to their old sinful ways! ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers; be zealous when it comes to making your calling and electing a sure thing! For if you can do that, you'll never stumble, ¹¹ and you'll be richly supplied with entry into the age-long Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Anointed.

¹² This is why I always want to remind you of these things, despite the fact that you already know [them] and are firmly rooted in the truth. ¹³ However, as long as I must live in this temporary dwelling, I will consider it righteous to shake you and remind you, ¹⁴ since I realize that this 'tent' will soon be set aside, as our Lord Jesus the Anointed One has indicated to me. ¹⁵ Therefore, I'm going to do everything that I can whenever I can, so that you'll keep on reminding each other of these things after I'm gone.

¹⁶ Now, what we've told you about the power and appearance of the Lord Jesus the Anointed One wasn't some myth that we just made up. Rather, we were eyewitnesses to his magnificence! ¹⁷ For he was honored and glorified by God (the Father) through a voice that came to him, which glorified him in an appropriate way when it said, 'This is My Son whom I love and of whom I have approved!' ¹⁸ Yes, we heard these words from heaven itself as we were there with him on the Holy Mountain! ¹⁹ And by this, we had the prophetic words made more sure to us, so you will do well to pay attention to them. For [these words] are like a lamp that will illuminate the dark places until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

²⁰ Understand this: None of the prophecies in the Scriptures came from [anyone's own] ideas, ²¹ nor [were they spoken] just because some men wanted to prophesy. Rather, men spoke from God as they were being born along by [His] Holy Breath.

Chapter 2

¹ However, there have also been false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These will introduce destructive heresies and deny the master who bought them, which will bring swift destruction upon them. ² Yet, many will follow them into their dirty deeds. And because of this, the way of the truth will be slandered. ³ Also, since such ones will desire whatever

you have, they will worm their way [in among you] with carefully-planned words. However, the ancient judgment upon them will not be delayed and their destruction hasn't fallen asleep.

⁴ Notice that God didn't spare the angels that sinned, for He threw them into the dark pits of Tartarus where they are still awaiting His justice. ⁵ Nor did He spare the first system of things... though He guarded Noah (who was a preacher of righteousness) along with seven others, when He brought a downpour upon that world of godless people. ⁶ And after He condemned the cities Sodom and Gomorrah, He reduced them to ashes. And all these things are examples of what is going to happen to such godless people!

⁷ Yet, remember that [God] protected righteous Lot, who was deeply disturbed by the lewd actions of those lawless people. ⁸ For the wicked things that this man saw and heard each day while he was living among them tortured his righteous soul. ⁹ So [remember that] the Lord knows how to rescue devout people from trials, while he keeps the unrighteous for a day of judgment when they will be destroyed.

¹⁰ This is especially true of those who chase after flesh in filthy acts of lust and who despise divine appointments... the self-willed who don't tremble when they speak ill of the glorious ones. ¹¹ But even the messengers [of God] (who are much stronger and more powerful than them) wouldn't think of looking down on such [glorious] ones, for fear of being judged as blasphemers by the Lord. ¹² So these are like unreasoning animals that were born to be caught and killed. And because they speak badly of things that they don't understand, they will then rot in their filth. ¹³ Yes, the payback for their unrighteousness is the mistreatment of themselves.

What brings pleasure to these people is just spending their days in luxury. For they are spots and flaws that enjoy doing anything that they feel tempted to do, as they feast among you! ¹⁴ They have eyes that are always full of adultery and sins, as they try to tempt those who are weak. For their hearts have been trained to desire things that aren't theirs, and they [bring forth] children who are cursed. ¹⁵ Such ones have been led away from the straight path and are directed onto the course of Balaam [the son] of Beor, who loved the reward for doing what was wrong, ¹⁶ but was scolded for going beyond the limits by a farm animal that couldn't speak... yet it did speak in a man's voice and it stopped that crazy prophet!

¹⁷ Such people are like springs without any water and like clouds being blown by storms, which are reserved for the gloom of darkness. ¹⁸ Yet they talk in big ways about stupid things, as they try to tempt [people] into following human desires and loose lifestyles... yes, they turn the little ones who are fleeing [this system of things] back into doing what's wrong. ¹⁹ They keep promising them freedom, while they are in fact slaves to filth... for whoever is conquered by another, becomes his slave.

²⁰ Why, anyone who has escaped from the filth of this system of things by coming to an accurate knowledge of the Lord and Savior (Jesus the Anointed) and then goes back to it, is conquered by it again and is worse off than he was before [becoming a Christian]. ²¹ Therefore, it would have been better for such ones if they had never learned about the ways of Righteousness than to have turned from it after they've been taught the laws of Holiness! ²² So what happens to them is as the proverb truthfully says: 'The dog has returned to its own vomit, and the sow that was bathed to rolling in its manure.'

Chapter 3

¹ My loved ones; This is now the second letter that I've written to you. In the first letter, I tried to

shake you into thinking clearly and remind you to ² never forget what the holy Prophets used to say, or of the commandments that our Lord and Savior gave to us through [his] Apostles. ³ Recognize this: In the last days there will be those who will ridicule... they'll go their own way and do whatever they want, ⁴ then they'll mock you by asking, 'So, where is this appearance of his that they've been promising since our ancestors fell asleep? For everything is still the same as it has been since the beginning of creation!'

⁵ However, what is hidden from them is this: Though the ancient skies and lands were out of the water; by the Word of God, they still stood between the waters. ⁶ And it was through this that the world back then was flooded and destroyed by water. ⁷ Likewise, it's by this same word that what's in store for the skies and the lands today is the fire of the Judgment Day, when those godless men will be destroyed.

⁸ But loved ones; don't overlook the fact that one day to the Lord is as a thousand years (or, thousands of years), and a thousand years (or, thousands of years) as just one day. ⁹ For the Lord isn't slow when it comes to his promises, as some people think. Rather, he's being patient with you, because he doesn't want anyone to be destroyed... he's allowing enough time for everyone to repent! ¹⁰ However, the Day of the Lord will come just like a thief! And then the skies will become extremely hot, their basic parts will melt, and they will all pass away with a hissing noise... and then the earth and everything that's being done on it will be exposed!

¹¹ So, since all of this is about to be dissolved; what sort of people should you be when it comes to holy conduct and godliness?

¹² Yes, we're awaiting and anticipating the appearance of the Day of the Lord, during which the skies will burn and dissolve and their basic parts will melt due to the intense heat! ¹³ But we're also awaiting the new skies and lands that He has promised, in which righteousness will dwell!

¹⁴ Therefore, loved ones; since we are [truly] expecting these things, we should be swift about making ourselves flawless and spotless, so we'll be found to be at peace with Him!

¹⁵ You should think about the patience that our Lord is showing when it comes to our salvation... which is something that our beloved brother Paul wrote to you about through the [special] wisdom that he was given ¹⁶ and which he speaks of in all his letters. Yes, some of [what he writes] is hard to understand, so it is being twisted by the ignorant and unstable, the same as they do to the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

¹⁷ So to you, my loved ones: Since you've been warned, be careful that you aren't led astray by the bad things that these lawless people are doing and then lose your grip on your firm convictions. ¹⁸ Rather, keep growing in the loving care and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Anointed One. May he be glorified now and into that age-long Day.

1 John

Written for Jesus' Apostle John, possibly in Aramaic, sometime late in the 1st Century CE.

Chapter 1

¹ The message of life has been here since the beginning. We've heard about it, seen it with our eyes, stared at it, and felt it with our hands. ² Yes, the life was on display... we've seen it, we've testified about it, and now we're reporting to you that there is age-long life with the Father, because He showed it to us. ³ As the result, we're reporting back to you about these things that we've seen and heard, so we can share in it with you. We've shared in this with the Father and His Son Jesus the Anointed One, ⁴ and now we're writing these things down so that our joy may be complete.

⁵ The message that we heard from Him (which we want to announce to you) is this: God is light and there isn't any darkness in Him!

⁶ Now, if we say that we're sharing with Him but we just keep on walking in the darkness, we're lying and we aren't being truthful. ⁷ But if we're walking in the light (since He's in the light), we're also sharing what we have with each other, and the blood of His Son Jesus is cleansing us of all our sins. ⁸ And if we should say that we don't have any sins, we're misleading ourselves and there's no truth in us. ⁹ However, if we admit our sins, He will forgive us and wash away all our unrighteousness, because He is faithful and righteous. ¹⁰ For when we say that we haven't sinned, we're saying that He's a liar and His words aren't in us.

Chapter 2

¹ My little children; I'm writing these things to you so as to keep you from committing any sins. However, if anyone does commit a sin, we have someone righteous who is our advocate with the Father, Jesus the Anointed One. ² He's the sacrifice that begs forgiveness for our sins... and not just for ours, but also for those of the whole world!

³ This is how we can be sure that we've come to know him: If we keep on obeying his commandments. ⁴ So the one who says, 'Now I know him,' but doesn't obey his commandments, is a liar and the truth isn't in him. ⁵ However, God's love has been made perfect in all those who really do as they've been told. And that's how we know whether we're in him. ⁶ For whoever says he's in [Jesus] is obligated to keep on walking in the path that [Jesus] walked.

⁷ Loved ones; What I'm writing to you about here isn't a new commandment, it's an old commandment that you've had since the beginning. This old commandment is all the instructions that you've heard so far. ⁸ But now I'm also writing you a new commandment, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. ⁹ However, those who say that they are already in the light but who dislike their brothers are still in the darkness. ¹⁰ For only those who love their brothers are in the light (so they don't go stumbling about), ¹¹ while those who dislike their brothers are still in darkness and must walk around in the dark without any idea of where they're going, because the darkness has left them blind.

¹² I'm writing to those of you who are still boys, because your sins have been forgiven through his name.

¹³ I'm writing to those of you who are fathers, because you've come to know the one who is from long ago.

I'm writing to those of you who are young men, because you've conquered the wicked one.

I have written to you who are boys, because you've come to know the Father.

¹⁴ I have written to you who are fathers, because you've come to know the one who is from long ago. I've written to you who are young men, because you are strong, God's Word is in you, and you've conquered the wicked one.

¹⁵ Don't love the world or anything in [it]; for if anyone loves the world, there's no love of the Father in him. ¹⁶ Because, nothing in this world – its fleshly desires, its lusting after the things we can see, and its trusting that we can provide for ourselves – comes from the Father, it all comes from the world... ¹⁷ and the world with all its desires is passing away! However, those who do God's Will remain through the age.

¹⁸ Young children; It's the last hour. And as you've heard, the Antichrist is coming, for there are already many Antichrists... and that's how we know it's the last hour. ¹⁹ They left us because they weren't like us; for if they'd been like us, they would still be with us, and this is what proves that they aren't like us. ²⁰ However, the Holy One has chosen you... but then you already know that. ²¹ So I'm not writing to you because you don't know the truth, but because you have known it.

Remember that lies don't come from the truth. ²² And who are the liars? They are those who deny that Jesus is the Anointed One. Yes, this is the Antichrist (gr. *antichristos* – *anti-anointed*): They are the ones who deny both the Father and the Son! ²³ For whoever denies the Son [also denies] the Father. However, those who have the Son also have the Father.

²⁴ As for you; Hang onto the things that you heard long ago! For if the things that you heard long ago stick with you, you will remain in the Son and in the Father... ²⁵ and what they promised us was age-long life.

²⁶ Now, I'm writing this to you [so as to warn you] about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ I realize that you don't need anyone to be teaching you, since the anointing that you received from him is still in you, and his anointing is teaching you about everything... it's true and it doesn't lie. So just as it taught you, remain in him.

²⁸ Little children; Stay in him, so that when he is revealed, we can speak freely and not be ashamed at his appearance. ²⁹ For if you recognize the fact that he's righteous, you'll also recognize that everyone who does righteous things has been fathered by him.

Chapter 3

¹ Look at the type of love that the Father has given us... to be called the children of God (which is what we are). And that's the reason why the world doesn't understand us... because they don't understand Him!

² But loved ones; Although we're the children of God, we really haven't been shown what we will be yet. What we do know is that when [Jesus] is revealed, we'll be like him, and then we'll see him just as he is. ³ So all those who have been given this hope will purify themselves [in order to be like him]. ⁴ However, those who just keep on sinning are lawbreakers... for lawlessness is sin.

⁵ You already know that the reason why he showed himself [in the flesh] was to take away our sins, since there are no sins in him. ⁶ Therefore, no one that is in him will keep on sinning, while those who continue to sin haven't seen him or come to know him.

⁷ Little children; Don't allow anyone to mislead you. Only those who do righteous things can be righteous in the same way that he is righteous. ⁸ However, sinners come from the Slanderer, because the Slanderer has been sinning since ancient times. And the reason why the Son of The God was shown [in the flesh] was to eliminate the deeds of the Slanderer. ⁹ Therefore, no one who has been fathered by God can remain a sinner, because [God's] seed is in him... he can't keep on sinning, because God has become his Father!

¹⁰ Now, it's easy to tell the children of God from the children of the Slanderer, for God didn't father those who aren't righteous and those who don't love their brothers. ¹¹ Indeed, from the earliest [days] you've heard the message that we must love each other. ¹² [We don't want to be] like Cain who came from the wicked one and slaughtered his brother. And just why did he slaughter him? Because what his brother did was righteous, but what he did was wicked. ¹³ Therefore brothers; Don't be surprised that the world hates you!

¹⁴ We know that we've crossed over from death to life, because we love our brothers. However, those who don't love them just stay dead. ¹⁵ For whoever dislikes his brother is a murderer... and we all know that murderers won't receive age-long life. ¹⁶ But we know that we've been loved, because [Jesus] gave his life for us... and this is why we should also be willing to lay down our lives for our brothers!

¹⁷ So, how can God's love is in a person who, though may have the worldly means to provide, doesn't feel pity for his brother when he can see that he's in need? ¹⁸ Little children; Don't just love with your tongues and with words, but in reality, by doing [whatever is needed]. ¹⁹ And this is how we can prove whether we are really being truthful with ourselves, so that our hearts can be confident when we stand before Him. ²⁰ For if our hearts are still condemning us, God is greater than our hearts and He knows everything!

²¹ Loved ones; If our hearts don't condemn us, we can have confidence in God ²² and trust that we'll receive whatever we ask of Him, because we're obeying His commandments and doing the things that are pleasing in His eyes. ²³ And this is what He has commanded: We must believe in the name of His Son (Jesus the Anointed), and [we must] love each other... just as He told us. ²⁴ For those who keep His commandments are in Him, and He's in them! And this is how we can know that He is in us: by the Spirit that He gave to us.

Chapter 4

¹ Loved ones; Don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits to prove whether they come from The God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² You can tell whether a spirit is from God by this: Every spirit that speaks of Jesus the Anointed One as having come in the flesh, comes from God. ³ But any spirit that doesn't speak of Jesus doesn't come from The God but from the Antichrist, whom you heard would come into the world... and who is already here.

⁴ Little children; Since you were fathered by God, you've already conquered them all... for [the One] who is in you is greater than the whole world!

⁵ Now, those who are fathered by this world talk about worldly things, and the world listens to them; ⁶ but since we have been fathered by God, only those who know God will listen to us, while those who aren't from God won't listen to us... and this is how you can tell true spirits from false spirits.

⁷ Loved ones; Keep on loving each other, because love comes from The God... so those who love, know God, because love comes from The God! ⁸ However, those who don't love haven't known The

God, because God is love! ⁹ And He showed His love for us by sending His one-and-only Son into this world so we could gain life through him. ¹⁰ And this is true love, because [back when] we didn't love God, He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to cover our sins.

¹¹ Loved ones; If this is how much God loves us, then we're obliged to love each other! ¹² Indeed, no one has ever seen God; but as long as we love each other, God is in us and He's making His love perfect in us.

¹³ We know that we're in Him and He's in us, because He has given us His Spirit... ¹⁴ and we've seen and testified to the fact that the Father sent His Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ For whenever anyone admits that Jesus the Anointed One is God's Son, God is in [this person] and he's in The God.

¹⁶ So we've come to know and believe in the love that God has for us, because God is love, and whoever keeps on loving is in God and God is in him. ¹⁷ This love is actually being perfected in us, so we'll be able to speak freely in the Judgment Day. Therefore, we can be just like Him while we're still in this world!

¹⁸ Understand that there isn't any fear in love, because perfect love casts out our fear. But those who are still afraid are being tormented by it, since [such ones] haven't perfected their love. ¹⁹ As for us; We love because He loved us first!

²⁰ Now, if anyone says 'I love God,' and he still dislikes his brother, he's a liar! For if he doesn't love his brother whom he can see, he can't love God whom he can't see. ²¹ Therefore, we have this commandment from Him: 'All who would love God must also love their brothers!'

Chapter 5

¹ Those who believe that Jesus is the Anointed One have been fathered by The God. And those who love the One who fathered [them] must also love those whom He fathered. ² So, this is how we know that we love the children of God: When we love God and we are obeying His commandments. ³ Yes, you show your love for God by obeying His commandments... and His commandments aren't hard to follow. ⁴ For all who have been fathered by God have conquered the world; and the victor that conquers the world is our faith.

⁵ So, who has conquered the world other than those who have faith that Jesus is the Son of The God? ⁶ This is the one who came through water and blood... Jesus the Anointed! No, not just through water, but through water and blood! And the Spirit testifies to this, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ So there are these three witness bearers: ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are one.

⁹ Now, if we can believe the testimony that men provide, the testimony that God provides is even greater. For The God Himself has testified concerning His Son, ¹⁰ and whoever puts faith in the Son of God has this testimony within himself! However, those who don't believe The God are making Him out to be a liar, because they haven't trusted the testimony that God Himself gave concerning His Son. ¹¹ And this is what He testified to: That The God gave us age-long life, and this life is in His Son. ¹² Therefore, those who have the Son also have *the life*, but those who don't have the Son don't have *the life*.

¹³ I'm writing all of this to you, so you'll know that those who have faith in the name of the Son of The God have age-long life. ¹⁴ And we trust that no matter what we may ask for ourselves (as long as it's His Will), He hears us. ¹⁵ So if we know that He hears whatever we ask of Him, then we also know that we'll have the things that we've asked, because we asked Him.

¹⁶ Now, if you should see your brother committing a sin that isn't deadly, you can ask that he might be given life, not death. However, there are sins that do bring death, and when it comes to such sins, I'm telling you not to ask for anything. ¹⁷ Of course, everything that's unrighteous is a sin... but there are sins that aren't deadly.

¹⁸ We know that none of those who have been fathered by The God continue to sin; for having The God as their Father protects them so the Wicked One can't touch them... ¹⁹ and we know that while we come from The God, the whole world is under the influence of the evil one. ²⁰ We also know that the Son of The God has come and he has given us the understanding that we might know the One who is true, and that we are alive in this True One who through His Son, Jesus the Anointed. For He is the God of truth and of age-long life!

²¹ Little children; Guard yourselves from the idols!

2 John

Written for Jesus' Apostle John, possibly in Aramaic, sometime late in the 1st Century CE.

Chapter 1

¹ The older man, to the chosen lady and to her children whom I truly love... and not just me, but all those who've come to know the truth ² through the truth that exists in us and will continue to be with us through the age. ³ For the kindness, mercy, and peace from God (the Father) and Jesus the Anointed One (the Son of the Father) [comes to] us through this truth and through love.

⁴ I'm so very happy now that I've found your children walking in the truth and following the commandments that we received from the Father. ⁵ So now I'm begging this of you lady (I'm not giving you a new commandment, just one that we've had since the beginning): Love each other. ⁶ And this is [how we prove our] love: By following His commandments!

Yes, that's the commandment! It's the same thing that you've heard since the beginning; just keep following it. ⁷ Because, many have strayed [back] into the world and won't admit that Jesus the Anointed One came in the flesh, and these who have strayed are the AntiChrists.

⁸ Watch out for yourselves! Be careful not to destroy the things we've worked [so hard] on, so you can receive the full reward! ⁹ For those who are running ahead and not remaining in the teaching of the Anointed One don't have God. However, those who stick with this teaching have both the Father and the Son.

¹⁰ Now, if someone comes to you and doesn't bring this teaching, don't welcome him into your homes or even greet him, ¹¹ for those who greet him become sharers in his evil deeds.

¹² Although I have many [other] things to write to you, I don't want to do it with paper and ink. Rather, I'm hoping to come and speak to you face to face, so your joy can be realized.

¹³ The children of your chosen sister send you their greetings.

3 John

Written for Jesus' Apostle John, possibly in Aramaic, sometime late in the 1st Century CE.

Chapter 1

¹ The older man, to my beloved GaiUs, whom I truly love.

² My loved one; I pray that you're doing well in everything, and that you continue in good health as the inner man prospers.

³ I was so happy when the brothers came and testified to the fact that you're continuing to walk in the truth. ⁴ For nothing brings me greater joy than hearing that my children keep on walking in the truth!

⁵ Loved one; You're doing a faithful work by helping the brothers... and even those who are strangers, ⁶ for they've testified about your love to the called ones. So it would be a fine thing if you'd send them off in a way that is worthy of The God, ⁷ because they've been going to the gentiles in [His] name and they haven't asked anything from them. ⁸ As the result, we're obliged to welcome such ones hospitably, so we can be fellow workers for the truth.

⁹ I wrote something to the congregation, but DioTrephe (who likes to be the most prominent) refused to welcome us. ¹⁰ That's why if I come there, I won't forget the way he acted and all the wicked rumors that he spread about us. And even that wasn't enough for him, because not only does he fail to welcome the brothers, but he also prevents the rest who wish to do so... even expelling them from the congregation!

¹¹ Loved one; Don't imitate his bad ways, just do what is good, because those who do what's good come from God, but those who do what's bad haven't seen God. ¹² Why, everyone has testified about this matter to DeMetrius, so he knows the truth. And now we're warning you about this... and you know that what we're saying is true.

¹³ I have many other things to write about, but I don't wish to write them with pen and paper. ¹⁴ I hope to see you soon, and then we can talk face to face.

May you have peace.

The friends send you their greetings. Give my greetings to the friends by name.

Jude

*A letter for general circulation by Jude, the brother of James and half-brother of Jesus through Mary.
Likely written in Aramaic around 62-CE.*

Chapter 1

¹ Jude, a slave of Jesus the Anointed One and a brother of James, to those who are in God the Father (and are loved), and in Jesus the Anointed (who have been called and watched over): ² May you grow in mercy, peace, and love.

³ Loved ones; Although I really wanted to write to you about the salvation that we hold in common, I found it necessary to write so as to encourage you to keep on struggling for the faith that the Holy Ones gave to you, ⁴ because some men have slipped in among you whose judgment was written about long ago. They are godless men who are turning the loving care of our God into something immoral, and they're denying our only owner and Lord, Jesus the Anointed One.

⁵ Despite the fact that you already know everything, I want to remind you of this: Although Jehovah delivered our people out of the land of Egypt, He later destroyed those who didn't show enough faith. ⁶ He also locked up those [heavenly] messengers who didn't keep the position they had long ago and left the place where they lived, and He's now keeping them in perpetual darkness where they're awaiting their judgment on the Great Day. ⁷ For as in Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, they've gone after things that are sexually immoral and they're searching for strange flesh. So they've been set before us as examples of those who are undergoing the penalty of age-long fire.

⁸ And that's how you who are day-dreamers are indeed polluting the flesh... by not respecting those who've been put over you and by speaking disrespectfully of the Glorious Ones. ⁹ Indeed, when MichaEl (the Highest Messenger [of God]) had an argument with the Slanderer over the body of Moses, he didn't dare to judge him by speaking disrespectfully. All he said was, 'May Jehovah give you what you deserve!' ¹⁰ However, these men continue to speak disrespectfully of many things that they don't really understand, and like senseless animals (who everyone knows [dirty themselves] naturally), are really messing on themselves [when they do] things like this.

¹¹ So, woe to them, because they're going the way of Cain, they've rushed into the wrongs of BalaAm for a reward, and they're destroying themselves with the rebellious words of KorAh! ¹² And as they feast with you at your loving [congregational] meals, they are like rocks that are hidden [below water]... fearless shepherds over just themselves... dry clouds that are blown in every direction by the wind... fruitless trees in late autumn that have died twice and been uprooted... ¹³ wild waves of the sea that foam shameful things on themselves... wandering stars that have been reserved for the gloom of age-long darkness. ¹⁴ For the seventh man from Adam, Enoch, prophesied this about them when he said, '[Look!] the Lord will arrive with tens of millions of His holy ones ¹⁵ to condemn them all and to give all the godless what they deserve for the godless things they're doing in their worldly ways and for all the shocking things that these godless sinners have said against Him.' ¹⁶ For these men continue to grumble and complain about how things work out as they keep on doing whatever they wish. Yes, their mouths do a lot of bragging, and they feign admiration of people for their own [evil] purposes.

¹⁷ But as for you, loved ones; Remember what you were once told by the Apostles of our Lord Jesus the Anointed... ¹⁸ remember that they used to say to you, 'In the last days there will be those who speak disrespectfully as they go their own way and do godless things. ¹⁹ These are the ones who will create divisions, for they are carnal and they don't have the Breath [of God]!'

²⁰ However, as for you, loved ones; Build the most Holy Faith in yourselves, pray through the Holy Breath, ²¹ and keep yourselves in God's love, as you're awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One and age-long life.

²² Also, be merciful to those who are unsure... ²³ save [them] by snatching [them] from the fire. However, when you're showing them mercy, also be fearful, because you must hate the dirty underwear that has been spotted by the flesh.

²⁴ Now, to the One who is able to protect you against stumbling and who can put you free from defects and joyfully shouting aloud within the sight of His glory... ²⁵ yes, to our only God (our Savior) and to Jesus the Anointed One (our Lord), may there be glory, majesty, might, and authority throughout all time, both now and through the ages... may it be so!

Revelation

*Written for Jesus' Apostle John, possibly in Aramaic, sometime late in the 1st Century CE.
A vision of The Lord's Day.*

Chapter 1

¹ A revelation that The God gave to Jesus the Anointed One to show his slaves the things that must happen very quickly. He sent it by his messenger to his slave John in signs. ² And [John] testifies that everything he saw was the Word of The God and the testimony of Jesus the Anointed. ³ Those who read it aloud, as well as those who listen to the words of this prophecy and obey the things that are written in it are blest, because the appointed time is near.

⁴ From John, to the seven congregations in Asia [Minor]; May you find loving care and peace from The One who is, who was, and who is coming, as well as from the seven spirits that are in front of His throne, ⁵ and from Jesus the Anointed One, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth, who loves us, who freed us from our sins by his own blood, ⁶ and who made us to be a Kingdom of Priests to his God and Father. May he have glory and might through the ages of the ages... may it be so!

⁷ Look! He's coming in the clouds and every eye will see him (including those who pierced him), and all the nations of the earth will wail because of him. Yes, may it be so!

⁸ 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,' said Jehovah, The God; 'the One who is, who was, and who is coming... the Almighty.'

⁹ I (John) am your brother who shares in your difficult times, in the Kingdom, and in your endurance in Jesus, and I am on this island called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

¹⁰ It was through the Breath [of God] that I found myself in the Lord's Day. For from behind me I heard a voice that was as loud as a trumpet, ¹¹ which said: 'Write the things that you're about to see on a scroll and send it to these seven congregations: Ephesus, Smyrna, PergaMōm, ThyaTira, Sardis, PhilaDelphia, and LaoDikia.'

¹² Then I turned around to see who was speaking to me. But when I turned, I saw seven gold lampstands. ¹³ And between the lampstands, [I saw] someone [who looked] like a son of man. He was dressed in a robe that came down to his feet and his chest was wrapped in gold. ¹⁴ His head and hair were as bright as white wool or snow, and his eyes were as flames of fire. ¹⁵ His feet looked like the finest copper as it is being poured from a furnace, and his voice sounded like the noise that's made by large bodies of water. ¹⁶ In his right hand [he held] seven stars, a long, sharp, two-edged sword was sticking out of his mouth, and his face glowed as brightly as the sun.

¹⁷ Well when I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. Then he laid his right hand on me and said, 'Don't be afraid; I'm the first, the last, ¹⁸ and the living one. And though I died, {Look!} I'm alive through the ages of the ages. I also hold the keys to death and the place of the dead. ¹⁹ So now, write about the things that you will see... the things that are and the things that will soon be.

²⁰ 'As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands; The seven stars signify the messengers of the seven congregations, and the seven lampstands signify the seven congregations.'

Chapter 2

¹ Write this to the messenger of the congregation in Ephesus: The one who is holding the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven gold lampstands said, ² *I know what you're doing... that you've worked hard and endured, that you don't tolerate evil men, and that you've put those who say they are Apostles (but who really aren't) to the test, showing them to be liars.* ³ *You've also been patient, because you've been bearing my name and you haven't given up.* ⁴ *However, you've lost the love that you had at first, and I hold this against you.* ⁵ *So you must recognize how far you've fallen and turn around... go back to doing what you did at the first! For if you don't (and unless you repent), I'll be coming to you and I'll remove your lampstand from its place.*

⁶ *However, I can say this on your behalf: You hate what the Nicolaitans are doing, and I also hate what they're doing.*

⁷ Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations: *I'll allow those who conquer to eat from the Tree of Life that is in the Paradise of The God.*

⁸ And write this to the messenger of the congregation in Smyrna: This is what the one who is the first, the last, and who died and came to life, has to say: ⁹ *I know of your problems and your poverty (although you're rich), and about the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews... although they really aren't, they're just a synagogue of the Slanderer.* ¹⁰ *Don't be afraid of the things that you're about to suffer, for {Look!} the Slanderer is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you'll be persecuted for ten days. But be faithful to death and I'll give you the garland of life.*

¹¹ Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations: *Those who conquer won't be harmed by the second death!*

¹² And write this to the messenger of the congregation in PergaMōm: The one who has the long, sharp, two-edged sword says, ¹³ *I know that the place where you're living is the very throne of the Slanderer, and yet you keep hanging onto my name. For you didn't deny your faith in me even in the days of my faithful witness AntiPas, who was killed among you there where the Slanderer lives.* ¹⁴ *However, I still hold a few things against you, for there are some among you who are following the teachings of BalaAm – the one who taught Balak how to set a trap before the Sons of IsraEl [by getting them] to eat sacrifices to idols and to be sexually immoral.* ¹⁵ *You also have those who are following the teachings of the Nicolaitans.* ¹⁶ *So turn around; for if you don't, I'll be there soon and fight a war against you with the long sword from my mouth!*

¹⁷ Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations: *To those who conquer, I will give some of the hidden manna and a white [voting] pebble. This pebble has a new name written on it that no one will know other than those who receive it.*

¹⁸ And write this to the messenger of the congregation in ThyaTira: The Son of The God (the one who has eyes like flames of fire and whose feet are like fine copper) says, ¹⁹ *I know what you're doing, and I know of your love, your faith, your service, and your endurance. [I also know that] what you've been doing recently is even more than what you've done in the past!* ²⁰ *However, I do hold this one thing against you: You're still putting up with that woman JezeBel... the one who calls herself a prophet but who teaches and misleads my slaves into immoral sexual acts and into eating things that are sacrificed to idols.* ²¹ *And although I have given her enough time to turn around, she doesn't wish to repent her immorality,* ²² *so {Look!} I will be throwing her into a bed and I will bring a time of great difficulty upon those who are enjoying sex with her, unless they repent over what they're doing*

with her. ²³ *I'm also going to put her children to death, so that all the congregations will know I'm the one who searches their kidneys and hearts, and who repays each one according to his deeds.*

²⁴ *However, to the rest of you in ThyaTira (those of you who are unaware of such teachings and who haven't come to know about what they call the deep things of the Slanderer), I say this: I won't lay any more loads on you. ²⁵ Just hang on until I get there, ²⁶ and then I'll give those who conquer and who obey whatever I've told them to do down to the end authority over the nations... ²⁷ they will shepherd them with an iron rod with the same [authority] that I received from my Father, and they'll shatter them like clay pots. ²⁸ I'll also give them the morning star.'*

²⁹ *'Let those who have ears listen to what [God's] Breath says to the congregations!*

Chapter 3

¹ *'And write this to the messenger of the congregation in Sardis: The one who has the seven Breaths of God and the seven stars says, I know what you're doing, and although you have the reputation of being alive, you're really dead! ² So wake up and revive the things that haven't died yet, because I don't see where you've accomplished any of the tasks [you've been assigned] in the sight of my God! ³ Start remembering [all the things] that you've received and heard, then hang onto them and repent! For if you don't stay awake, I will come like a thief... and you won't be aware of it until I'm right there on you!*

⁴ *'However, there are a few names in Sardis that haven't dirtied their robes. These will walk with me and they'll wear white [robes], because that's what they truly deserve. ⁵ Yes, all those who conquer will be dressed like that... in white robes. I'll never erase their names from the Scroll of Life, and then I'll admit to knowing their names before my Father and His messengers.*

⁶ *'Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations!*

⁷ *'And write this to the messenger of the congregation in PhilaDelphia: The one who is holy and true, and who has the key of David that opens what no one can close and closes what no one can open says, ⁸ I know what you're doing, and Look; I've put an open door before you that no one can close! I also know that although you don't have much strength, you've kept my word and you haven't denied knowing my name. ⁹ So, look at what I'm going to do to those from the synagogue of the Opposer who say they are Jews (but who aren't and are just lying)... {Look!} I'm going to make them come and bow at your feet, and I'll make sure that they know how much I love you. ¹⁰ Also, since you've obeyed my instructions to be patient, I'm going to protect you from the hour of trial that's coming upon the whole habitation of mankind to try everyone who lives on the face of the earth.*

¹¹ *'I'm coming soon, so hang on and don't let anyone steal your garland, ¹² for I will make those who conquer pillars in the Most Holy Place of my God, and they'll never leave it. I'll also write the Name of my God upon them, as well as the name of the city of my God, New JeruSalem, which will come down out of the sky from my God, along with my new name.*

¹³ *'Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations!*

¹⁴ *'And write this to the messenger of the congregation in LaoDikia: The Amen (the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation by The God) says, ¹⁵ I know what you're doing, and that you're neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other, ¹⁶ but since you're neither hot nor cold (but lukewarm), I'm going to vomit you out of my mouth! ¹⁷ For you're saying, I am rich, and because I'm rich, I don't need anything! However, what you don't realize is that you're really miserable, pitiable,*

poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸ *My advice to you is to buy gold that has been refined by fire from me, so that you can become rich and wear white robes... then nobody will see the shame of your nakedness. Also, buy salve to rub in your eyes so you can see,* ¹⁹ *for I correct and discipline all those for whom I care... so [you should] repent and become zealous!*

²⁰ *'Look, I'm standing at the door and knocking! And if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I'll come in and we'll have supper together.* ²¹ *Then I'll allow those who conquer to sit down with me on my throne, just as my Father has allowed me to sit on His throne because I have conquered.*

²² *'Let those who have ears hear what [God's] Breath says to the congregations!*

Chapter 4

¹ Well, after I saw those things, I saw a door opening up in the sky. And the first voice that I heard speaking to me (which sounded like a trumpet) said, 'Now, come on up here, and I'll show you what must happen next.'

² Then I immediately [became like] the wind. And look... there was a throne in the sky, and someone was sitting upon the throne. ³ The One who was sitting on it looked like jasper and sardius gems; and all around this throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald. ⁴ Then surrounding the throne there were twenty-four more thrones upon which twenty-four elders were sitting, who were each dressed in white robes and had gold garlands on their heads... ⁵ also, lightning, thunder, and voices were coming from the throne. Then in front of the throne there were seven flaming lamps, which are the seven Spirits of The God.

⁶ Also in front of the throne was a transparent sea that looked like crystal, and on each of the four sides of the throne there was an animal that had many eyes on its front and back sides. ⁷ The first animal looked like a lion, the second looked like a young bull, the third had the face of a man, and the fourth looked like a flying eagle. ⁸ Also, each of the four animals had six wings that were wrapped around them, and the inner parts of their wings were full of eyes. These don't rest during the night or during the day, and they were saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah God the Almighty... the One who was, who is, and who is coming.'

⁹ Then, as the animals were giving glory, honor, and thanks to the One who was sitting on the throne (the One who lives through the ages of ages), ¹⁰ the twenty-four older ones fell down before Him and bowed to their faces, then they threw their garlands in front of His throne, saying, ¹¹ 'O Jehovah our God; You deserve all the glory, honor, and power, because You created everything... yes, everything was created and exists because You willed it to be!'

Chapter 5

¹ Then I saw a scroll with writing on both sides that was sealed tightly with seven seals in the right hand of the One who was sitting on the throne. ² And I saw a mighty messenger who called out in a loud voice: 'Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?' ³ However, there wasn't anyone in the heavens or on the earth that was able to open the scroll or to examine it. ⁴ So I started crying, because nobody could be found that was worthy to open and examine the scroll.

⁵ But then one of the elders said to me: 'Stop crying. Look! The Lion who is of the tribe of Judah and from the root of David has conquered, so he can open the scroll and its seven seals!'

⁶ Well, that's when I saw a lamb that looked like it had been slaughtered standing between the throne

and before the four animals and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which symbolize the seven Spirits of The God that have been sent throughout the entire earth. ⁷ Then [the lamb] went right up and took [the scroll] from the right hand of the One who was sitting on the throne. ⁸ And when he took the scroll, the four animals and the twenty-four elders (each of whom held harps and gold bowls that were filled with the incense that symbolizes the prayers of the Holy Ones) fell down in front of him, ⁹ and they sang a new song, which went:

'You're the only one who is worthy
To receive the scroll and open it's seals.
For, you're the one who was slaughtered,
And who bought a people for God with his blood,
From every tribe, language, country, and race,
¹⁰ To serve as Kings and Priests of our God,
And to rule as kings on (gr. *epi*) the earth.'

¹¹ Then I looked around, because I heard the voices of many messengers who were all around the throne and who (along with the animals and the elders) numbered into the millions and tens of millions. ¹² They were all shouting in a loud voice: 'This Lamb who was slaughtered deserves to receive the power, the wealth, the wisdom, the strength, the honor, the glory, and the blessings!'

¹³ Well after that, I heard all the creatures that were in the skies, on the ground, under the ground, in the seas, and everything else in those places say, 'May the One who is sitting on the throne and His Lamb be praised, honored, glorified, and allowed to retain the power through the ages of the ages.' ¹⁴ All the while, the four animals kept saying, 'May it be so!,' as the elders fell down and bowed to their faces.

Chapter 6

¹ Thereafter, I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four animals say in a thundering voice, 'Come on out!' ² And at that {Look!} I saw a white horse, and the one who was sitting on it had a bow. Then he was given a garland, and he went out to conquer and complete his victory.

³ After that, he opened the second seal, and I heard the second animal say, 'Come on out!' ⁴ So another horse came out, which was fiery red; and the one who was sitting on it was authorized to remove peace from the earth, so that [people] would slaughter each other... and a large sword was given to him.

⁵ Then he opened the third seal, and I heard the third animal say, 'Come on out!' So I saw {Look!} a black horse; and the one who was sitting on it had a balance scale in his hand. ⁶ And I also I heard a voice that sounded like it came from the midst of the four animals, which said: 'A quart of wheat for a silver coin and three quarts of barley for a silver coin... but you may not damage the olive oil or the wine.'

⁷ Then he opened the fourth seal, and I heard the voice of the fourth animal say, 'Come on out!' ⁸ And I saw {Look!} a greenish-yellow horse; and the one who was sitting on it was named Death... and The Place of the Dead followed closely behind him. These were given authority over a quarter of the earth to kill with the sword, famines, plagues, and the wild animals of the earth.

⁹ Next he opened the fifth seal, and underneath the Altar I saw the lives of those who had been slaughtered because of the Word of God and because of the things to which they had testified. ¹⁰ They

were calling out in a loud voice and asking, 'Until when, O Sovereign Lord who is holy and true, will You continue to hold back Your judgment and the avenging of our blood upon those who live on the earth?' ¹¹ Then they were each given white robes and they were told to rest just a little while longer, until the full number of their fellow slaves and brothers was to be filled (who were going to be killed as they were).

¹² Then I saw him open the sixth seal, and there was a great shaking that caused the sun to become as black as haircloth and the entire moon to become like blood. ¹³ And at that, the stars in the skies fell to the earth like a fig tree drops its figs when it's shaken by a strong wind. ¹⁴ The sky also disappeared as though it was being rolled up in a scroll, and all the mountains and islands were removed from their places.

¹⁵ Well at that, all the kings of the earth, all the important people, all the military commanders, all the rich and powerful, as well as all the slaves and free people hid themselves in caves and under rocks on the mountains. ¹⁶ They kept saying to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall over us and hide us from the face of the One who is sitting on the throne and from the rage of the Lamb... ¹⁷ for the Great Day of their rage has arrived and who can oppose them!'

Chapter 7

¹ After that, I saw four messengers standing at the four corners of the earth who were hanging onto the four winds of the earth so they couldn't blow on the lands, the seas, or the trees. ² Then I saw another messenger ascending from the sunrise who was carrying the seal of the living God; and he shouted loudly to the four messengers who were allowed to harm the lands and seas: ³ 'Don't harm the lands, the seas, or the trees until after we have sealed the slaves of our God in their foreheads.'

⁴ And after that I heard the number of those who were to be sealed... a hundred and forty-four thousand out of every tribe of the sons of IsraEl. ⁵ Twelve thousand were to be sealed out of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand out of the tribe of ReuBen, twelve thousand out of the tribe of Gad, ⁶ twelve thousand out of the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand out of the tribe of NaphTali, twelve thousand out of the tribe of ManasSeh, ⁷ twelve thousand out of the tribe of SimeOn, twelve thousand out of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand out of the tribe of IsSachar, ⁸ twelve thousand out of the tribe of ZebuLun, twelve thousand out of the tribe of JoSeph, and twelve thousand were to be sealed out of the tribe of BenJamin.

⁹ And after all that, I saw {Look!} a crowd so large that no one could count them. They came from all countries, nationalities, ethnic groups, and languages, and they were standing within view (gr. *enopion*) of the Lamb and the throne. They were all wearing white robes and carrying palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and they were shouting: 'We owe our salvation to our God who is sitting on the throne and to the Lamb!'

¹¹ Then the messengers who were standing in a circle around the throne, as well as the elders and the four animals, fell to their faces in front of the throne, bowing low before God ¹² and saying: 'May it be so! May our God have all praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength through the ages of the ages... may it be so!'

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me: 'Just who are these that are dressed in the white robes and where did they come from?'

¹⁴ And I replied: 'My lord; You're the one who knows!'

Then he told me: 'They're the ones who have come out of the great time of difficulty and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ This is why they're under the gaze of the throne of The God, serving Him day and night in His Most Holy Place. And the One who is sitting on the throne will spread His tent over them ¹⁶ so they won't be hungry or thirsty anymore, nor will the sun beat down on them with blistering heat; ¹⁷ for the Lamb who is in the middle of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to the springs of the waters of life, and The God will wipe all the tears from their eyes.'

Chapter 8

¹ Well, when he opened the seventh seal, the skies were silent for about a half hour. ² Then I saw that the seven messengers who stand before The God were given seven trumpets. ³ And at that, another messenger arrived carrying a gold incense bowl. He then stood in front of the Altar and he was given a lot of incense to offer along with the prayers of all the Holy Ones, there on the gold Altar in front of the throne. ⁴ So the smoke from the incense that was being offered by the messenger kept arising before The God, along with the prayers of the Holy Ones.

⁵ Then the messenger took the incense bowl and filled it with some of the fire from the Altar and threw it on the ground, which caused thunder, voices, lightning, and a great shaking. ⁶ And that's when the seven messengers prepared to blow the seven trumpets.

⁷ Well, when the first one blew his trumpet, hail and fire that was mixed with blood was thrown to the earth so that a third of the lands, a third of the trees, and all of the green plants were burned.

⁸ Then the second messenger blew his trumpet, and something that looked like a huge burning mountain was thrown into the sea, which caused a third of the sea to turn into blood, ⁹ killing a third of the creatures that live in the seas and destroying a third of the ships.

¹⁰ And when the third messenger blew his trumpet, a huge star that burned like a lamp fell out of the sky onto a third of the rivers and the springs of water ¹¹ (I was told that the name of this star was wormwood). So a third of the water turned into wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it had become so bitter.

¹² Well, when the fourth messenger blew his trumpet, a third of the sun was struck, as was a third of the moon and a third of the stars, which brought darkness upon a third [of the earth], so that the day didn't appear over a third of it, nor did the night.

¹³ It was then that I saw an eagle flying high in the sky, and I heard it shout, 'Woe, woe, woe, to those who are living on the earth, because of the remaining trumpet blasts that the three messengers are ready to blow!'

Chapter 9

¹ And when the fifth messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that fell to the earth from the sky that was given the key to the abyss. ² So this one opened the abyss and smoke poured out of it as though it was coming from a huge furnace. And the smoke from the abyss thereafter darkened the sun and the air.

³ Then locusts came to the earth out of the smoke, and they were given the same power as earthly scorpions. ⁴ However, they were told not to damage any of the earth's vegetation or trees, just those men who don't have God's seal on their foreheads. ⁵ Yet they weren't allowed to kill them, just to sting

them for five months... but the pain that they would bring was like the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶ And during that period, men will look for ways to die, but they won't find any... though they will wish to die, death will escape them.

⁷ These locusts looked like horses that are prepared for battle. On their heads were what appeared to be gold garlands, and their faces looked like the faces of mankind. ⁸ They had women's hair, they had teeth like lions, ⁹ and they wore breastplates that looked like they were made of iron.

[The flapping] of the wings [of these locusts] sounded like the attack of many chariots in a war, ¹⁰ and they had tails with stingers like scorpions. These tails were allowed to sting people for five months. ¹¹ They also had a king who led them... the messenger of the abyss. In Hebrew, his name is AbadDon, but he's called ApolLyon (the Destroyer) in Greek.

¹² Well, after this first woe passed away, {Look!} two more woes were yet to follow!

¹³ Then when the sixth messenger blew his trumpet, I heard a voice that came from the gold horns on the Altar that's in front of The God, ¹⁴ which said to the sixth messenger with the trumpet: 'Release the four messengers that have been tied down at the great EuPhrates River!' ¹⁵ So these four messengers (who were prepared to kill a third of all mankind on [a specific] hour, day, month, and year) were untied, ¹⁶ and they led an army that I was told had two-hundred million horsemen.

¹⁷ This is what the horses and their riders looked like in the vision: They wore fire-red, hyacinth-blue, and sulfur-yellow breastplates. Their horses had heads like lions, and fire, smoke, and sulfur came out of their mouths. ¹⁸ It was these three plagues (the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur that came out of their mouths) that killed a third of all mankind. ¹⁹ The power of their horses was all in their mouths and tails, and their tails were like snakes with heads... and these are what they used to do all the damage.

²⁰ However, the rest of the people who weren't killed by these plagues still refused to repent over the things that they were doing and stop bowing low before the demons, or before their idols of gold, silver, copper, stone, and wood (things that can't see, hear, or walk); ²¹ nor did they repent for their murders, their occult practices, their sexual immorality, or their thievery.

Chapter 10

¹ Then I saw another very powerful messenger coming down out of the sky wrapped in a cloud and wearing a rainbow on his head. His face was [as bright] as the sun, his feet were like columns of fire, ² and he held a small opened scroll in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the ground, ³ and he shouted in a loud voice that sounded like the roar of a lion. Then as he shouted, the seven thunders each spoke in its own voice.

⁴ Now, I was getting ready to write down the things that the seven thunders said, but then I heard a voice from the sky say, 'Don't write what the seven thunders said... seal [these words] up!'

⁵ Then the messenger that I saw standing on the sea and on the ground raised his right hand toward heaven, ⁶ and he swore this by the One who lives for ages of ages, who created the heavens and everything in them and the lands and everything in them ---: 'The time has arrived! ⁷ For when the seventh messenger blows his trumpet (which is about to happen), God's mystery that was revealed through the good news that He sent through His slaves the Prophets will then be fulfilled.'

⁸ And after that, I heard the voice from the sky speak to me again. It said, 'Go and take the little open scroll out of the hand of the messenger who is standing on the sea and on the ground!' ⁹ So I went over

to the messenger and told him to give me the little scroll. And he told me: 'Now, take it and eat it! It will be as sweet as honey in your mouth, but it will be very bitter in your stomach.'

¹⁰ So I took the little scroll out of the hand of the messenger and I ate it... and it was in fact as sweet as honey. But after I ate it, my stomach became bitter. ¹¹ Then I was told: 'Now you must go on to prophesy to peoples, nations, languages, and many kings!'

Chapter 11

¹ Next, [he] handed [me] a reed that was like a walking stick. And he said: 'Now, go measure God's Most Holy, the Altar, and those who are bowing low there. ² Pay no attention to the courtyard outside of the Most Holy... don't measure it, because it has been given to the nations and they're going to trample the Holy City under their feet for forty-two months. ³ Then I'm going to have my two witnesses prophesy for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days wearing sackcloth. ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have been standing on the earth before the Lord. ⁵ And if any of their enemies should wish to harm them, fire will come out of their mouths and consume them. So if anyone wants to persecute them, that's how they're going to die! ⁶ Because, these have been authorized to close up the skies so no rain will fall during the period of their prophesying. They're also authorized to turn water into blood and to bring every sort of plague to the earth whenever they wish.

⁷ 'Then, after they've finished their testimony, the wild animal will come out of the abyss to fight them, conquer them, and kill them, ⁸ and their corpses will lie in the main street of the great city, which [God's] Breath refers to as Sodom and Egypt, because it's where their Lord was hung on a pole. ⁹ And there the peoples, nationalities, tongues, and ethnic groups will look at their corpses for three and a half days, during which time they won't allow them to be buried. ¹⁰ All the while, those who live on the earth will be happy and approve of what happened to them, even sending gifts to each other, because these two prophets will have brought so much pain to those who live on the earth.'

¹¹ However, after the three and a half days, The God sent His breath of life into them and they stood up on their feet, which frightened those who saw them. ¹² Then [the two witnesses] heard a loud voice from heaven say to them, 'Come on up here.' And their enemies saw them ascend into the sky in a cloud. ¹³ This was followed by a tremendous shaking, and a tenth of the city ([Sodom and Egypt]) toppled, destroying the names of seven thousand people. This frightened all those who remained, and they gave glory to The God of heaven.

¹⁴ Well, this ended the second woe. But look; a third woe was on its way!

¹⁵ Then when the seventh messenger blew his trumpet, there were loud voices in heaven shouting, 'The kingdom of this world now belongs to our Lord and to His Anointed One, and He will rule it through ages of the ages!'

¹⁶ And at that, the twenty-four elders who were sitting on their thrones before God fell to their faces and bowed low to Him, ¹⁷ saying: 'We thank You, Jehovah God the Almighty (the One who is and who was), because You've assumed Your great power and started ruling as King. ¹⁸ Yes, this made the nations angry, but [the time for] Your rage has arrived when the dead will be judged, when Your slaves (the Prophets, the Holy Ones, and those who fear Your Name – the small and the great) will be rewarded, and when those who are corrupting the earth will be thoroughly corrupted.' ¹⁹ And then the heavenly Most Holy of God became visible and I could see the Chest of His Sacred Agreement inside His Most Holy Place. This was all followed by lightning, voices, thundering, shaking, and a great hailstorm.

Chapter 12

¹ And thereafter, a great sign appeared in the sky... there was a woman who had the sun wrapped around her, the moon was under her feet, and there was a garland of twelve stars on her head. ² She was also pregnant and screaming to give birth in labor and agony.

³ Then another sign appeared in the sky. {Look!} There was a huge fire-red Dragon with seven heads and ten horns. On its heads there were seven royal turbans, ⁴ and it was dragging a third of the stars of the sky with its tail, which it then threw down on the earth! This Dragon was standing in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she did give birth he could swallow [the child] down!

⁵ Well, she then gave birth to a son... a male, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod. And thereafter her child was snatched away to God and to His throne, ⁶ as the woman escaped into the desert to a place that God had prepared for her, where she was to be fed for a thousand, two hundred and sixty days.

⁷ Next, a war broke out in heaven. MichaEl and his messengers battled with the Dragon, and the Dragon and his messengers fought back. ⁸ However, [the Dragon] lost and he could no longer stay in heaven. ⁹ So the huge Dragon (the original snake who is called the Slanderer and Opposer) that is misleading the whole habitation [of mankind], was thrown down... he was thrown down to the earth along with his messengers.

¹⁰ Well at that, I heard a loud voice in heaven say:
'Now has arrived the salvation and power,
As well as the Kingdom of our God;
For His Anointed has now been empowered,
And the accuser of our brothers has been cast down,
Who blames them before God day and night!

¹¹ 'By the blood of the Lamb, he was conquered,
And by the things that they testified.
For they didn't value their lives,
When staring death in the face!

¹² 'So rejoice you heavens and all those who live there,
But, woe to the earth and the sea;
For the Slanderer has come down to you in great rage,
Knowing that he has little time.'

¹³ Then when the Dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he started persecuting the woman who gave birth to the male (child). ¹⁴ However, the woman was given the two wings of a huge eagle so she could fly to her place in the desert where she'll be fed for a time, times, and half a time, and where the snake can't reach her.

¹⁵ Then this snake shot a river of water out of its mouth after the woman in an attempt to drown her. ¹⁶ But the earth came to the woman's aid... it opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the Dragon shot out of its mouth. ¹⁷ This made the Dragon so angry with the woman that he went off to wage war with the rest of her seed... those who obey God's instructions and carry the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁸ And thereafter, [the Dragon] stood still on the sands of the sea.

Chapter 13

¹ Next I saw a wild animal coming up out of the sea that had seven heads and ten horns. On its horns there were ten royal turbans, and on its heads were blasphemous names. ² This wild animal that I saw looked like a leopard, but it had feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. Then the Dragon gave [this beast] power, a throne, and great authority.

³ One of [the animal's] heads looked like it had been mortally wounded, but this deathblow had been healed and the whole earth started following it admiringly. ⁴ They also bowed to the ground before the Dragon, because it is what gave the wild animal its authority. And they also bowed before the wild animal, saying, 'Who else is like this wild animal and who can stand against it?'

⁵ Then [the animal] was given a mouth to speak great things and blasphemies, and it was given the authority to act for forty-two months. ⁶ So it opened its mouth and spoke blasphemous things against The God... it blasphemed His Name, His Tent, and all those who are tenting in the heavens.

⁷ Thereafter, he was allowed to go to war with the Holy Ones and conquer them, and he was given power over every nation, people, language, and ethnic group, ⁸ so that all those on the earth whose names aren't written in the Lamb's Scroll of Life would have to bow low before him... this one who had been slaughtered from the founding of the world.

⁹ Now, all who have ears should listen to this: ¹⁰ If anyone is a jailer, he'll be thrown in jail, and if anyone kills with the sword, he'll be killed with a sword! For this is where the Holy Ones will need faith and endurance.

¹¹ Then I saw another wild animal coming up out of the ground. It had two horns like a lamb, but it started speaking like the Dragon. ¹² It had all the authority of the first wild animal, which it used in its presence to force all the lands and all those who dwell in them to bow low before the first wild animal whose deathblow had been healed. ¹³ It performed great signs, even making fire come down from the skies onto the earth before everyone, ¹⁴ so as to mislead those who live on the earth with the signs that it is allowed to perform in front of the wild animal. It also told those who live on the earth to make an image to the wild animal that had survived the sword stroke. ¹⁵ Then it was allowed to give breath to the image of the wild animal so that the image could speak and cause everyone that doesn't bow low before the image of the wild animal to be killed.

¹⁶ Then it forced everyone – the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the slaves – to receive a branding on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ so that no one would be able to buy or sell other than those who have the brand... which is the name of the wild animal or the number of its name. ¹⁸ This is where wisdom is required: Let those who can reason calculate the number of the wild animal... it's a man's number, six hundred and sixty-six.

Chapter 14

¹ Then {Look!} I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion; and with him there were a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's Name written on their foreheads. ² I also heard a noise coming from the sky that sounded like a lot of water and loud thunder.

Well, the sound that I heard was of people who were all playing harps and singing. ³ They were singing a new song before the throne and before the four animals and the elders, and no one was able to master that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. ⁴

These hadn't polluted themselves with women. In fact, they are virgins who kept following the Lamb no matter where he went. They were bought from among mankind as first fruitage to God and to the Lamb, ⁵ for no lies were found in their mouths and they didn't have any defects.

⁶ Then I saw another messenger flying high in mid-sky, and he had age-long good news to proclaim to those who live on the earth... to every ethnic group, nation, language, and people. ⁷ He was shouting aloud, 'Fear God and glorify Him, because His hour of judgment has arrived. So, bow low before this One who made the skies, the lands, the seas, and the springs of water!'

⁸ Then another (a second) messenger followed him, saying: 'She has fallen... the Great Babylon has fallen! She's the one who made all the nations drink the wine of her sexually-immoral rampage!'

⁹ And thereafter, another messenger (a third one) followed him, shouting aloud: 'If anyone bows low before the wild animal and its image and receives its brand on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he will also have to drink the wine of the pure wrath of The God that is being mixed in the cup of His rage... and he will be examined by being tortured with fire and burning rocks in front of the holy messengers and in front of the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke from the examination by torture of those who bow low before the wild animal and its image and all those who receive the branding of its name will ascend through ages of the ages, and they won't have any rest day or night. ¹² This is where the Holy Ones (those who keep the commandments of The God and have faith in Jesus) must hang on!'

¹³ Then I heard a voice from the sky that said, 'Write this: *From now on, the dead who die in the Lord are blest! Yes, [God's] Breath said, Let them rest from their hard labor... and may their [good] deeds follow them!*'

¹⁴ Well after that I saw {Look!} a white cloud, and someone was sitting on the cloud that looked like a son of man. He had a gold garland on his head and he held a sharp sickle in his hand.

¹⁵ Then another messenger came out of the Most Holy and he shouted this at the one who was sitting on the cloud: 'Take that sickle and start harvesting, because it's time for the harvest and the harvest is absolutely ripe!' ¹⁶ So the one who was sitting on the cloud lowered his sickle to the ground and started harvesting.

¹⁷ Well at that, another messenger came out of the Most Holy in the heavens, who also carried a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ [He was followed by] a messenger that came out of the Altar, whose responsibility was burning. And this one shouted to the messenger who held the sharp sickle: 'Take that sharp sickle and harvest the clumps of grapes from the vine of the earth; for its grapes are now ripe!'

¹⁹ So the messenger lowered his sickle to the ground and harvested the grapes of the earth. Then he threw them into the great winepress of God's rage, ²⁰ where they were trampled by foot outside of the city. And what came out of this winepress was blood, which flowed in a stream that was as deep as a horse's bridle for two hundred miles.

Chapter 15

¹ Well after that, I saw another great and wonderful sign in the sky... there were seven messengers [who were bringing] seven plagues. These were the last ones, because they would bring an end to the rage of God.

² Then I saw what looked like a sea of crystal and fire. And standing beside the crystal sea were those who had conquered the wild animal, its image, and the number of its name. They each had harps of

God ³ and they were singing the song of God's slave Moses and the song of the Lamb. It went:
'Everything that You may do,
O Jehovah, the Almighty God,
Is wonderful and great, King of ages;
For Your ways are all righteous and true,
⁴ And who doesn't fear You, Jehovah?
[Yes, who won't] honor Your Name?
Because You're the One we can trust,
All nations will come and bow before You;
For Your righteous deeds have now been revealed.'

⁵ And after that, I looked and saw that the heavenly Most Holy (which is [inside] the Tent of Proofs) had been opened up, ⁶ and seven messengers who had the seven plagues came out of the Most Holy wearing clean, bright linen, and they had gold braids around their chests.

⁷ Then one of the four animals gave [each of] the seven messengers one of the seven golden bowls that were full of the wrath of The God who lives through ages of ages, ⁸ and then the Most Holy became filled with smoke because of the glory of The God and His power, so that no one could enter it until after the seven plagues that were being brought by the seven messengers had been delivered.

Chapter 16

¹ Well after that, I heard a loud voice from the Most Holy tell the seven messengers to go and pour the seven bowls of the wrath of God onto the earth.

² So the first one went and poured his bowl out on the ground. And with that, the men who had the brand of the wild animal and who were bowing low before its image broke out in very bad malignant sores. ³ Then the second one poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of dead men. So everything in the sea – every living creature – died. ⁴ And after that, the third one poured his bowl into the rivers and springs, and they turned into blood.

⁵ Then I heard the messenger who was over the waters say, 'You (the Holy One who is and who was) are righteous, because You've passed judgment on these things. ⁶ Since they've shed the blood of Your Holy Ones and Prophets, You've given them blood to drink... and that's what they deserve!'

⁷ And after that I heard the Altar speak. It said: 'Yes, Jehovah God the Almighty; Your judgments are righteous and true.'

⁸ Then the fourth [messenger] poured his bowl out on the sun, which caused it to sear men with fire. ⁹ And though the tremendous heat seared the men, they just blasphemed the Name of The God who has the power over these plagues, and they didn't turn back and glorify Him.

¹⁰ Thereafter, the fifth one poured his bowl out on the throne of the wild animal, which made its whole kingdom become dark and its [people] were biting their tongues in pain. ¹¹ However, they just blasphemed the God of heaven for all their pain, and they didn't repent ---.

¹² So then the sixth one poured out his bowl into the great EuPhrates River, and this dried up its water. [He did this] to prepare the way for the kings from the sunrise.

¹³ And then I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs come out of the mouths of the Dragon, the wild animal, and the false prophet. ¹⁴ These were the unseen powers of demons, and they were to

serve as signs. These were sent to all the kings of the habitation of mankind so as to assemble them for the battle of the Great Day of the Almighty God.

¹⁵ 'Look, I'm coming as a thief! So whoever stays awake and keeps his clothes on will be blest... he won't have to walk around naked and have people see his shame.'

¹⁶ They then assembled [all the earth's kings] at the place that is called in Hebrew, Har-Mageddon.

¹⁷ Thereafter, the seventh [messenger] poured his bowl out into the air. And a loud voice from --- the throne inside the Most Holy proclaimed: 'Now it's finished!' ¹⁸ This was followed by thunder, lightning, voices, and a shaking that was so great and covered so large an area that nothing has been seen like it since men have been on the earth. ¹⁹ For it split the great city into three parts, and all the cities of the nations fell in ruin!

Then God looked at The Great Babylon and remembered to also give her the cup of wine of His anger and rage. ²⁰ But by then, all the islands were gone and there weren't any mountains. ²¹ For a great hailstorm had come out of the sky on the people (each of its stones weighed about a hundred pounds). However, the people just blasphemed God over the plague of hail, though it was an unusually bad plague.

Chapter 17

¹ Then one of the seven messengers who had the seven bowls came over and spoke to me, saying: 'Come here! I'm going to show you the judgment on the great whore who sits over many waters. ² [She's the one] with whom the earth's kings have had sex and who made the people of the earth drunk from the wine of her sexual immorality.'

³ So he carried me into the desert on the wind, and there I saw a woman who was sitting on a scarlet-colored wild animal that was covered with blasphemous names and which had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ This woman was wearing purple and scarlet clothes that were covered with gold, precious gems, and pearls. And in her hand [she held] a gold cup that was full of disgusting things and the filth of her immoral sexual acts. ⁵ She had a mysterious name written on her forehead, 'The Great Babylon, the Mother of Whores and of [all] the Disgusting Things of the Earth.' ⁶ Then I realized that the woman had gotten drunk on the blood of the Holy Ones, as well as on the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.

Well, when I saw her, I was confused and amazed. ⁷ So the messenger asked me: 'Why are you so confused? I'll tell you the mystery of the woman and of the wild animal with the seven heads and ten horns that she's riding. ⁸ The wild animal that you saw was, then it was not, but it's about to come out of the abyss and go off into destruction. And when they see the return of the wild animal that was but is no longer, those who live on the earth will marvel at it. However, their names haven't been written in the Scroll of Life since the founding of the world.

⁹ 'Here's where intelligence and wisdom are required: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is sitting. ¹⁰ And there are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, and the other hasn't arrived yet. But when he gets here, he will only be allowed to stay for a little while. ¹¹ However, the wild animal that was but isn't is an eighth king that comes from the seven, and it goes off into destruction.

¹² 'Now, the ten horns that you saw represent ten kings that haven't received a kingdom yet; however, they will be authorized to be kings for one hour with the wild animal. ¹³ And they'll all just have one idea in mind... to give their power and authority to the wild animal. ¹⁴ Then they will go and fight

against the Lamb; but because he's the Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb and those who are with him (the called, elected, and faithful) will conquer them.'

¹⁵ Then he told me this: 'The waters over which you saw the whore sitting mean peoples, crowds, ethnic groups, and languages. ¹⁶ And because the ten horns and the wild animal that you saw will hate the whore, they're going to take away everything that she has and leave her naked, then they'll eat her flesh and burn [what's left] in a fire. ¹⁷ For God will put [the thought] into their hearts to do what He thinks she deserves, and He's also the One who will give them the idea to hand their kingdoms over to the wild animal, so that whatever God says will be fulfilled. ¹⁸ Now, the woman that you saw means the great city that dominates the kings of the earth.'

Chapter 18

¹ Well after all that, I saw another messenger coming down out of the sky who was very powerful, and the earth lit up with his glory. ² Then he shouted in a mighty voice, saying, 'She has fallen... the Great Babylon has fallen and she has become a home for demons, a prison for unclean spirits, and a cage for scavenger birds! ³ For all the nations have fallen [victim] to the wine of the rage of her sexual immorality, all the kings of the earth have had immoral sex with her, and the earth's businessmen have become rich through the power of her shameless luxury.'

⁴ Then I heard another voice in the sky say: 'Come out of her my people! Come on out, so you don't share in her sins and receive part of her plagues! ⁵ For her sins have piled all the way to heaven, and God has remembered all the unjust things that she has done. ⁶ So, pay her back for all the [bad] things that she's done! In fact, pay her back with twice as much... double the payback for the things she did! If she poured [poison] in a cup, then pour in twice as much for her! ⁷ And as she glorified herself and lived in shameless luxury, pay her back that much more in pain and sorrow! Because she keeps saying in her heart, *I'm sitting as a queen. I'm nobody's widow and I'll never have to mourn!* ⁸ That's why her plagues will come upon her in a single day – death, mourning, and famine – and she'll be burned up with fire, because the Almighty God Jehovah is passing judgment on her!

⁹ 'Then those kings of the earth who had sex and lived in shameless luxury with her will bawl and beat themselves in grief over her, as they stand and watch the smoke from her fire. ¹⁰ But they'll stand at a distance, because they'll be afraid of her torture. And they'll say, *O woe, woe, you great city... O Babylon you mighty city; for your judgment has arrived in a single hour!*'

¹¹ 'The earth's businessmen will also bawl and mourn over her, because there won't be anyone to buy their complete stock of goods anymore... ¹² any of the gold and silver, the precious stones and pearls, the fine linen, the purple, the silk, the scarlet, any of the scented wood, or any of the things made of ivory, precious wood, copper, or iron... or the marble, ¹³ the cinnamon, the Indian spice, the incense, the perfumed oil, the frankincense, the wine, the olive oil, the fine flour and wheat... or the cattle, sheep, horses, coaches, slaves, or the lives of humans. ¹⁴ Yes, all the juicy fruit that she so deeply desired has left her, as have all the fatty foods and the bright colors. They're no longer available to her, and she'll never have them again.

¹⁵ 'Then the men who sold these things and who became rich from her will cry and mourn at some distance from her, because they'll [also] be afraid of her torture. ¹⁶ They'll say, *O woe, woe, you great city that wore all the fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and who was so richly covered in gold, precious stones, and pearls; ¹⁷ because all that great wealth has been taken away in a single hour!*

'And this was also true of the ship captains, all those who sail, the seamen, and everyone who makes a living at sea. They too stood some distance away ¹⁸ and called out as they watched the smoke while

she was burning, saying, *What other city was like this great city?* ¹⁹ Then they threw dust on their heads, bawled, and mourned, shouting, *O woe, woe, for this great city that made so many shipping companies rich with her wealth, because everything has been taken away from her in a single hour!*

²⁰ 'O heavens, you Holy Ones, and you Apostles and Prophets; Rejoice over this, because God's judgment has brought vengeance upon her for your sakes!'

²¹ Then a mighty messenger picked up a stone that looked like a huge millstone and threw it into the sea, saying: 'This is how fast that city (the Great Babylon) will be thrown down, and she'll never be found again. ²² Then the sounds of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpet players will no longer be found in you, craftsman and tradesman won't be found in you anymore, --- ²³ no lamplight will ever shine in you again, and the voices of brides and grooms won't be heard in you thereafter. For though your traveling merchants were once the most important men on the earth and you misled all the nations with your sorcery, ²⁴ the blood of the Prophets, the Holy Ones, and of all those who've been slaughtered throughout the whole earth has been found within you!'

Chapter 19

¹ Well after all that, I heard what sounded like the voices of a huge crowd in the sky proclaiming, 'Praise Jah! [Yes, praise] the salvation, the glory, and the power of our God, ² for His judgments are righteous and true! He has passed judgment on the great whore who made the whole earth filthy with her immoral sex, and He has avenged the blood of His slaves [who died] at her hands!'

³ Then they shouted a second time: 'Praise Jah; because the smoke from her will keep ascending through ages of ages!'

⁴ Then the twenty-four elders and the four animals fell down and bowed low before The God as He sat on His throne, saying: 'May it be so! Praise Jah!'

⁵ And a voice came out of the throne that said, 'Praise our God, all you who are his slaves... yes you, the great and the small who fear Him!'

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like the voices of a huge crowd, along with the noise of a lot of water and heavy thunder. They were shouting, 'Praise Jah! For Jehovah our God the Almighty has started ruling as king! ⁷ Let's rejoice, shout in joy, and glorify Him, since it's time for the Lamb's wedding! His bride has prepared herself, ⁸ and she's been found worthy to be dressed in bright, clean, fine linen (for the fine linen represents the righteousness of the Holy Ones).'

⁹ Then he said to me, 'Write this: Those who are invited to the Lamb's wedding banquet are blest! And he added: 'God really said this.'

¹⁰ Well at that, I fell down in front of his feet to bow low before him. But he warned me, saying: 'Be careful... don't do that! For I'm just a fellow slave of you and your brothers who are witnesses of Jesus... and testifying for Jesus is the spirit behind this prophecy. Therefore, just bow low before God!'

¹¹ And then I saw the sky opening up, and Look... there was a white horse, and the one who was sitting on it was called Faithful and True, because he judges and he fights his wars for righteousness!

¹² His eyes were flames of fire and he wore many royal turbans on his head. He had a name that was written, which nobody knew but him. ¹³ He was wrapped in a robe that was splattered with blood, and the name he was called is The Word of The God. ¹⁴ He was followed by all the armies of the heavens

who were also [riding] white horses and wearing white, clean, fine linen. ¹⁵ He also had a long sharp sword protruding from his mouth that he could use to strike the nations; for he will shepherd them with a staff made of iron. This is [the one that I saw] crushing the grapes with his feet in the winepress of the Almighty God's anger and rage. ¹⁶ For on his robe and on his thigh he had the name written: 'King of kings and Lord of lords.'

¹⁷ After that, I also saw a messenger who was standing in the sun and shouting in a loud voice, saying to all the creatures that fly high in the sky, 'Come here and gather for God's great supper. ¹⁸ For here you can eat the flesh of kings, generals, mighty men, horses and their riders, as well as the flesh of all the freemen and slaves... yes, both the small and the great!'

¹⁹ Then I saw the wild animal along with the kings of the earth and their armies all gathered to wage war against the one who was sitting on the [white] horse and his army. ²⁰ However, the wild animal was captured along with the false prophet that performed the signs in front of it, which he had used to mislead those who received the branding of the wild animal and those who bowed low before its image. While they were all still alive, they were tossed into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. ²¹ Then the long sword that came from the mouth of the one who was riding the [white] horse killed off all the rest... and all the birds came and ate their fill of flesh.

Chapter 20

¹ Well after that, I saw a messenger come down out of the sky with a long chain in his hand [that held] the key to the abyss; ² and he grabbed the Dragon – the original snake, the Slanderer and Opposer – and chained him up for a thousand years (or possibly, thousands of years). ³ Then he threw him into the abyss... he closed it up and locked it up over him, so he couldn't mislead the nations anymore until the after the thousand years had ended. But after that, he will be set free for a little while.

⁴ And I also saw thrones... and those who sat down on them were the ones who had been executed with axes for testifying about Jesus, for telling about God, and who hadn't worshiped the wild animal or its image, nor had they received its branding on their foreheads or on their hands. They were appointed to be judges, and they came to life and ruled as kings with the Anointed One for a thousand years. ⁵ ... This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Those who have a part in the first resurrection are blest and holy, because the second death won't have any power over them. For they will be Priests of The God and of the Anointed One and they will rule for the thousand years.

⁷ But after the thousand years have ended, the Slanderer will be freed from his prison ⁸ and he'll go out to mislead people – Gog and Magog – in all four corners of the earth and bring them together for a battle... there will be as many as the sands of the seas! ⁹ These will thereafter march across the whole earth and surround the camp of the Holy Ones and the loved city... but then fire will come from the sky and consume them! ¹⁰ And the Opposer who misled them will then be thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the wild animal and the false prophet already are, and they will be tortured there day and night through ages of ages.

¹¹ Well after that, I saw someone sitting on a huge white throne; and before him the land and the sky just vanished and couldn't be found. ¹² I also saw the dead – the great and the small – standing before the throne, and several scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, which was the Scroll of Life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the scrolls, according to the things they had done. ¹³ Then the sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up the dead in them, and all [the dead] were judged by the things they had done. ¹⁴ And finally, death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire (the lake of fire symbolizes the second death), ¹⁵ and anyone whose name wasn't found written in the Scroll of Life was also thrown into the lake of fire.

Chapter 21

¹ Then I saw new skies and new lands, because the previous skies and lands had disappeared, as had the seas. ² I also saw the Holy City New JeruSalem stepping down out of the sky from God, prepared like a bride who had been adorned for her man.

³ Well at that I heard a loud voice from the throne say, 'Look! The Tent of The God is with mankind! He's going to pitch His Tent among them, then they'll be His people and He'll be their God. ⁴ He's going to wipe all the tears from their eyes and there won't be any more death, mourning, wailing, or pain, because all that used to be will be gone!'

⁵ Then the One who was sitting on the throne said: '{Look!} I'm making everything new!' And he added, 'Write this down, because these words are faithful and true.'

⁶ Then He told me: 'It has all been accomplished! I'm the Alpha and the Omega – the beginning and the end – and I'm going to give anyone who is thirsty a free drink from the Spring of the Water of Life! ⁷ Whoever conquers will inherit these things... yes, I'll be his God and he'll be My son!' ⁸ But as for the cowards, the unbelievers, the nasty, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who cast spells, the idol worshipers, and all the liars; their inheritance is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur... the second death.'

⁹ Then one of the seven messengers with the seven bowls that were full of the seven last plagues came and spoke to me, saying, 'Come here and I'll show you the bride... the Lamb's woman!' ¹⁰ So he carried me off on the wind to an enormously high mountain, and there he showed me JeruSalem, the Holy City, which was coming down out of the sky from God. ¹¹ It had all the glory of God, it sparkled like the most precious of gems, and it gleamed like crystal-clear jasper stones. ¹² It had high, thick walls and twelve gates. There was a messenger at each of the twelve gates, and each one was inscribed with the name of one of the twelve tribes of the sons of IsraEl. ¹³ There were three gates on the east side, three gates on the north side, three gates on the south side, and three gates on the west side.

¹⁴ The city wall also had twelve foundation stones, upon which the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb were written.

¹⁵ Now, the one who was talking to me held up a ruler (a gold reed) that he used to measure the city, along with its gates and its walls. ¹⁶ The city was square... as long as it was wide. For he then measured the entire city with the reed; and its length, width, and height (which were equal) [measured the same as] twelve-thousand stadions. ¹⁷ He also measured [the thickness of] its walls, and it was the length of a man's forearm (which is about the same as for a messenger [of God]), times one hundred and forty-four.

¹⁸ The walls were made of jasper, and the entire city was made of gold that was as pure as clear crystal. ¹⁹ And the foundation stones of its walls were decorated with all sorts of precious gems. The first one was decorated with jasper, the second with sapphires, the third with chalcedony, the fourth with emeralds, ²⁰ the fifth with rubies, the sixth with sardius, the seventh with peridots, the eighth with beryls, the ninth with topaz, the tenth with chrysoprase, the eleventh with hyacinth, and the twelfth with amethysts. ²¹ Also, the twelve gates were twelve pearls (each of the gates was made of a single pearl), and the city's main street was paved with gold that was as pure as clear crystal!

²² I didn't see a Most Holy within [the city], because Jehovah God the Almighty and the Lamb are its

Most Holy. ²³ Nor did the city need the sun or moon to shine upon it, because it was lit by the glory of The God... and the Lamb was its lamp. ²⁴ So, all the nations were able to walk in its light, and the earth's kings were bringing their glorious things into it. ²⁵ Its gates won't ever be closed during the day, and night won't exist there. ²⁶ For this is where they will carry the glory and honor of the nations. ²⁷ And nothing that's dirty, or anyone who does disgusting things or tells lies will ever enter it... only those [whose names] are written in the Lamb's Scroll of Life.

Chapter 22

¹ Well after that, he showed me the River of the Water of Life... it was crystal clear and it flowed outward [from under] the Throne of The God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the street. And on both of its sides were the Trees of Life, which bore twelve [crops of] fruit, putting out the fruit every month; and the Trees' leaves were used to heal the ethnics. ³ So, everything that causes people to sin will thereafter be gone, for the Throne of The God and of the Lamb will always be there, where His slaves can come to bow low before Him, ⁴ see His face, and they'll wear His Name on their foreheads. ⁵ Also, since there won't be any more night, they won't need lamps or sunlight, because Jehovah (The God) will be shining upon them, and they'll rule as kings for ages of ages.

⁶ Then he said to me: 'These words are faithful and true. Yes, Jehovah (The God who gave His Breath to the Prophets) sent His messenger to show His slaves the things that will happen very quickly. ⁷ And look... I'm coming quickly! Blest is the one who obeys the things that are prophesied about in this scroll.'

⁸ Well, I (John) was the one who saw and heard these things. And after I saw and heard it all, I fell down to bow at the feet of the messenger who had shown me these things. ⁹ But he warned me again, saying: 'Be careful... don't do that; for I'm is just a fellow slave of you and your brothers, who are Prophets and who are obeying [the things that] are spoken of in this scroll. Rather, bow low before God!'

¹⁰ He also warned me: 'Don't seal up the things that are said in the prophecy of this scroll, because the season is near. ¹¹ So may those who are acting unrighteously stay unrighteous, and may the filthy stay filthy. However, may those who are righteous remain righteous, and those who are holy remain holy.'

¹² 'Look, I'm coming quickly! And the reward that I bring is the repayment to each one for what he has done. ¹³ I'm the Alpha and the Omega; the first and the last; the beginning and the end. ¹⁴ Blest are those who wash their robes, for they'll be allowed access to the trees of life and they can enter the city gates. ¹⁵ But the dogs, those who cast spells, those who are immoral, the murderers, the idol worshippers, and everyone who enjoys lying will be left on the outside.'

¹⁶ 'I am Jesus, and I sent my messenger to testify to you about these things that will be [coming] to the congregations. I am the root and the descendant of David... the bright morning star.' ¹⁷ For the [Holy] Spirit and the bride keep saying, *Come!* So let all those who hear this also say, *Come!* Yes, let all who are thirsty come; for anyone who wants to can partake of life's water freely!

¹⁸ 'I'm now testifying to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll, that if anyone adds anything to it, God will add the plagues to him that are written about in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone removes any of the words of this scroll of prophecy, God will remove his share from the Tree of life and from the things that are written in this scroll concerning the Holy City.'

²⁰ 'Then the one who testified to these things said, *Yes, I'm coming quickly!*'

May it be so! Come Lord Jesus!

²¹ May the loving care of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with all the Holy Ones.