

THE  
STORY  
OF  
JESUS  
ALL FOUR GOSPELS IN ONE

D. B. RYEN



*SECOND  
EDITION*

THE  
STORY  
OF  
JESUS

ALL FOUR GOSPELS IN ONE

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STUDY BIBLE

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D. B. RYEN

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Second Edition, Version 2.6

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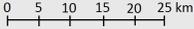
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# Palestine

Circa 30 AD



*Who has believed our message? And who has been shown the LORD's arm?*

*He grew up before him like a sapling and like a root from dry land. He didn't have a form or honor that we'd look at him, nor an appearance that we'd want him.*

*He was hated and betrayed by men, a man of sadness, familiar with sickness. He was hated enough to hide one's face from him. And we didn't think much of him.*

*But he certainly carried our sickness and bore our pain, while we figured he was struck, beaten, and oppressed by God.*

*He was stabbed for our rebellion and broken for our guilt. The discipline for our good fell on him and we're healed by his bruises.*

*Like sheep, we've all wandered and each has turned his own way, but the LORD made all our depravity meet him.*

*He was oppressed and mistreated, but he didn't open his mouth. Like a lamb led to slaughter and like a sheep silent before shearers, he still didn't open his mouth.*

*He was taken by restraint and judgment. And who would've thought that he was cut off from the living land for my people's rebellion, his own generation, whose disease it was?*

*His grave was set among the wicked, but he was wealthy in death because he had done nothing violent, nor was deception in his mouth.*

*But the LORD was happy to crush him, to make him diseased. If he could make himself their guilt, then he'd see his seed, he'd lengthen his days, and the LORD's pleasure would flourish in his hand.*

*Because of his soul's trouble, he'll see it and be satisfied. By his knowledge, the righteous one, my servant, will justify many by carrying their guilt.*

*So I'll give him a part with the great, and he'll divide the plunder with the strong because of this: he poured himself out to death and was counted with the lawless, but he carried the sin of many and interceded for the lawless.*

*— Isaiah 53*

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# Table of Contents

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## INTRODUCTION

---

<i>Disclaimer</i>	9
-------------------	---

## PREFACE

---

<i>First Century Judea</i>	11
----------------------------	----

## CHAPTERS

---

1.	<i>Foreword to the Gospel</i>	15
2.	<i>The Birth of John</i>	23
3.	<i>The Birth of Jesus</i>	31
4.	<i>John's Ministry</i>	41
5.	<i>The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry</i>	45
6.	<i>Opposition in Galilee</i>	59
7.	<i>The Disciples Called</i>	65
8.	<i>Controversy on the Sabbath</i>	75
9.	<i>Teaching on the Mountain</i>	83
10.	<i>Authority and Repentance</i>	93
11.	<i>Disbelief</i>	101
12.	<i>Parables</i>	107

---

13.	<i>Across the Sea and Back Again</i>	113
14.	<i>The Twelve Sent Out</i>	121
15.	<i>The Bread of Jesus</i>	127
16.	<i>The Yeast of the Pharisees</i>	135
17.	<i>Jesus the Christ</i>	143
18.	<i>About Greatness</i>	149
19.	<i>To Jerusalem</i>	155
20.	<i>The Feast of Booths</i>	159
21.	<i>Love and Prayer</i>	173
22.	<i>Further Teaching</i>	179
23.	<i>Discipleship</i>	187
24.	<i>To Jerusalem for the Last Time</i>	201
25.	<i>Entering the City</i>	213
26.	<i>Jesus' Authority Questioned</i>	225
27.	<i>Jesus Attacks His Critics</i>	233
28.	<i>What will Come</i>	239
29.	<i>Betrayal Arranged</i>	249
30.	<i>The Passover</i>	253
31.	<i>In the Room Upstairs</i>	261
32.	<i>Betrayal</i>	269
33.	<i>Trials</i>	273
34.	<i>Crucifixion</i>	287
35.	<i>Buried</i>	295
36.	<i>The Tomb is Empty</i>	297
37.	<i>Alive!</i>	301
38.	<i>The Birth of the Church</i>	311

## APPENDICES

---

A.	<i>Chronology of the Gospels</i>	319
B.	<i>Index of Topics</i>	325
C.	<i>Index of Scripture References</i>	333
D.	<i>Index of Illustrations</i>	337
E.	<i>Jesus' Miracles</i>	339
F.	<i>Jesus' Parables</i>	341
G.	<i>Acknowledgments</i>	343

# Introduction

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## *Disclaimer*

Religious education isn't new. Scholars have been studying, interpreting, and teaching theology based on sacred writings for millennia. But the Scriptures are for everyone, not just the learned. In the same way, religion and faith are for everyone, regardless of education, scholarship, race, gender, or social status. The original Gospel writers weren't scholars themselves, at least not originally. They were a tax collector, a missionary's companion, a physician, and a fisherman; it's unknown whether they had any formal religious education. But it didn't matter — they penned the most popular biography in history.

Such is this account.

*THE STORY OF JESUS* attempts to put the events of Jesus' life into chronological order. It draws primarily from the four books of the Bible that record his life, that is, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These sources have been combined into one complete seamless narrative as accurately as possible. When details vary between the four Gospels, round parentheses ( ) denote differences in wording from one Gospel writer to the next. And when details are not stated at all, but rather implied, square brackets [ ] contain the extra text.

Efforts have been made to thoroughly research historical facts and

language translations, but always from the perspective of an interested follower, not a certified biblical scholar, historian, or linguist. As such, there may be details that are less than accurate despite the best of intentions. For example, the order of events in this account may not be in the precise order they occurred in history, as established by teams of scholars with far greater expertise.

Similarly, it's always difficult to translate the Bible literally while still being readable. The translation used in *THE STORY OF JESUS* is original text, based on various contemporary English translations and the original Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew versions of the Bible. This applies both to the main text of Jesus' life story and the sidebars of the various scriptural references. *THE STORY OF JESUS* attempts to be as faithful as possible to the original languages it was written in, even at the expense of being readable. Hopefully any discrepancies in fact or translation will be graciously overlooked, because this book's purpose isn't to be a historical textbook but the retelling of a story, one that has changed many lives.

*THE STORY OF JESUS* is divided up into 38 chapters, which are further subdivided into sections. The start of each section includes a brief description of what it's about and a list of biblical references for where the text came from. *THE STORY OF JESUS* also includes lots of extra information to help explain the context and translation of Jesus' story. Footnotes that correspond to a particular topic are marked accordingly with an alphabetic footnote within the text ( <sup>a</sup> ). Larger text boxes may have no specific reference to the text, but generally help to explain the world in which Jesus walked during the first century.

Everyone should study the Scriptures for themselves. That's how this account started. *THE STORY OF JESUS* is quite simply the full story of Jesus' time on earth.

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# Preface

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## *First Century Judea*

Israel's history all started with one man: Abram. The Bible records that God told him to leave his home, promising to give him his own land and make him into a great nation.<sup>a</sup> This promised land was Canaan, a fertile green belt bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Jordan River to the east. After arriving there, Abram was renamed Abraham and had a son by his previously-barren wife, Sarah. His son, Isaac, fathered twins. The younger twin, Jacob, deceptively received the blessing and inheritance of the firstborn. Jacob was renamed Israel and had twelve sons, who, with their descendants, would become the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob was forced to relocate away from Canaan to Egypt due to a seven-year famine. In Egypt, Jacob's family of seventy grew into a nation, and over time Israel's population became so large that the Egyptian Pharaoh feared revolt and subsequently oppressed them as slaves. Then, four hundred years after arriving in Egypt, Moses<sup>b</sup>

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A. The LORD told Abram, "Go from your country, your relatives, and your father's house, to the land I'll show you. I'll make you a great nation. I'll bless you and make your name great, and then you'll be a blessing. I'll bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. And all the families on earth will be blessed through you." – Genesis 12:2-3

B. The LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and tell him, 'The LORD says, "Let my people go, so they can serve me."'" – Exodus 8:1

led the entire nation back to the land promised to them by God.

Under Joshua, Moses' successor, the people of Israel drove out the residents of Canaan and were established as a kingdom of their own right. Successive judges ruled Israel after their settlement in Canaan, frequently rescuing them from neighboring nations, until Saul was established as Israel's first king. However, a shepherd-turned-warrior named David was the one to truly lead Israel, becoming Israel's second king after Saul's death.

During the reign of David<sup>c</sup> and his son Solomon, Israel reached the peak of its power, becoming the richest nation in the Middle East at the time, according to the Bible. But it didn't last long. Crumbling morality, heavy taxation, and labor conscription led to Israel's division. Around 950 BC, under David's grandson Rehoboam, the nation split into the southern kingdom of Judah, which maintained the Davidic dynasty, and the northern kingdom of Israel, which adopted a new king, Jeroboam. Various kings rose and fell in Israel and Judah as they warred with each other and with their neighbors for generations. Then around 720 BC, the Assyrians conquered Israel, taking much of its population into exile. Judah was also conquered, this time in two campaigns by the Babylonians in 597 and 587 BC, who captured Jerusalem<sup>d</sup> and similarly exiled many of the survivors. The Persians later conquered Babylon, taking over their massive empire, but they allowed groups of Jewish exiles to return to their homeland. In 333 BC, Alexander the Great conquered Persia, gaining control of Israel and the rest of the Middle East and establishing Greek culture and language throughout. After his death, Alexander's generals divided his empire between themselves, but subsequent revolts re-established an independent Jewish nation in 164 BC under the Hasmonean dynasty. However, Jerusalem was again captured, with Judea becoming a province of the Roman Empire in 63 BC. Herod the Great ruled the Jews as a client-king under Rome and was the current ruler at the time of Jesus' birth in 4 BC.

Throughout Israel's tumultuous history, various prophets (messengers from God) encouraged the Jews and warned them to repent and return to God<sup>e</sup> and follow the laws given to them during their exodus

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C. *He raised David up to be their king, and he witnessed about him, saying, "I've found David, Jesse's son, to be a man after my heart, who'll do all I want."* – Acts 13:22

D. *How lonely sits the city that was full of people! She who was great among the nations has become a widow!* – Lamentations 1:1

E. *"Repent and turn from all of your rebelling, so that sin won't trip you up. Throw away all the rebelling you've done and make a new heart and a new spirit for yourselves. O Israel's house,*

from Egypt to Canaan. The prophets frequently stressed that Israel's rebellion away from God had led to their downfall, and that turning back to him would lead to freedom and blessing. However, any religious reformation soon reverted back to immorality and subsequent oppression.

Despite the dire circumstances of Israel's national identity, Jews lived in constant expectation of the Messiah,<sup>f</sup> which means "anointed one" in Hebrew. The Greek equivalent, *christos*, is where the term "Christ" comes from. The Jews understood the Messiah to be a powerful king who would defeat their enemies and bring prosperity and peace. Although many messiahs temporarily delivered Israel throughout its history, none fulfilled all the requirements, as detailed by various prophets' contributions to Scripture.

So this was the situation in Judea during the first century: Israel was living under Roman rule; revolts were common, but were swiftly and brutally subdued; religious reform had expanded Moses' Law into thousands of rules and rituals about cleanliness; and the Jews were waiting for their Messiah, a mighty king who would sit on David's throne and establish an empire.

It was into this world that Jesus was born.

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*why will you die? I'm not happy with anyone's death," says the LORD God. "So repent and live!" – Ezekiel 18:30-32*

F. *Look at my servant, whom I hold. He's my chosen, who pleases my soul. I've put my Spirit on him and he'll bring justice out to the nations. He won't get discouraged or crushed until he sets up justice on earth. – Isaiah 42:1,4a*

## The Bible

Although it can vary in content and translation, the **Bible** is the primary text of multiple world religions, most notably Christianity and Judaism. In its most common form, the Bible is divided into two major sections, each containing multiple smaller books:

1. The Old Testament follows the history of Israel as a nation through its formation, settlement, exile, and restoration. It also includes books of songs, poetry, prophecy, and law.
2. The New Testament starts with four different accounts – written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – that detail the life of a teacher named Jesus, who claimed to be God’s Son. It goes on to describe the beginning of the church, including letters addressed to various churches of the day.

This sacred text, particularly the Old Testament, is also simply called the **Scripture**.

Originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the Bible has become the most widely reproduced book in the world. And despite having multiple authors and being written over centuries, the Bible claims to be the inspired words of God.

The first five books of the Bible, in the Old Testament, are collectively referred to as **Moses’ Law**. It’s also called the Pentateuch, the Torah, the “Book of the Law,” or simply “The Law.” This ancient Scripture records the development of Israel as a nation, as well as the laws God gave them for fulfilling their destiny as his people.

1. Genesis records the early history of the world and the establishment of Abraham’s descendants as the nation of God. It follows Israel’s first four generations, from Abraham to the twelve patriarchs of Israel, ending with their settlement in Egypt. It also includes accounts of creation, the first sin, the worldwide flood with Noah’s ark, and Babel’s tower to heaven.
2. Exodus records Israel’s flight from slavery under Pharaoh in Egypt. It also details God’s covenant with them as a nation.
3. Leviticus lays out instructions on holiness.
4. Numbers records 40 years of wandering in the desert and how Israel’s territory should be divided once they got there.
5. Deuteronomy records final commands to serve God as Israel prepared to enter their promised land.

These books served as the foundation for Jewish government, law, religion, and culture. Additionally, Moses’ Law dictated what was clean and unclean. God called Israel to be holy (set apart) for himself, and, as such, Israel’s rules about external purity were outward signs of that inward holiness. Specific uncleanness was described in Moses’ Law.

- Eating or handling certain animals, such as ravens, vultures, eagles, owls, hares, pigs, camels, mice, bats, lizards, shellfish, and all insects except locusts. Other animals were implied based on general characteristics, such as alligators, cats, dogs, horses, squid, snakes, and turtles.
- People with certain physical conditions, such as menstrual periods, leprosy, open sores, post-childbirth, and having any discharge from the body.
- Touching the dead bodies of both people and animals. Even the tent that a dead body was found in was considered unclean.

Purification rituals were detailed for all unclean conditions, which typically involved a period of social isolation, sprinkling of water or blood, immersion in water, and/or offering sacrifices to become clean again. These regulations about **cleanliness** were the cornerstone of Israel’s religious rituals.

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# Chapter 1

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## *Foreword to the Gospel*

### *1.1 Luke's purpose*

*Mark 1:1*

*Luke 1:1-4*

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, God's Son.

Greatest Theophilus,<sup>a</sup> even though many have set their hand to put together an account of the things done among us, as they were given to us by those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and servants of the word, I thought it would be good for me also to write it out chronologically, after carefully investigating everything from the beginning, so that you might know for sure about the word you've been taught.

### *1.2 John's prologue: the "word"*

*John 1:1-18*

---

A. Luke addressed his version of Jesus' life, as well as his history of the early church (the book of Acts), to "**greatest Theophilus.**" *Kratistos* is the Greek word that translates to "strongest," "greatest," or "most excellent." It was used as a title of respect when addressing someone important. Theophilus, on the other hand, translates to "God lover." Although this term could be applied to the church as a whole, it was likely the name of a specific person, possibly the one who commissioned the writing.

In the beginning was the word and the word was with God. The word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things came to be through him, and apart from him nothing came to be that has come to be. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light is shining in the darkness and the darkness can't grasp it.

There was a man named John who was sent from God. He came as a witness to testify about the light, for all to believe through him. He wasn't the light, but a witness to the light. The true light coming into the world illuminates every man. He was in the world and the world was made through him, but the world didn't know him. He came to his own, but his own didn't accept him. But whoever accepted him, he gave the right to become God's children, to those who believed in his name, who weren't born of blood or of the body's will or of man's will, but born of God.

The word became a body and lived with us. We saw his glory, glory like the only one born of the Father, full of grace and truth. John testifies<sup>b</sup> about him. He cried out, "This is the one I spoke about: 'The one who comes after me is greater than I am, because he existed before I did.'"

Out of his abundance, we've all received grace for grace. The Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus

- B. Occasionally, Greek authors used the present tense of a verb to emphasize an action in the midst of a story told in the past tense. This literary feature occurs in the New Testament, which was originally written in Greek. However, English doesn't employ this method of emphasis, so a direct translation can seem awkward. In other Bible translations, the present tense Greek is often translated into past tense English and marked with an asterisk to note the emphasis. However, a more literal translation keeps those few words in the present tense, as it's rendered here. In this first occurrence, the original Gospel writer emphasized John's testifying by writing "**testifies**," contrary to the tense of the rest of the passage.

### The Word

*Logos* is the Greek word for "speech" or "**word**," but John uses this term to refer specifically to God's word personified as Jesus. No other Gospel writer uses *logos* like this. However, since Heraclitus first used the term around 500 BC, ancient Greek philosophers used *logos* to mean wisdom in general, particularly pertaining to divine order and reasoning.

Many Bible translations capitalize "word" when referring to Jesus. Similarly, pronouns ("he" or "his") referring to God or Jesus are typically capitalized throughout Scripture. However, there was no concept of capitalization in the original languages of the Bible. Over time, church tradition has capitalized any titles or pronouns referring to God, but this practice isn't directly biblical. So to keep with a more literal translation of the original Scriptures, pronouns referring to Jesus or God are not capitalized here. Nor is "word" capitalized, despite being a reference to Jesus' divinity. However, "Father" and "Son" are capitalized when they're clear references to God.

Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the only God who was born, who's at the Father's chest, has made him known.

### 1.3 *Jesus' genealogy*

*Matthew 1:1-17*

*Luke 3:23b-38*

The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Christ, the son of David and the son of Abraham:

Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers.

Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez fathered Hezron, and Hezron fathered Ram.

Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, and Nahshon fathered Salmon.

Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, and Obed fathered Jesse.

Jesse fathered David the king.

David fathered Solomon by her of Uriah.

Solomon fathered Rehoboam, Rehoboam fathered Abijah, and Abijah fathered Asa.

Asa fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram, and Joram fathered Uzziah.

Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, and Ahaz fathered Hezekiah.

Hezekiah fathered Manasseh, Manasseh fathered Amon, and Amon fathered Josiah.

#### Jesus' Different Genealogies

Both Matthew and Luke record Jesus' genealogy. Matthew's starts with Abraham, the patriarch of all Israel, and lists descendants forward to Jesus' father Joseph. Luke, on the other hand, begins with Jesus and records backward all the way to Adam, the first man. One explanation for Jesus' **two different genealogies** is that Matthew records only the heirs to David's throne, while Luke records the complete lineage. Ancient genealogies weren't necessarily exhaustive lists – ancestors were sometimes only included for a specific reason.

Another possibility is that Matthew records Joseph's line (Jesus' legal father), while Luke records Mary's (Jesus' biological mother). Reading closely in Luke's account (page 19), the text states Jesus was "**considered**" (Greek *nomizo*) to be Joseph's son, thereby making Joseph the son of Eli through marriage. Therefore, Jesus was possibly a descendant of David by both parents, fulfilling the prophet Jeremiah's words long before.

*The LORD says, "David will never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel's house."*

– Jeremiah 7:14

### Women in Jesus' Genealogy

Besides his mother Mary, four women are mentioned in Matthew's account of Jesus' genealogy. The first, **Tamar**, was originally Judah's daughter-in-law, being married to his two oldest sons. Genesis 38 records that after their deaths, with Tamar widowed twice, she was engaged to Judah's next son, but the marriage never occurred. So after disguising herself as a prostitute, Tamar slept with Judah. Upon becoming pregnant, Judah condemned his daughter-in-law to be burned for her sin, not knowing she was pregnant by him. But after confronting him with proof, she was allowed to live and subsequently gave birth to twin boys, Perez and Zerah.

**Rahab** was a prostitute in the city of Jericho during Israel's conquest of Canaan. She hid two Israelite spies and helped them escape the city by sending their pursuers in a different direction. For her service to Israel, Rahab's whole household was spared when Jericho was conquered, and she lived among Israel from then on. Her story is recorded in the book of Joshua.

**Ruth** is one of only two women to have a book of the Bible named after her. After her husband died, Ruth committed herself to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and they travelled back to Naomi's homeland, Israel, even though Ruth herself was from Moab. Although widows in ancient Israel had nobody to provide for them, Ruth found favor with a man named Boaz, Naomi's relative. Boaz was so impressed with Ruth's character that he married her and took her and Naomi into his household.

Finally, Bathsheba was originally the wife of Uriah, a warrior in King David's army. However, while Uriah was away on campaign, David saw her bathing on a rooftop, sent for her, and slept with her. Upon finding out she was pregnant, David commanded Uriah to be abandoned in battle, leading to his death. David then took Bathsheba as his wife, but was soon confronted about his sin. Although he quickly repented, their child became sick and died. However, Bathsheba later bore him four other children, one of which, Solomon, went on to rule Israel after David (see 2 Samuel 11). Her name isn't explicitly stated in Jesus' genealogy, but it's certainly implied as "**her of Uriah**."

In such a patriarchal world, it's not insignificant that women were mentioned at all in a genealogy.

Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers during the exile to Babylon.

After the exile to Babylon, Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel, and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel fathered Abihud, Abihud fathered Eliakim, and Eliakim fathered Azor.

Azor fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Achim, and Achim fathered Eliud.

Eliud fathered Eleazar, Eleazar fathered Matthan, and Matthan fathered Jacob.

Jacob fathered Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are 14 generations; from David to the exile in Babylon, 14 generations; and from the exile in Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations.

Jesus was considered to be from<sup>c</sup> Joseph, from Eli, from Matthat, from Levi, from Melchi, from Jannai, from Joseph, from Mattathias, from Amos, from Nahum, from Hesli, from Naggi, from Maath, from Mattathias, from Semein, from Josech, from Joda, from Joanan, from Rhesa, from Zerubbabel, from Shealtiel, from Neri, from Melchi, from Addi, from Cosam, from Elmadam, from Er, from Joshua, from Eliezer, from Jorim, from Matthat, from Levi, from Simeon, from Judah, from Joseph, from Jonam, from Eliakim, from Melea, from Menna, from Mattatha, from Nathan, from David, from Jesse, from Obed, from Boaz, from Salmon, from Nahshon, from Amminadab, from Admin, from Ram, from Hezron, from Perez, from Judah, from Jacob, from Isaac, from Abraham, from Terah, from Nahor, from Serug, from Reu, from Peleg, from Heber, from Shelah, from Cainan, from Arphaxad, from Shem, from Noah, from Lamech, from Methuselah, from Enoch, from Jared, from Mahalaleel, from Cainan, from Enosh, from Seth, from Adam, from God.

C. *Ho* is a very common Greek article that can mean various things. *Ho* can be translated to many words in English, including (but not limited to) “the,” “this,” and “which.” In the case of a genealogy, it means “son of” or simply “from.”

### Joseph

**Joseph** is the name of many men in the Bible who lived long before Jesus’ father Joseph. The most notable of them was the eleventh of Jacob’s twelve sons. Joseph was favored by Jacob more than any of his brothers, being the only son of Jacob’s favorite wife, Rachel. His name means “may God add,” referring to Rachel’s desire for more children after his birth. Upon receiving a colorful coat from his father and relating a dream of his lordship over his brothers, Joseph’s ten brothers sold him in a fit of envy to slave traders travelling to Egypt.

Throughout years of slavery, promotion, jail, dream interpretation, and famine, Joseph eventually worked his way up to becoming the second most powerful man in Egypt, all the while maintaining his integrity and deferring praise to God. He ended up saving his entire extended family from famine, and brought them down to live with him in Egypt. It was in Egypt that the family of Israel developed into a nation, became enslaved, and was finally delivered from slavery. Joseph was also the father of Ephraim and Manasseh, two future half-tribes of Israel.

## The City of Jerusalem

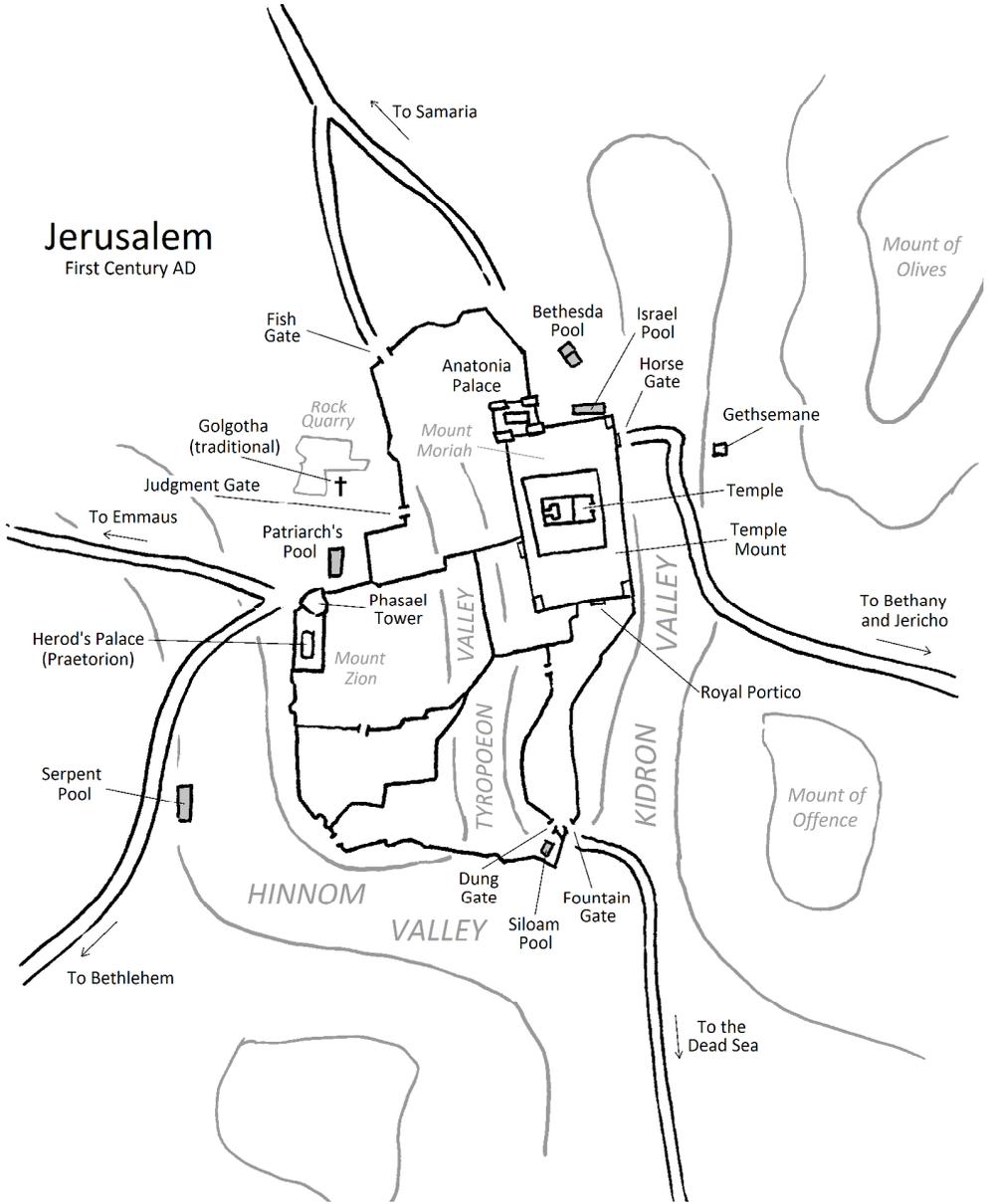
The Jewish capital of **Jerusalem** was (and still is) a prominent city in the Middle East, but it has a tumultuous history of repeated conquest, glory, rebellion, war, destruction, and restoration. Unlike other ancient capitals that were well-positioned around natural resources and trade routes, Jerusalem was located far inland, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea, away from major trade routes and waterways. It also lacked an adequate water supply, until an underground spring was diverted within its walls. The city sat on the southern spur of a plateau in the Judean mountains. Two steep valleys flanked Jerusalem east and west, while another shallow one ran through it. The Hinnom Valley, also called the Gehenna Valley, lay south and west of Jerusalem's walls, wrapping around the base of the city's highest point, Mount Zion, where Herod's palace was built; the Kidron Valley was east of the city, separating the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem's temple mount, also called Mount Moriah; and through the middle of the city, the shallow Tyropoeon Valley ran southward to join with the Kidron and Hinnom outside the walls. But despite its apparent geographic impracticality, Jerusalem's hostile location made it a strong fortress, easily defended against attack. However, Jerusalem's walls and gates have been built, destroyed, rebuilt, and expanded so many times that little of what stood in the first century remains to this day.

The name Jerusalem has various proposed meanings: the first half of the word can mean "foundation," "cornerstone," "house," or "instruction," while the second half can mean "peace," "safety" or refer to Shalim, the Canaanite god of the setting sun. Similarly, Jerusalem has various pseudonyms. The city is first mentioned in the Bible as Salem (1), which was ruled by a Canaanite priest named Melchizedek during the time of Abraham. Hundreds of years later, Jerusalem is again mentioned in the Bible during Joshua's campaign to conquer Canaan. The city was then inhabited by the Jebusites, and was therefore called Jebus (2). Although Israel attacked and invaded the city, they couldn't drive the Jebusites out until the reign of King David. Despite the city's strong defense atop steep slopes, David's army conquered the city around 1003 BC through a secret underground water tunnel. David then expanded the city walls and made Jerusalem his capital. Jerusalem helped to unite Israel because it sat, ideally, near the border of Judah (southern kingdom) and Benjamin (northern kingdom). Thus Jerusalem was also known as the City of David (3). Finally, David's son Solomon built the first Temple in Jerusalem on the second-highest point in the city, Mount Moriah, which may be the same location as where Abraham tied up and nearly sacrificed his son Isaac in an act of faith centuries earlier. However, the Temple mount (and Jerusalem itself) was thereafter called Zion (4), after Mount Zion, the highest point within the city, located across the Tyropoeon Valley just west of Mount Moriah.

After construction of the Jewish Temple, Jerusalem became the center of religion and culture for Israel. It was during Solomon's reign that Jerusalem reached the pinnacle of its splendor, with envoys from all over the world visiting to admire and pay tribute to Israel. However, civil strife and widespread immorality soon led to its downfall. Twenty years after the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria, Jerusalem (the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah) miraculously survived a siege in 701 BC by the Assyrians after a plague supposedly decimated their army. However, Babylon succeeded where Assyria could not, capturing Jerusalem in 597 and again in 587 BC, and taking exiles back east on both occasions. Seventy years later, Jewish exiles were allowed to return to their homeland under the Persians to rebuild the Temple, which was completed in 516 BC, but paled in comparison to the original Temple. Judah existed as a vassal state in the Persian Empire, and as a territory in the Greek Empire after Alexander the Great conquered Persia. But Jerusalem revolted against the Greeks in 167 BC and established an independent Hebrew nation. However, the city was recaptured in 37 BC, this time by Herod the Great, who ruled Judea and the surrounding nations as a client-king under Rome. During Herod's rule, Jerusalem's Temple and walls were renovated and expanded. The Jews again rebelled in 66 AD, leading to a Roman-Jewish war and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD under the Roman commander Titus.

# Jerusalem

First Century AD



### Priesthood

A **priest** is a mediator between God and man. More specifically, Jewish priests were the official ministers of Israel and descendants of Moses' brother Aaron, from the tribe of Levi. Aaron was ordained as Israel's first High Priest as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, and his family subsequently became the official priestly line. The Greek term *archiereus* ("first priest") referred to the current or past priest who governed all the other priests as the religious head of Israel. This position is often translated "High Priest" or "Chief Priest."

A priest was to be set apart for service in all things, from appearance (no physical defects) to family life (wife must be a virgin from Israel). The High Priest's purification process involved a week-long ceremony of bathing, dressing in specially-made priestly clothes, and being anointed with oil. A priest's duties included burning incense, tending to ceremonial lamps, ensuring offerings were properly prepared, teaching the Law, and judging court cases. But most importantly, the High Priest would enter the innermost room of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, once each year and offer sacrifices for himself and the people.

The role of priests diminished somewhat over time as they were overshadowed by other religious groups, such as scribes and Pharisees. As well, the role of High Priest was no longer hereditary under Roman rule, but could be appointed or deposed as the current ruler desired.

*[Aaron and his sons] will be anointed for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*

— Exodus 40:15

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# Chapter 2

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## *The Birth of John*

### ***2.1 John's birth foretold to Zacharias***

*Luke 1:5-25*

During the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias,<sup>a</sup> who belonged to the division of Abijah.<sup>b</sup> He had a wife from Aaron's daughters,<sup>c</sup> whose name was Elizabeth. They were both righteous in God's sight, walking blamelessly in all the Lord's commandments and regulations. However, they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren and they were both well along in days.

It happened that while he was acting as priest before God in the order of his division, he was chosen by lot, according to the priestly custom, to enter the Lord's Temple and burn incense. Meanwhile, the

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- A. The name **Zacharias**, which means "God has remembered," is the Greek version of Zechariah. Over 30 men in the Bible had the same name.
- B. When David was king of Israel, he divided the priesthood into 24 divisions, of which **Abijah** was the eighth. Each division was responsible for the daily administration of the temple for a week at a time.
- C. Aaron was Moses' older brother and was ordained as the first High Priest of Israel. His male descendants carried on in this role throughout subsequent generations. Female descendants, however, did not serve as priests, but to be one of **Aaron's daughters** denoted priestly descent.

whole assembly of people prayed outside at the hour of incense.<sup>d</sup> An angel from the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the incense altar. Zacharias was alarmed when he saw it and fear seized him. But the angel told him, “Don’t be afraid, Zacharias. Your request has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will give birth to a son and you’ll name him John. You’ll have joy and happiness, and many will celebrate his birth, because he’ll be great in the Lord’s sight. He won’t drink wine or liquor,<sup>e</sup> and he’ll be filled with the Holy Spirit from within his mother’s womb. He’ll turn many of Israel’s sons back to the Lord their God. And it’s he who will go before him in the spirit and the power of Elijah<sup>f</sup> to turn the hearts of fathers back to their children and the disobedient to a righteous attitude, and to prepare a people equipped for the Lord.”

“How will I know this?” Zacharias asked the angel. “I’m an old man and my wife is well along in days.”

“I am Gabriel, who stands in God’s presence,” the angel answered. “I’ve been sent to speak to you and bring you this good news. Look, you’ll be silent and unable to speak until the day this happens, because you didn’t believe my words, which will be completed in their time.”

The people were waiting for Zacharias, wondering about his delay in the Temple. But when he came out, he couldn’t speak to them, so they realized that he’d seen a vision in the Temple. And although he kept signing to them, he stayed mute.

After the days of his service were done, he returned home. And after those days, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant, but she hid herself for five months, saying, “This is how the Lord has dealt with me in the days when he looked at me to remove my disgrace<sup>g</sup> from among men.”<sup>h</sup>

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D. Incense was burned continuously on a golden altar in the Temple. The supply was refreshed by a priest first thing in the morning and again after the evening sacrifices. Therefore, the **hour of incense** could either be at dawn or twilight.

E. Anyone who **abstained from alcohol** was called a Nazirite, from the Hebrew word *nazir* (“separated”). Also included in the Nazirite vow was never cutting one’s hair or touching a corpse. The Old Testament records that the hero Sampson and the prophet Samuel were both Nazirites.

F. *Look, I’m going to send Elijah the prophet to you before the great and fearful day of the LORD comes. He’ll turn fathers’ hearts to their children and children’s hearts to their fathers, so that I won’t come and strike the land with a curse. – Malachi 4:5-6*

G. Ancient cultures valued children immensely as a means to continue one’s legacy and a sign of God’s blessing. Barrenness was therefore **disgraceful**, and even considered a curse by God.

H. *He makes the barren live in the house like the joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD! – Psalm 113:9*

## 2.2 *Jesus' birth foretold to Mary*

*Luke 1:26-38*

In the sixth month, Gabriel the angel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,<sup>i</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man from David's house named Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary. Coming in, he said, "Rejoice,<sup>j</sup> favored one! May the Lord be with you!"

She was troubled at these words and kept wondering what kind of a greeting this was. Then the angel told her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, because you've found God's favor! Look, you'll conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you'll name him Jesus. He'll be great and will be called the Son of the Highest.<sup>k</sup> The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He'll reign over Jacob's house forever and his kingdom will have no end."

Mary asked the angel, "How can this happen, since I haven't known a man?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest will overshadow you, which is why the Holy One born will be called God's Son. Look, even your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age too, and the one who was called barren is now in her sixth month, because nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Look, the Lord's slave. May it happen to me just as you've said."

Then the angel left her.

## 2.3 *Mary visits Elizabeth*

*Luke 1:39-56*

In those days, Mary got up and went to the hills in a hurry, to a city

- I. **Nazareth** was a town in the Roman province of Galilee, somewhat secluded from the rest of the land. It sat in a high valley, surrounded by hills and apart from major highways. However, Nazareth was just a few miles south of Sepphoris, a prominent Roman city in Galilee. The extensive building projects in Sepphoris in the early first century would likely have attracted skilled workers from the surrounding area. However, despite its proximity to Sepphoris, Nazareth may have had a reputation for being unimportant in Israel, as well as for immorality. It was not a place where the Messiah would have been expected to come from.
- J. In addition to meaning "**rejoice**," "be glad," or "be well," the Greek word *chairo* could also be used as a salutation, meaning "hail" or "greetings." It was particularly used at the beginning of written letters and was the standard greeting to Caesar ("Hail, Caesar!").
- K. In terms of the physical position of an object, "**highest**" could refer to being elevated above everything else. However, in reference to God, it referred to his being exalted above all.

### The Holy Spirit

**Holy Spirit** comes from the Greek *hagios* (“holy,” “saintly”) and *pneuma* (“breath,” “wind,” “spirit”) and was understood to be the Spirit of God. It has also been translated “Holy Ghost,” from the Old English word for “spirit” (*gast*). “Holy Spirit” only occurs three times in the Old Testament, although the Hebrew word for “spirit” (*ruwach*) occurs many times alone or with other descriptors in reference to God. The New Testament, however, uses “Holy Spirit” 98 times, hinting at the Christian theology of the Trinitarian nature of God.

Christianity holds that God has three distinct entities making up the same one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Understandably confusing, and in sharp contrast to Judaism’s strict monotheism, this doctrine has been described in a variety of metaphors. The three parts of God are said to be like three pieces of the same pie. Or similar to each person having three distinct parts – a body, a mind, and a spirit – which are separate dimensions of oneself, yet intimately unified as one person. Another understanding is that God the Father produced God the Son and their relationship is the Spirit of God. However it’s understood, each entity of the Trinity is completely God. Like a cube exists in three dimensions, so God is three in one. Outside of the Gospels, one of the most explicit references to Trinitarian theology was made by Paul the Apostle: *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the partnership of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”* (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Trinitarian theology developed after Jesus’ time, but the understanding during the first century was that the Holy Spirit was God’s breath or essence, not a separate being.

in Judah. Then she entered Zacharias’ house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She cried out in a loud voice, “You’re blessed<sup>m</sup> among women! And the fruit of your womb is blessed! And why me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? Because look, when the sound of your greeting entered my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy! Blessed is she who believed, because what the Lord has told her will be fulfilled.”

Then Mary said,

“My soul amplifies<sup>n</sup> the Lord and my spirit is overjoyed in God my savior!

L. The Greek verb *ginosko* means “**know**” or “understand.” It was also a euphemism for intercourse.

M. “**Blessed**” comes from the Greek word *makarios*, which can also mean “happy.” It represents the wishing of favor or goodness on another, with the hope that God will make it happen. God promised Israel blessings if they obeyed his Law. A father would often bless his children before his death, symbolically passing on God’s favor. The opposite of a blessing – a curse – is wishing injury, harm, or misfortune on another.

*Look, I’m putting a blessing and a curse before you today: the blessing if you listen to the LORD your God’s commands, which I’m commanding you today; and the curse if you don’t listen to the LORD your God’s commands, but turn from the way I’m commanding you today by following other gods that you don’t know. – Deuteronomy 11:26-28*

N. *Megalyno* is Greek for “make great” or “exalt.” It’s translated here as **amplifies**. It’s used only twice in the gospels.

Because he looked at the lowliness of his slave, and look, all generations will call me blessed from now on.

Because the Strong One has done something great for me, and his name is Holy.<sup>o</sup>

His mercy is on generation after generation toward those who fear him.<sup>p</sup>

He has done great things with his arm and he has scattered those proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He took down rulers from their thrones and lifted up the humble. He filled the hungry with good things,<sup>q</sup> but sent the rich away empty.

Reminded of his mercy, he helped his servant Israel as he spoke to our fathers, Abraham and his descendants forever.”

So Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned home.

## 2.4 *John's birth*

*Luke 1:57-80*

The time came for Elizabeth to deliver and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had amplified his mercy toward her and they celebrated with her.

Then it happened that they came to circumcise<sup>r</sup> the child on the eighth day. They were going to call him Zacharias, after his father, but his mother said, “No! He’ll be called John.”

But they told her, “None of your relatives are called by that name.”

So they signed to his father as to what he wanted to call him. He

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O. *Let them praise your great and awesome name – it is Holy. – Psalm 99:3*

P. *The LORD's kindness is from forever to forever on those who fear him, and his righteousness is on the children's children of those who keep his covenant and remember and follow his rules. – Psalm 103:17*

Q. *He satisfied the thirsty soul and filled the hungry soul with good things. – Psalm 107:9*

R. Starting with Abraham, Genesis records that God commanded all males to be circumcised as a sign of God's covenant with his people. **Circumcision** is the surgical removal of the foreskin on the penis. It was also practiced in other ancient cultures, such as Egypt and Canaan, as a rite of passage into adulthood, often occurring during puberty. However, Israel traditionally circumcised a newborn male at eight days old, in conjunction with naming him. Over time, the Jews took great pride in circumcision, often degrading foreigners as “the uncircumcised.”

*You'll circumcise the flesh of your foreskin to be the sign of the covenant between me and you. – Leviticus 17:11*

asked for a tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” They were all amazed. Then immediately his mouth and his tongue were opened and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came on all those living around them, and all this talk was discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. All who heard it kept it in mind, saying, “What will this child be?” because the hand of the Lord was with him too.

His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he has visited us and has made his people redeemed!

He has raised up a horn<sup>s</sup> of salvation for us in the house of David his servant, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets ages ago: ‘For salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us;<sup>t</sup>

To show our fathers mercy and remember his holy covenant, the promise he swore to our father Abraham;<sup>u</sup>

To let us serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days, being rescued from our enemies’ hands.’

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest, because you’ll go on ahead of the Lord to prepare his way,<sup>v</sup>

To give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,

Because of the tender mercy of our God, which the sunrise from the heights will visit us with,

To shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,<sup>w</sup>

To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

S. Animal **horns** served multiple purposes in Israel. As musical instruments (*shofar*), they called the nation together for festivals or battles. Horns were also oil containers, which could be used to anoint a new king. And since an animal’s horns were its weapons, they became a symbol of strength and courage.

*The LORD is my cliff, my fortress, my savior, my God, my rock, and my shelter. He’s my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my high place. – Psalm 18:2*

T. *He saved them from the hand of those who hated them and redeemed them from the enemy’s hand. – Psalm 106:10*

U. Genesis records that **God’s covenant with Abraham** was to give him land, bless him, and bless others through him. The covenant was confirmed with his name being changed from Abram and all of his male descendants being circumcised as a sign of the covenant throughout subsequent generations.

V. *“Look, I’m going to send my messenger to clear the way ahead of me. Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his Temple. Look, the messenger of the covenant, the one you enjoy – he’s coming!” says the LORD of armies. – Malachi 3:1*

W. *The people walking in darkness will see an intense light, and the light will shine on those living in a dark land. – Isaiah 9:2*

So the child kept growing and getting strong in his spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his presentation to Israel.

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# Chapter 9

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## *Teaching on the Mountain*

### **9.1 Twelve apostles chosen; blessings and woes**

*Matthew 5:1-12, 10:2-4*

*Mark 3:13-19*

*Luke 6:12-26*

During this time, Jesus leaves for the mountain to pray and he calls the ones he wanted. He had spent the night praying to God and when the day came, his disciples came to him. He chose twelve of them and named them as his apostles,<sup>a</sup> so that they would be with him and that he could send them out to preach and have authority to throw out demons. These are the names of the twelve he designated as apostles: the first was Simon (whom he also named Peter), and his brother Andrew; James of Zebedee and John, James' brother (he named them *Boanerges*, which means, "sons of thunder"); Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew the tax collector and Thomas; James of Alphaeus and Judas of James<sup>b</sup>

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A. The Greek word *apostolos* literally means "someone sent away" and is where the English word "**apostle**" comes from. Although it has come to have a strong religious connotation, the word back in Judea was more generic and referred to a messenger or emissary.

B. Matthew records the tenth disciple as Thaddeus, while Mark records him as **Judas of James**. Luke, on the other hand, shortens his name to Jude of James in the book of Acts, possibly to further distinguish him from Judas Iscariot, the twelfth disciple. Being "of James" usually meant being the son of James, but it could also mean they were brothers. However, despite

(Thaddaeus); Simon, who was called a Zealot;<sup>c</sup> and Judas Iscariot,<sup>d</sup> who became a traitor and betrayed him.

Then Jesus came down with them and stood in a flat area. A large crowd of his disciples was there, as well as a great multitude of people from all of Judea and Jerusalem, and from Tyre and Sidon on the coast, who had come to listen to him and have their diseases healed. Even those who were harassed by unclean spirits were being cured. All of the people were trying to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing everyone.

But when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and his disciples joined him after he had sat down. Then, lifting his eyes toward his disciples, he opened his mouth and taught them.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed are those who are hungry now, because they’ll be satisfied. Blessed are those who weep now, because they’ll laugh. Blessed are those who mourn, because they’ll be comforted. Blessed are the meek,<sup>e</sup> because they’ll inherit the earth.<sup>f</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, because they’ll be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, because they’ll receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, because they’ll see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, because they’ll be called sons of God. Blessed are those who’ve been mistreated for righteousness’ sake, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed are you when men hate you, exclude you, insult you, mistreat you,

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his many names, little is known about Jude, although some scholars hold that he was one of Jesus’ brothers and the writer of the biblical book of the same name.

- C. During the Roman occupation of Judea, a group of Jewish rebels sought to expel the Romans from their homeland. Their name – the **Zealots** – reflected their zeal and fierce patriotism for the Jewish nation. Zealots were some of the earliest terrorists on record, regularly murdering Romans and Greeks who were living in Judea. They also targeted other Jews thought to be in league with Rome, such as Sadducees, or those who openly opposed violence against Rome. Zealots had a bleak reputation in Judea for being ruffians. They used violent revolts to undermine Roman rule. In 66 AD, they led a rebellion and succeeded in taking control of Jerusalem, triggering the Roman-Jewish War. However, their success was short-lived: Rome recaptured the city in 70 AD and destroyed the Temple. Shortly thereafter, the Roman army attacked the Zealot stronghold of Masada in 73 AD, prompting the Zealots to commit mass suicide, effectively ending the movement.
- D. Iscariot translates to “from Kerioth,” referring to a town or region in Judea. Thus **Judas Iscariot** may have been the only non-Galilean disciple.
- E. The Greek word *prays* (pronounced “prah-ooce”) is a root adjective that is often translated “**meek**” or “humble.” However, the usual Greek word for “humble” is *tapeinos*, suggesting that meekness may not be the same as humility. *Prays* occurs only three times in the Gospels, while variations of *tapeinos* occur seven. The two terms often occur together.
- F. *The humble will inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.* – Psalm 37:11

scorn your name as evil, and falsely say all sorts of evil about you because of me, the Son of Man. On that day, leap and celebrate! Be happy, because look, your reward in heaven is huge. Their fathers mistreated the prophets before you the same way.

“But woe<sup>g</sup> you who are rich, because you have your comfort. Woe you who are full now, because you’ll be hungry. Woe you who laugh now, because you’ll mourn and cry. And woe when all men speak well of you, because their fathers used to treat the false prophets likewise.”

## 9.2 Interpretations of the Law

Matthew 5:13-24, 27-48; 6:22-23

Luke 6:27-36; 11:33-36; 16:16-18

Mark 9:49-50; 14:34-35

“You’re the salt of the earth. Everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if salt becomes saltless and bland, how can you flavor it and make it salty again? It’s useless for the soil and the manure, not good for anything anymore, except to be thrown out and walked on by men. So have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another. Whoever has ears to hear, listen up!

“You’re the light of the world. A city set on a hill can’t hide. And nobody lights a lamp and puts it in the cellar<sup>h</sup> under a basket. Instead, it

G. **Woe** is pronounced basically the same way in Greek, Hebrew, and English. It’s a term of sadness or suffering, an exclamation of grief spoken in the midst of despair.

H. *Krypte* is a Greek word referring to a hidden or secret place. It’s where the English “crypt” comes from, but it can also be translated as “basement,” “cellar,” or “vault.”

### Salt

Common table **salt** is sodium chloride (NaCl), a crystallized solid at room temperature that easily dissolves in water. All life is dependent on salt, which contributes two of the major electrolytes in cells. However, salt can be lethal if levels aren’t carefully balanced. In fact, armies used to scatter salt on enemy fields to render the land infertile. Salt was also the most common ancient seasoning, being one of the five basic human tastes. Before refrigeration, it was the primary means of preserving meat for consumption later. Salt production typically occurred at the seaside, particularly at the Dead Sea, by evaporating seawater in salt pans. Throughout human history, salt has always been a valuable commodity. The English word “salary” comes from the Latin word *salarium*, which was money paid to Roman soldiers to purchase salt.

Conversely, Mark uses the Greek word *analos* as the opposite of salty, translating literally to “without salt” or “**saltless**.” Matthew and Luke, however, use *moraino*, meaning “**bland**” or “**tasteless**.” *Moraino* could also mean “**foolish**,” as Paul quotes later in the New Testament: “*Professing to be wise, they became foolish (moraino).*” (Romans 1:22)

goes on a lampstand,<sup>i</sup> so it shines on everyone in the house, and those who come in can see the light. Similarly, shine your light before men so they can see the good you do and praise the Father in heaven.

“The eye is the lamp of the body. When your eye is healthy and good, your whole body is full of light as well. But when it’s sick and bad, your body will be full of darkness. So watch out that the light inside you isn’t darkness. If the light inside you is dark, it’ll be dark indeed! But if your whole body is full of light, with no dark part, it’ll be completely lit up, like when a lamp illuminates you with its light.

“Don’t think that I came to dissolve the Law or the prophets. I didn’t come to destroy but to fulfill! The Law and the prophets went until John, and since that time the good news of God’s kingdom is being announced and everyone is forcing his way in. I tell you truly that until heaven and earth pass away, not one *iota*<sup>j</sup> from the Law will pass away until everything’s done, because it’s easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke<sup>k</sup> of the Law to fail. Whoever voids even one of the smallest of these commandments, and teaches this to men, will be called the smallest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

“I tell you that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you won’t enter the kingdom of heaven.

“You’ve heard that the ancients were told, ‘Don’t murder,’<sup>k</sup> and that whoever murders will be guilty before the court. But I tell you that anyone who’s angry with his brother will be guilty before the court as well; whoever tells his brother, ‘*Raca*,’<sup>l</sup> will be guilty before the Sanhedrin;<sup>m</sup> and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be guilty enough for the

I. *Lychnia* is derived from the word for lamp or candle (*lychnos*), referring to something that supports or elevates a light. It can be translated “**lampstand**” or “candleholder.”

J. The ninth letter of the Greek alphabet, *iota*, is the smallest of all Greek letters. It’s written with a single vertical stroke (“*ι*”), similar to the English letter “i.” Similarly, the Greek word *keriaia* refers to a “little horn,” serif, or **stroke** of a single letter.

K. *Do not murder*. – *Exodus 20:13*

L. *Raca* is an Aramaic expression of contempt that means “empty head” or “air head,” similar to calling someone an idiot. The term comes from the writings of Jewish scribes, but isn’t mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.

M. Every city in Israel had a council of judges called the **Sanhedrin** (Hebrew for “assembly”) that heard civil and criminal matters, including violations of Moses’ Law. Its 23 members were made up of priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and other aristocrats. Although the Sanhedrin had considerable power in Judea, the Romans held ultimate authority and could interfere with its actions at anytime. In Jerusalem, the Great Sanhedrin was Judea’s supreme court, which included 71 members. It had authority over the Temple police, who could arrest people apart from Roman laws, but couldn’t legally execute prisoners.

fires of hell. So if you're offering your gift at the altar<sup>n</sup> and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go. First make up with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

"You've heard it said, 'Don't have an affair.'<sup>o</sup> But I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman and lusts<sup>p</sup> for her has already had an affair with her in his heart. If your right eye trips you up, pull it out and throw it away. It's better for you to lose one part of yourself than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right [hand] trips you up, cut it off and throw it away. It's better for you to lose one part of yourself than for your whole body to go to hell.

"It was said: 'Whoever sends his wife away will give her a divorce.'<sup>q</sup> But I tell you that whoever divorces his wife and marries another (except due to fornication) has an affair<sup>r</sup> and makes her do the same. And whoever marries a woman divorced from a husband has an affair too.

"Again, you've heard that the ancients were told, 'Don't break your promises or promise falsely, but you'll keep your oaths to the Lord.'<sup>s</sup> But I tell you, don't swear at all, either by heaven, because it's God's

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N. Any raised structure used to offer sacrifices to a god was an **altar**. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each made or restored altars to God after defining moments in their lives. During Israel's journey through the wilderness, the Tabernacle (God's portable Temple) had two altars: one for burnt offerings, made of wood and bronze, and another for incense, made of wood and gold. Altars were also used to remind future generations of a particular event, like the one erected by Joshua as a monument to the tribes east of the Jordan to symbolize their unity with the rest of Israel. The altar in Jerusalem's Temple was originally built by Solomon, but was rebuilt and rededicated many times throughout Israel's history. However, altars weren't unique to Israel's religion – many ancient cultures used them to offer sacrifices to their gods. In fact, Paul records that Athens had so many altars that one was dedicated to an "unknown god" to make sure no deity was missed.

O. *Do not have an affair.* – Exodus 20:14

P. *Epithymeo* is Greek for "desire," "long," "crave" or "turn toward." However, in the context of desiring something that one cannot legitimately have, it corresponds to "**lust**" or "covet."

Q. *When a man takes and marries a wife, but she doesn't please his eyes because he finds something indecent with her, he can write a divorce certificate, hand it to her, and send her out of his house.* – Deuteronomy 24:1

R. The Greek *moicheuo* and the Hebrew *na'aph* are both traditionally translated "commit adultery," which refers to sex with another's spouse. Here they're translated "**have an affair**." In a broader sense, the Greek *porneia* ("**fornication**") is where the English "pornography" originates and refers to any illicit or immoral sex. In the Bible, this includes affairs, homosexuality, bestiality, and incest. Both terms were used as metaphors for idol worship.

S. *When you make a promise to the LORD your God, don't delay in completing it, because that would be sin and the LORD your God would certainly require it from you. But if you keep yourself from promising, it wouldn't be sin. So be careful to do whatever comes out of our lips, because you've freely promised the LORD your God what you've said.* – Deuteronomy 23:21-23

throne; by the earth, because it's the stool for his feet; or by Jerusalem, because it's the city of the great king. And don't swear by your head, because you can't make one hair white or black. Instead, let your words be 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no.'<sup>1</sup> Anything beyond that is evil.

"You've heard it said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'<sup>2</sup> But I tell you, don't resist someone who's evil. Whoever slaps your right cheek, turn your other one to him as well, and if anyone wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat too. Whoever forces you to go one mile,<sup>3</sup> go two with him. Give to anyone who asks something from you, don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you, and don't demand what's yours back from someone who takes it.

"You've heard it said, 'Love your neighbor'<sup>4</sup> and hate your enemy.'<sup>5</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,<sup>6</sup> bless those who curse you, lend without expecting anything back, and pray for those who mistreat you,<sup>7</sup> so that you'll be sons of your Father – the Highest – who's in heaven. He makes his sun rise on the evil and the good, he sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous, and he's kind to the ungrateful and the evil. So treat others how you want them to treat you. What reward will you have if you only love those who love you? Don't tax collectors and sinners love those who love them? What extra are you doing if you only embrace your brothers? Don't the

T. *Above all, my brothers, don't swear, either by heaven, by earth, or by any other oath. But your "yes" is "yes" and your "no" is "no," so you won't fall under judgment. – James 5:12*

U. *If a man strikes the life of any man, he'll certainly be killed. The one who strikes the life of an animal will make peace – life for life. If a man injures his neighbor, it'll be done to him just as he did – break for break, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. He'll be injured just as he injured a man. The one who strikes an animal will make peace, but the one who strikes a man will die. There's one judgment for you, for the stranger and the native, because I am the LORD your God. – Leviticus 24:17-22*

V. As the ruling power, Roman soldiers could legally force any civilian or their property (horse, mule, oxen, cart, boat) to carry their equipment at any time. This practice was called impressment (*angaria* in Greek). It was often used in the empire-wide postal service, where messengers could seize civilian horses if theirs were worn out. However, such a practice was easily abused and a limit of **one mile** was imposed to reduce hostility between soldiers and civilians.

W. *Do not hate your brother in your heart. You can certainly correct your neighbor, but you won't take on sin because of him. Don't take revenge or hold a grudge against the sons of your people, but you'll love your neighbor like yourself. I am the LORD. – Leviticus 19:17-18*

X. *If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he's thirsty, give him a drink. And in doing this you'll pile up burning charcoal on his head. Don't be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good. – Romans 12:20-12*

Y. *They stoned Stephen as he called out and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, don't hold this sin against them!" Saying this, he slept. – Acts 7:59-60*

Gentiles do that? What grace<sup>c</sup> is it to be good to those who are good to you? Even sinners do that. And what grace is it if you only lend to those who'll pay you back? Sinners lend to sinners to get the same amount back. So be perfect, just like your heavenly Father is perfect. And be merciful,<sup>z</sup> just like your Father is merciful.

### 9.3 *Religious hypocrisy*

*Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18*

“Be aware of acting righteously in front of men so they'll notice you, because then you won't have any reward with your Father in heaven. When you give to charity, don't have a trumpet blown before you like the hypocrites<sup>a</sup> do in the synagogues and in the streets so that men will honor them. I tell you truly that they have their reward. But when you give to charity, don't let your left know what your right is doing, so that your giving will be hidden. Then your Father, who sees what's hidden, will reward you.

“When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites, because they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners for men to see. I tell you truly, they have their reward. But when you pray, go into your closet,<sup>b</sup> close the door, and pray to your Father who's hidden. And your Father, who sees what's hidden, will reward you.

“And when you pray, don't use repetitions<sup>c</sup> like the Gentiles, who think they'll be heard because of their many words. Don't be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you even ask him.

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Z. Various theological definitions exist for **grace** and **mercy**. These are two of the simplest: grace (called “favor” in the Old Testament) is giving something good that is undeserved, such as donating to the poor; mercy is not giving something negative that is deserved, like refraining from penalizing a criminal. These definitions correlate with the context of many of their occurrences in the Bible, but not all.

A. Pretending to have certain virtues and morals without actually having them is hypocrisy, a form of deception. A **hypocrite** emphasizes the importance of righteousness and strives for that appearance, but fails to actually practice it. The term *hypokrites* comes from Greek theater, referring to an actor who wore a mask and imitated the speech and behavior of a particular character.

B. Many houses had inner rooms or **closets** to store goods. They were called *tameion* in Greek, which can also be translated “bedroom” or “secret room.”

C. The Greek word *battalageo* means “stutter” or “stammer,” possibly originating from Battus, the king of Cyrene, who was said to have stuttered as a child. It could also refer to speaking in **repetitions** or babbling, related to prayers that were incessantly repeated. Finally, *battalageo* may imply prayers with unnecessarily long lists of words, to ensure the “right” words were spoken.

“When you fast, don’t be gloomy like the hypocrites. They blemish their faces when they fast so they’ll be noticed by men, and I tell you truly, they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint<sup>d</sup> your head and wash your face so your fasting won’t be noticed by men, only by your Father in private. And your Father, who sees things in private, will reward you.”

## 9.4 True treasure; judgment

*Matthew 6:19-21, 7:1-6*

*Luke 6:37-42*

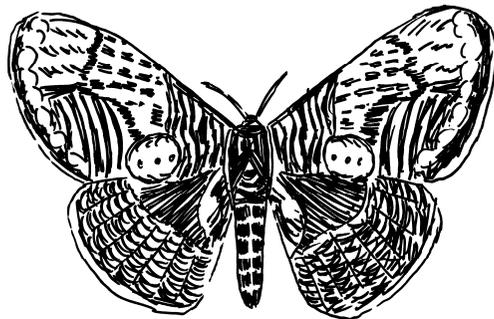
“Don’t gather up treasures on earth, where moth and rust can destroy, and where thieves can dig in and steal. Instead, gather up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth<sup>e</sup> and rust can’t destroy, and where thieves can’t dig in and steal. Because wherever your treasure is, that’s where your heart will be too.

“Don’t judge, and you won’t be judged. Don’t condemn, and you won’t be condemned. Release, and you’ll be released. Give, and it’ll be given to you – a beautiful amount will pour onto your chest,<sup>f</sup> pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Therefore, you’ll be judged how you judge, and it’ll be measured back to you how you measure.”

D. Ritually smearing with oil, milk, perfume, or water is called **anointing**, which is used by various religions to symbolize a special purpose. The Bible records that oil was used to ceremonially anoint priests and utensils for use in the Temple, which represented a spiritual anointment with God’s Holy Spirit. It was also used to crown kings and commission prophets. Olive oil, in particular, was also used medicinally, anointed on the sick or wounded for healing. It could also be rubbed over the body as a means of refreshment, a common practice throughout ancient cultures. Anointing the head and washing the face were possibly part of the daily hygiene routine in first century Judea.

E. All **moths** start out as larvae. When moth eggs are laid on fabric, they hatch into larvae and eat the natural fibers (wool, silk) as they grow, leaving the clothing full of holes. They can also destroy agricultural crops with their vast appetites.

Moths were a symbol of destruction in the Bible. Hosea 5:12 records that God will be “like a moth” to his people, slowly and silently punishing them for their disobedience.



F. The Greek word *kolpos* refers to the **chest**. Clothes in that area formed a loose pouch overhanging the belt, which was used to collect and carry numerous smaller items, such as grain.

He also told them a parable: “Can the blind guide the blind? Won’t they both fall into a ditch? A student isn’t above his teacher, but everyone will be like his teacher after he’s completed.<sup>g</sup> Why do you look at the sliver in your brother’s eye but don’t notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you tell your brother, ‘Brother, let me take that sliver out of your eye,’ and look, you don’t see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye and then you’ll see clearly to take the sliver out of your brother’s eye.

“Don’t give something holy to dogs. And don’t throw your pearls before pigs, because they’ll trample them underfoot, then turn and tear you apart.”

### 9.5 *Narrow road; false prophets; obedience*

*Matthew 7:13-29, 8:1*

*Luke 6:43-44, 46-49*

“Go in through the narrow gate. Destruction has a wide gate and a broad road that leads to it, and many go in through it. But life has a small gate and a narrow road that leads to it, and few ever find it.

“Be aware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but on the inside they’re ravenous wolves. You’ll know them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thorns or figs harvested from bushes?<sup>h</sup> No, every good tree produces good fruit, and bad trees produce bad fruit. A good tree can’t produce bad fruit and similarly a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. Every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you’ll know them by their fruit, just like each tree is known by its fruit.

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ but don’t do what I say? Not everyone who calls me that will get into the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day, many will tell me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name, throw out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?’<sup>i</sup> But I’ll tell them, ‘I never knew you. Leave me, you who act lawlessly.’<sup>j</sup>

G. *Katartizo* is a Greek verb meaning “prepare,” “complete,” or “perfect.” Matthew uses this term to describe fishermen mending their nets, and so making them fit for work again. In the sense of a student, it can mean “mature” or “graduated,” having completed one’s training.

H. *My brothers, can a fig produce olives or a vine produce figs?* – James 3:12

I. *Become doers of the word, not only hearers who deceive themselves.* – James 1:22

J. *Leave me, all of you trouble makers, because the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.* – Psalm 6:8

“Everyone who comes to me, hears my words, and does them, I’ll show you what he’s like: he’s a wise man building a house, who dug deep and set its foundation on the rock. Then the rain fell and a flood occurred. But even when rivers came and the winds blew, and both slammed against the house, they couldn’t shake it. It didn’t fall because it had been well built, founded on the rock. But everyone who hears my words and doesn’t do them is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand, without any foundation. The rain fell, the rivers came, the winds blew, and they slammed against it. Then immediately the house collapsed, and its ruin was massive.”

When Jesus had finished saying this, the crowds were blown away at his teaching, because he was teaching them with authority, not like their scribes. And when he came down from the mountain, many crowds followed him.

## Psalm 22

No other Psalm is quoted more often in the New Testament than David's anguished **Psalm 22**. Jesus quoted the first verse of the original Hebrew as he hung from the cross. Since the Psalms were not numbered in the first century, it's possible that quoting the first line was a reference to the whole song.

*My God, my God, why have you left me? The words I cry are far from my salvation. O my God, I call out by day, but you don't answer, and by night, but I don't have rest. Yet you are holy, you who are seated on Israel's praise. Our fathers trusted you – they trusted you and you saved them. They called out to you and were saved. They trusted you and weren't disappointed.*

*But I'm a worm not a man, the scorn of men and despised by people. All who see me mock me. They purse their lips and shake their head. "Roll<sup>1</sup> with the LORD. Let him rescue if he's pleased with him."*

*But you're the one who burst me from the womb, and you made me trust while on my mother's breasts. I've been thrown on you since birth; you've been my God since my mother's womb.*

*Don't be far from me, because trouble is near and there's no one to help. Many bulls have turned around me, strong ones from Bashan<sup>2</sup> have surrounded me. They open their mouths wide like a ravenous roaring lion. I'm poured out like water and all my bones are separated. My heart is like wax, melted inside me. My strength is dried up like a clay pot and my tongue sticks to my jaw. You put me in the dirt of death. Dogs have turned around me, an assembly of evil has encircled me. They've pierced my hands and feet and I can count all my bones. They look and stare at me. They divide my coat among them and cast lots for my clothes.*

*But you, LORD, don't be far. O my strength, hurry to help me. Rescue my soul from the sword and my only [life] from the hand<sup>3</sup> of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth. You answer me from the horns of aurochs.<sup>4</sup>*

*I'll tell my brothers about your name and I'll praise you in the midst of the congregation. Praise the LORD, you who fear him. Honor him, all Jacob's seed. Stay with him, all Israel's seed. Because he hasn't despised or detested the oppression of the poor. Nor has he hidden his face, but he heard when he called out.*

*My praise in the great congregation comes from you and I'll fulfill my promises in front of those who fear him. The poor will eat and be satisfied and those who ask for him will praise the LORD. May your heart live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and return to the LORD and all the families of the nations will worship in front of you. Because the kingdom is the LORD's and he rules nations. All the fat<sup>5</sup> on earth will eat and worship, and all who descend into the dirt will bow in front of him, even without a living soul. His seed will serve him and the Lord will be spoken of to the generations. They'll come and announce his righteousness to a people yet to be born, that he has done it.*

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word *galal* literally means "roll," often used in the Old Testament as the word to denote moving a large stone aside. However, it has also been translated as "commit" when entrusting plans or a person to God. This coincidentally aligns with the modern slang usage of roll; to "roll with the LORD" essentially means to be faithful to him.

<sup>2</sup> The Old Testament records that when Israel was entering Canaan, Og the king of **Bashan** marched his army out against them. Israel, however, annihilated him and his people and conquered his land. Bashan and all the territory east of the Jordan River was then re-named Gilead.

<sup>3</sup> *Yad* is the Hebrew word for "hand." As a symbol of strength, it also means "power."

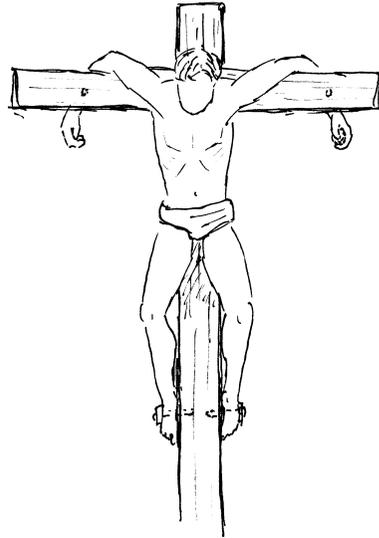
<sup>4</sup> The **auroch** was a type of wild cattle that once lived across Europe and Asia. They are now extinct; the last one died in the 1600s. They looked similar to modern bulls, with a large muscular body and massive horns pointing forward. Many Bibles translate the Hebrew term *re'em* as "wild ox."

<sup>5</sup> In Hebrew, *dashen* means "fat." When referring to people, it can also mean "prosperous."

## Crucifixion

The Latin word *crux* (“cross”) is where the English term “**crucifixion**” comes from, but the original Greek accounts of Jesus’ death use the word *stauros* (“stake”), which evolved to mean “crucify” over time. Crucifixion was a form of capital punishment performed by affixing a criminal to a wooden cross for a long, drawn-out death. This method of execution was used throughout ancient history, particularly during the Assyrian, Median, Persian and Greek empires. Similarly, the Romans used it as their most severe form of execution, reserved for slaves and criminals. No Roman citizen could be crucified, as it was considered too agonizing and disgraceful. In fact, the pain of crucifixion was so terrible that a new word – *excruciating* (“out of the cross”) – was used to describe it.

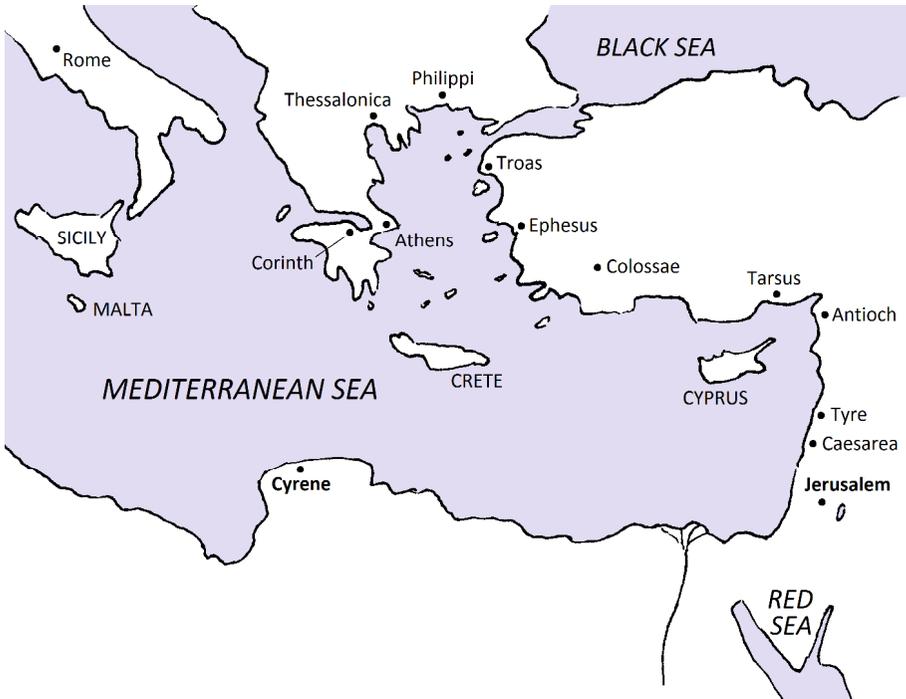
Exactly what the cross looked like or how the criminal was nailed to it isn’t clear, but most scholars agree a variety of forms were employed. Crucifixion evolved from the practice of impaling dead bodies on stakes to discourage civil disobedience. Over time, victims wouldn’t be killed beforehand and horizontal beams were attached to better accommodate a hanging body. The arms of the victim were first attached to a crossbeam with ropes, leather straps, and/or large iron nails. This was then raised onto a vertical stake that had been permanently planted in the ground. Finally, the feet or legs were fastened to the stake in a similar fashion. The victim would then be left to hang naked from the cross until dead. The strain of hanging by one’s arms for extended periods would likely have dislocated both shoulders in the process. Eventually, death came by asphyxiation (inability to breathe); when the body is supported by outstretched arms, hyperinflation of the chest cavity prevents adequate exhalation. The victim would have to painfully push himself up on his nailed legs to exhale with each breath. Exhaustion over time would lead to impaired respiration, hypoxia, and death. This process could take days in otherwise healthy people, but if a beating or whipping had occurred prior to crucifixion, death would come sooner due to the prior trauma and hypovolemia (excessive blood loss).



The Roman guards charged with performing crucifixion could only leave the site after the victim had died. So to speed the process, legs could be broken to prevent breathing, thereby causing death in a matter of minutes. There were no survivors of Roman crucifixions – soldiers would have ensured their victims were definitely dead, since their own lives would’ve been forfeited if anyone lived. Once expired, crucified corpses were often left on display to deter future crime. Barring customary burial, they would’ve decayed on the cross, exposed to the weather and scavenging animals.

Crucifixion was abolished by the Roman emperor Constantine in 337 AD upon his conversion to Christianity. Although the cross originally represented guilt, punishment, and shame, it became a sacred symbol of Christianity and was therefore no longer used for execution.

Despite the thousands of crucifixions that were recorded to have occurred, only one crucified body has been discovered to date. In 1968, the remains of a crucified man were found in Jerusalem. Large spikes had been driven laterally through the heel bones. However, his wrist bones were intact, suggesting spikes had been driven through the bones of his forearms rather than the hands, if at all.



### The City of Cyrene

On the north coast of Africa, directly south of Greece, was the ancient Greek colony of **Cyrene**, now in modern-day Libya. Founded in 630 BC, Cyrene quickly rose to prominence among other Greek settlements on the African coast and was known for its temple to the Greek god Apollo. The city had a prominent Greek population and a Jewish minority. It became a Roman province in 74 BC.

Cyrene was known for its export of silphium, a plant that was pictured on many of its coins. Silphium's valuable resin, worth its weight in silver, was traded throughout the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, it was so popular in ancient times that it was harvested to extinction in the first century AD. Overgrazing by livestock, the inability to cultivate it, and desertification of the land may have also contributed to its disappearance. Silphium's identity is controversial, but most experts agree it was from the genus *Ferula*, a family of tough flowering plants related to carrot and parsley. Like other spices of the time, silphium was used as a seasoning and as a medicine. Fever, cough, indigestion, pain, and warts were all reportedly relieved by its healing properties. Silphium may also have been used as an early contraceptive or abortifacient (pregnancy-terminating drug), and it may be the origin of the traditional heart shape in connection with sexuality and love (its seeds were heart-shaped). The last known silphium from Cyrene was recorded to have been eaten by the Roman emperor Nero in the first century.

With Cyrene's primary local export gone and multiple earthquakes wreaking havoc, the city was deserted by the seventh century AD, despite efforts at restoration. All that remains today are ruins near the Libyan city of Shahhat.

# Chapter 34

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## *Crucifixion*

### **34.1 To Golgotha**

*Matthew 27:31-34*

*Mark 15:20-23*

*Luke 23:26-33a*

*John 19:17*

After they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his clothes back on him. Then they lead him out carrying his own cross to crucify him. Two criminals were also led to be killed with him.

As they were coming out, they took someone passing by on his way in from the country (Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus) and put the cross on him. Then they force him to carry it behind Jesus.

Many crowds of people were following him, with women wailing and lamenting for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t cry for me. Instead, cry for yourselves and your children. Look, the days are coming when they’ll say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never birthed, and the breasts that never nursed.’ They’ll tell the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and the hills, ‘Cover us.’” Because if they do this when the tree is green, what’ll happen when it’s dry?”

### Golgotha

**Golgotha** is derived from the Hebrew or Aramaic term for “skull place.” The Latin equivalent is *Calvaria*, where the term “Calvary” comes from. Presumably, *Golgotha* was where the vertical stakes of crosses for crucifixion were permanently located, while horizontal cross-beams were temporarily affixed (with the victim nailed to it) for executions as they arose. Its exact location is unknown, but tradition holds that it was on a hill just west of Jerusalem, beside major highways. Archeologists have discovered evidence of an abandoned rock quarry from the first century in the same area, with tombs cut into the bottom of the cliff faces. The name *Golgotha* may also originate from an outcropping of rock shaped like a skull, or simply from the numerous executions that occurred there and abandoned skulls that could potentially be found. It may also refer to the buried bones of a cemetery nearby. Rome had a similar location reserved for executions just outside its *Porta Esquilina*.

So they bring him to a place called *Golgotha*, which means “Skull Place” in Hebrew. And they tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh,<sup>b</sup> but after tasting it, he wouldn’t drink any.

## 34.2 Crucifixion

*Matthew 27:35-44*

*Mark 15:24-27, 29-32*

*Luke 23:33b-43*

*John 19:18-25a*

They crucify him at the third hour.<sup>c</sup> But Jesus said, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they’re doing.”

Two thieves<sup>d</sup> are also crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left, with Jesus in between.

After they had crucified Jesus, the soldiers took his coat and made four parts – one part for each soldier. However, the shirt was seamless, woven from one piece, so they said to each other, “Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for whose it’ll be.”

So casting lots for who should take what, they divide his clothes

A. *The high places of vanity – the sin of Israel – will be destroyed. Thorns and thistles will grow on their altars. Then they’ll tell the mountains, “Cover us!” And the hills, “Fall on us!” – Hosea 10:8*

B. **Wine mixed with myrrh** may have been a primitive anesthetic. Some traditions hold that the women of Jerusalem gave this drink to victims of crucifixion to ease their pain. Mark records that the additive to wine was myrrh, while Matthew records that the additive was *chole*, meaning “bile” or “gall,” possibly in reference to myrrh.

C. The **third hour** of the day was around nine o’clock in the morning.

D. Theft wasn’t normally punishable by death under Roman law. It’s possible that the **two thieves** crucified with Jesus were rebels or zealots. Barabbas was also a rebel that was labelled a thief.

### Casting Lots

**Casting lots** was a popular form of gambling in the ancient Middle East. The Hebrew phrase for it, *yadad gowral*, directly translates to “throwing pebbles,” but there is some discrepancy as to what the practice actually looked like. It may have been an early form of dice. Another theory is that various small objects (pebbles, pieces of wood, pottery shards) with their owners’ names scratched onto them were placed into a container, and then upon shaking them together, a single object was drawn at random. However it occurred, casting lots was used throughout Israel’s history to determine God’s will. As Joshua was dividing up Canaan among Israel’s twelve tribes, portions of land were assigned by lot. Years later, Israel’s first king, Saul, was identified the same way. And the Old Testament prophet Jonah was chosen by lot to be thrown overboard to appease God and calm a fierce storm.

*Lots are thrown into the lap, but every decision is from the LORD.*

– Proverbs 16:33

among them. The soldiers did this to fulfill the Scripture, “They divided my coat among them and cast lots for my clothes.”<sup>e</sup>

Pilate had written the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.” They put it above his head on the cross, then they sat down and guarded him as people stood there watching. Many Jews read the inscription, since the place Jesus was crucified was close to the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

The High Priests had told Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘King of the Jews,’ but that he said, ‘I’m the king of the Jews.’”

But Pilate had answered, “I’ve written what I’ve written.”

Passers-by blasphemed him, shaking their heads and saying, “Destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days? Ha! If you’re God’s Son, come down from the cross and save yourself!”

The rulers – the High Priests, the elders, and the scribes – mocked him and scoffed at him among themselves the same way, saying, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself. Is he the Christ, chosen by God, the king of Israel? Let him come down now so we can see and believe! He trusts God – he even said, ‘I’m God’s Son’ – so now let God rescue him if he pleases.”<sup>f</sup>

The soldiers mocked him too, coming up and offering him vinegar,<sup>g</sup>

E. *I can count all my bones. They look and stare at me. They divide my coat among them and cast lots for my clothes.* – Psalm 22:17-18

F. *Roll with the LORD. Let him rescue if he’s pleased with him.* – Psalm 22:8

G. *Posca* was a common drink among the Roman army and lower civilian classes of the first century. It was a concoction of **vinegar**, water, and herbs. When batches of wine were improperly stored, bacteria fermented the ethanol (alcohol) into acetic acid (vinegar), thereby spoiling it. The term *posca* is Latin, but the Greek equivalent *oxos* comes from word for “sharp,” referring to its pungent flavor. It’s often translated as “vinegar” in the Bible.

saying, “Save yourself, if you’re the king of the Jews!”

Even the thieves crucified with him insulted him the same way. One of the criminals hanging there was blaspheming him, saying, “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

But the other scolded him, saying, “Don’t you fear God, since you’re under the same judgment? It’s the right thing for us – we’re getting what we deserve for our actions. But this one has done nothing wrong.”

Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!”

“Truly I tell you,” he replied, “you’ll be with me in paradise today.”

### 34.3 Death

*Matthew 27:45-56*

*Mark 15:33-41*

*Luke 23:44-49*

*John 19:25b-30*

At the sixth hour,<sup>h</sup> the whole land became dark until the ninth hour, because the sun failed.<sup>i</sup> Then around the ninth hour Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*” which translates to, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

H. The **sixth hour** of the day was at noon, while the **ninth hour** was around three o’clock in the afternoon.

#### Paradise

The Greek word *paradeisos* originates from the Persian word for “a wall around,” referring to an enclosed park or orchard that was maintained for hunting parties. Tradition holds that when a Persian king wanted to honor someone, he invited him to join him in **paradise**, that is, in his private garden. The Hebrew *pardec* similarly means “park” or “garden” in the Old Testament, appearing in Scripture after Israel’s exile, which suggests its adoption from the Persians. Paradise was later associated with Eden, the original garden for Adam and Eve. The word only appears three times in the New Testament:

1. Spoken by Jesus while on the cross, referring to the afterlife.
2. Recorded by Paul in a vision he had of being taken up into paradise, where he “*heard unspeakable words that were illegal for a man to say.*” (2 Corinthians 12:4)
3. Recorded by John in his apocryphal book of Revelation, quoting Jesus telling the church of Ephesus, “*For whoever conquers, I’ll let him eat from the tree of life, which is in God’s paradise.*” (Revelation 2:7b)

There’s certainly discrepancy as to what paradise is in the spiritual sense. Some believe it’s a utopia where virtuous souls wait before resurrection and entry into heaven, in contrast to *Sheol*, where the wicked go. Others believe it’s simply another term for heaven. The theories about its definition abound.

When the bystanders heard it, some said, “Look, he’s calling Elijah.”

Standing by Jesus’ cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary of Clopas,<sup>i</sup> and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there, he tells his mother, “Woman, look, your son!” Then he tells the disciple, “Look, your mother!” From then on the disciple took her as his own.

After this, knowing everything had been done, Jesus says, “I’m thirsty,” to fulfill the Scripture.

A jar full of vinegar was there, so someone immediately ran and filled a sponge with the vinegar. Putting it on a hyssop<sup>k</sup> stick, they raised it to his mouth and gave him a drink.<sup>l</sup> But the rest said, “Let’s see if Elijah will come and take him down and save him.”

After Jesus drank the vinegar, he gave up a loud cry<sup>m</sup> again, saying,

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I. *Ekleipo* (Greek verb) means “fail” or “stop,” and is where the English “eclipse” comes from. Astronomically, an eclipse is when an object in space temporarily obscures the view of another, either directly or by casting a shadow. A total solar eclipse is when the moon’s complete shadow falls on the earth, blocking direct sunlight from reaching the earth’s surface. Up to five partial solar eclipses occur annually, but because the moon’s orbit is elliptical and tilted at five degrees to the earth’s orbit around the sun, total solar eclipses are rare. They occur at the same place on earth about every 400 years, lasting up to seven minutes each time.

Both Matthew and Luke record darkness occurring at midday during Jesus’ crucifixion. Whether this was due to a solar eclipse or some miraculous sign is uncertain.

J. In Greek, when speaking about a person as “of” another, it usually referred to a man being the “son of” another. For example, “Judas of James” meant “Judas, son of James.” However, referring to a woman this way was different – “of” typically meant “wife of” rather than “daughter of.” So “**Mary of Clopas**” was likely “Mary, wife of Clopas,” rather than Clopas’ daughter.

K. The minty shrub **hyssop** thrived throughout the warm, dry climates of Europe and the Middle East. It grew well in rocky terrain, even sprouting straight out of walls. Woody stems supported numerous straight branches, which bore thin leaves and purple flowers.

Israel used hyssop branches in various purification ceremonies in the Temple and to apply blood from the Passover lamb to their doorways. King David alluded to its cleansing properties in his repentant Psalm 51.

The Hebrew and Greek words for hyssop (*ezowb* and *hyssopos* respectively) may also have referred to a number of aromatic herbs in Palestine.



L. *Scorn has broken my heart so that I’m sick. I looked for sympathy, but none was there, and for comforters, but found none. They gave me poison as my food and they gave me vinegar to drink for my thirst.* – Psalm 68:21-22

M. Crucifixion led to a slow death. Terrible pain led to difficulty breathing, which caused a gradual loss of consciousness that faded into death. Thus Jesus’ **loud cry** and abrupt death would have been quite unusual.

“Father, I set my spirit in your hands.<sup>n</sup> It’s finished!”

After saying this, he bowed his head, exhaled, and gave up his spirit. Then look, the veil<sup>o</sup> of the Temple tore in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook and rocks split apart. Tombs opened up and many bodies of the holy were raised from their sleep. They came out of their tombs after his resurrection, went into the holy city, and were seen by many.

Now the centurion standing in front of him, and those guarding Jesus with him, saw the earthquake and how he had exhaled. When they saw what was happening, they were frightened and praised God, saying, “This man was certainly innocent. He truly was God’s Son!”

All the crowds that had gathered for the event returned beating their chests when they saw what had happened. All his friends and the women, who had followed Jesus and ministered to him from when he was in Galilee, had also been watching this from far off. Among them were Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of Little James<sup>p</sup> and Joseph; the mother of Zebedee’s sons; Salome; and many other women who came up to Jerusalem with him.

### 34.4 *Death ensured*

*John 19:31-37*

It was the preparation day for the Sabbath, a big preparation.<sup>q</sup> The Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken so they could take the bodies away, that they wouldn’t stay on the cross for the Sabbath. So the soldiers came and broke the first man’s legs, and those of the other who was crucified with him. But coming to Jesus, they didn’t break his legs

N. *I set my spirit in your hands. You’ve ransomed me, LORD, God of truth.* – Psalm 31:5

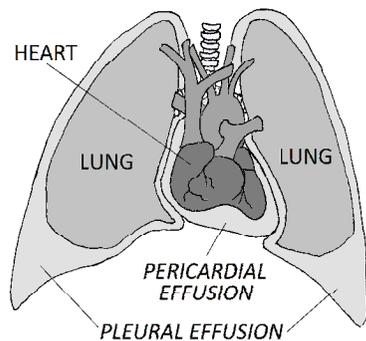
O. Separating the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies in the Temple was a massive curtain, also referred to as a **veil**. Exodus records that Israel’s Tabernacle, a large tent that functioned as the Temple on their journey from Egypt to Canaan, also had such a curtain. It was made of fine purple and red linen, with heavenly images woven into it. It hung across the inside of the Temple from golden hooks and poles. The curtain of Herod’s Temple was presumably similar to the original curtain of the Tabernacle. The only person who could pass behind it into the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God was said to live, was the High Priest once a year after a week of purification rituals. There he would burn incense, offer sacrifices for himself and the rest of the nation, and receive whatever messages God had for his people.

P. *Iakobos micros* translates to “James the Less” or “**Little James**.” This is not likely the same James as either of Jesus’ disciples or Jesus’ brother.

Q. Preparation was made every sixth day of the week so no work would be done on the Sabbath. On the day before the Passover Sabbath, it was an exceptionally **big preparation**, due to the nature of the weeklong feast when all work was banned.

when they saw that he was already dead. Then one of the soldiers stabbed his side with a spear, and blood and water<sup>r</sup> immediately came out.

The one who has seen this has witnessed it, and his witness is true. He knows he's telling the truth, so you can believe too. This happened to fulfill the Scripture, that "not one of his bones will be broken."<sup>s</sup> And another Scripture says again, "They'll look on the one they stabbed."<sup>t</sup>



R. Pericardial and pleural effusions (fluid around the heart and lungs) caused by the strain of crucifixion or another disease process could be liberated with a puncture to the thorax, causing "blood and water" to flow out of the wound.

S. *They'll leave none [of the Passover lamb] until morning, nor break its bones, to act according to all the rules of the Passover. – Numbers 9:12*

*The troubles of the righteous are many, but the LORD saves him from all of them. He keeps all his bones and not one is broken. – Psalm 34:20*

T. *I'll pour out the spirit of grace and appealing on David's house and on those living in Jerusalem, so they'll look at me whom they've stabbed. They'll mourn for him, like mourning for a son, and they'll cry bitterly over him, like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. – Zechariah 12:10*

# Appendix A

## *Chronology of the Gospels*

<u>CH.</u>	<u>PG.</u>	<u>PASSAGE</u>	<u>MATT</u>	<u>MARK</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
1.1	15	Luke's purpose	-	1:1	1:1-4	-
1.2	16	John's prologue: the "word"	-	-	-	1:1-18
1.3	17	Jesus' genealogy	1:1-17	-	3:23b-38	-
2.1	23	John's birth foretold to Zacharias	-	-	1:5-25	-
2.2	25	Jesus' birth foretold to Mary	-	-	1:26-38	-
2.3	25	Mary visits Elizabeth	-	-	1:39-56	-
2.4	27	John's birth	-	-	1:57-80	-
3.1	31	Joseph's dream	1:18-25	-	-	-
3.2	32	Jesus' birth	-	-	2:1-20	-
3.3	34	Jesus presented at the Temple	-	-	2:21-39	-
3.4	36	Magi visit	2:1-23	-	2:40	-
3.5	39	Passover in Jerusalem	-	-	2:41-52	-
4.1	41	John's ministry	3:1-12	1:2-8	3:1-18	-
5.1	45	Jesus' baptism	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-23a	-
5.2	46	Temptation in the wilderness	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	-
5.3	47	John's testimony	-	-	-	1:19-34
5.4	48	First disciples	-	-	-	1:35-51
5.5	50	First miracle: water to wine	-	-	-	2:1-12
5.6	51	Nicodemus' questions	-	-	-	3:1-21
5.7	53	Jesus greater than John	-	-	-	3:22-36
5.8	54	Samaritan woman	4:12	1:14a	3:19-20	4:1-42
6.1	59	Return to Galilee	4:17	1:14b-15	4:14-15	4:43-45
6.2	60	Capernaum child healed from Cana	-	-	-	4:46-54
6.3	61	Rejection in Nazareth	-	-	4:16-30	-
6.4	62	Travel to Capernaum	4:13-16	-	4:31a	-
7.1	65	Four disciples called	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	-
7.2	67	Demonized man healed	-	1:21-28	4:31b-37	-
7.3	67	Peter's mother-in-law healed	8:14-17	1:29-34	4:38-41	-

<u>CH.</u>	<u>PG.</u>	<u>PASSAGE</u>	<u>MATT</u>	<u>MARK</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
7.4	68	Travel and healing through Galilee	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42-44	-
7.5	69	Leper healed	8:2-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	-
7.6	70	Paralytic healed	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	-
7.7	71	Matthew called	9:9-13	2:13-17	5:27-32	-
7.8	73	Feasting vs. fasting	9:14-17	2:18-22	5:33-39	-
8.1	75	Cripple healed on the Sabbath	-	-	-	5:1-3a, 5-47
8.2	79	Picking grain on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	-
8.3	80	Hand healed on the Sabbath	12:9-21	3:1-12	6:6-11	-
9.1	83	Twelve apostles chosen; blessings and woes	5:1-12 10:2-4	3:13-19	6:12-26	-
9.2	85	Interpretations of the Law	5:13-24, 27-48 6:22-23	9:49-50 14:34-35	6:27-36 11:33-36 16:16-18	-
9.3	89	Religious hypocrisy	6:1-8, 16-18	-	-	-
9.4	90	True treasure; judgment	6:19-21 7:1-6	-	6:37-42	-
9.5	91	Narrow road; false prophets; obedience	7:13-29 8:1	-	6:43-44, 46-49	-
10.1	93	Centurion's servant healed	8:5-13	-	7:1-10	-
10.2	95	Widow's son resurrected	-	-	7:11-17	-
10.3	95	John's questions	11:2-19	-	7:18-35	-
10.4	97	Woe to Chorazin and Bethsaida	11:20-30	-	10:13-15	-
10.5	99	Sinful woman anoints Jesus' feet	-	-	7:36-50	-
11.1	101	Women followers	-	-	8:1-3	-
11.2	101	Accusations and blasphemy	12:22-37, 43-45	3:20-30	6:45 11:14-15, 17-28 12:10	-
11.3	104	Sign requested	12:38-42	-	11:16, 29-32	-
11.4	105	Spiritual family	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21	-
12.1	107	Parable of soils	13:1-23	4:1-20	8:4-18	-
12.2	109	Parables of seeds and yeast	13:24-35	4:26-34	13:18-21	-
12.3	111	Parable of seeds explained; more parables of the kingdom	13:36-53	-	-	-
13.1	113	Storm calmed	8:18, 23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	-
13.2	114	Legion thrown out	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	-
13.3	117	Jairus' daughter and bleeding woman healed	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	-
13.4	119	Blind and others healed	9:27-34	-	-	-
13.5	120	Hometown disbelief	13:54-58	6:1-6a	-	-
14.1	121	Worker shortage	9:35-38	6:6b	-	-
14.2	121	Twelve sent out	10:1, 5-16, 23-42; 11:1	6:7-13	9:1-6 12:2-9, 49-53 14:25-33	-
14.3	124	John executed by	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	-
15.1	127	Five thousand fed	14:13-23	6:30-46	9:10-17	6:1-15
15.2	129	Walking on water	14:24-33	6:47-52	-	6:16-21
15.3	130	Bread of life	14:34-36	6:53-56	-	6:22-58
15.4	133	Some disciples leave	-	-	-	6:59-71
16.1	135	Outer vs. inner cleanliness	15:1-20	7:1-15, 17-23	-	7:1

<u>CH.</u>	<u>PG.</u>	<u>PASSAGE</u>	<u>MATT</u>	<u>MARK</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
16.2	137	Phoenician girl healed	15:21-28	7:24-3	-	-
16.3	139	Healing in Decapolis	15:29-31	7:31-37	-	-
16.4	139	Four thousand fed	15:32-39a	8:1-9	-	-
16.5	140	Warning against hypocrisy	15:39b- 16:12	8:10-21	12:1b	-
16.6	141	Blind man in Bethsaida healed	-	8:22-26	-	-
17.1	143	Peter's confession of Christ	16:13-20	8:27-30	9:18-21	-
17.2	144	Jesus predicts his death, first time	16:21-28	8:31-9:1	9:22-27	-
17.3	146	Meeting with Moses and Elijah	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	-
18.1	149	Moonstruck boy healed	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43a	-
18.2	150	Jesus predicts his death, second time	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43b-45	-
18.3	151	Paying the two drachmas	17:24-27	-	-	-
18.4	151	Greatness in the kingdom	18:1-10	9:33-43, 45, 47-48	9:46-50; 17:1-3a	-
18.5	153	Forgiveness	18:15-35	-	17:3b-4	-
19.1	157	Following Jesus	8:19-22	-	9:57-62	-
19.2	158	Discussion with Jesus' brothers	-	-	9:51-56	7:2-10
20.1	159	Arrival in Jerusalem	-	-	-	7:11-36
20.2	161	Unable to arrest Jesus	-	-	-	7:37-52
20.3	162	Forgiveness of immoral woman	-	-	-	7:53- 8:11
20.4	163	Light of the world	-	-	-	8:12-30
20.5	164	Jesus and Abraham	-	-	-	8:31-59
20.6	166	Blind man healed, then testifies	-	-	-	9
20.7	169	Good shepherd	-	-	-	10:1-21
21.1	173	Seventy sent out	-	-	10:1-12, 16	-
21.2	174	Seventy return	-	-	10:17-24	-
21.3	175	Good Samaritan	-	-	10:25-37	-
21.4	177	Visit to Martha and Mary	-	-	10:38-42	-
21.5	177	Prayer	6:9-13a, 14-15	11:25	11:1-13	-
22.1	179	Greed and wealth	5:25-26 6:25-34	-	12:1a, 13-34, 54-59	-
22.2	181	Repent or die	-	-	13:1-9	-
22.3	182	Crippled woman healed	-	-	13:10-17	-
22.4	183	Unable to stone Jesus for blasphemy	-	-	-	10:22-39
23.1	187	Belief in Perea	-	-	-	10:40-42
23.2	187	Entering the kingdom	-	-	13:22-33	-
23.3	188	Swollen man healed; three parables	-	-	14:1-24	-
23.4	190	Lost and found	18:12-14	-	15	-
23.5	192	Sneaky manager; wealth	6:24	-	16:1-15, 19-31	-
23.6	194	Faith; servanthood	-	-	17:5-10	-
23.7	195	Lazarus resurrected	-	-	-	11:1-46
23.8	198	Sanhedrin decides to kill Jesus	-	-	-	11:47-54
24.1	201	Ten lepers healed	-	-	17:11-19	-
24.2	202	Parables on prayer	-	-	18:1-14	-
24.3	203	Divorce	19:1-12	10:1-12	-	-
24.4	205	Children in the kingdom	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	-
24.5	206	Wealth in the kingdom	19:16-30	10:17-31	18:18-30	-
24.6	208	Parable of the landlord's wages	20:1-16	-	-	-

<u>CH.</u>	<u>PG.</u>	<u>PASSAGE</u>	<u>MATT</u>	<u>MARK</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
24.7	208	Jesus predicts his death, third time	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	-
24.8	209	Greatest must be servants	20:20-28	10:35-45	-	-
24.9	210	Zaccheus; using what's given to you	25:14-30	10:46a	19:1-28	-
24.10	212	Blind Bartimaeus healed	20:29-34	10:46b-52	18:35-43	-
25.1	213	Arrival at Bethany	-	-	-	2:13a 11:55-12:1 12:9-11
25.2	214	Entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11, 14-17	11:1-11	19:29-44	2:13b 12:12-19
25.3	217	Fig tree cursed; Temple purified	21:12-13, 18-19a	11:12-18	19:45-48	2:14-25
25.4	219	Son of man must be "lifted up"	-	-	-	12:20-50
25.5	220	Fig tree withered	21:19b-22	11:19-24	21:37-38	-
26.1	225	Authority questioned	21:23-32	11:27-33	20:1-8	-
26.2	226	Vineyard and evil gardeners	21:33-46	12:1-12	20:9-19	-
26.3	228	Wedding feast	22:1-14	-	-	-
26.4	228	Paying taxes to Caesar	22:15-22	12:13-17	20:20-26	-
26.5	229	Marriage after resurrection; greatest commandment	22:23-33, 35-40	12:18- 34a	20:27-39	-
27.1	233	Messiah: the son of David and Lord	22:34, 41-46	12:34b-40	20:40-47	-
27.2	234	Woes to Pharisees	23:1-13, 15-39	-	11:37-54 13:34-35	-
28.1	239	God's kingdom is here; widow's gift	-	12:41-44	17:20-21 21:1-4	-
28.2	240	Future prophecies	10:17-22 24:1-31	13:1-27	12:11-12 17:22- 35, 37 21:5-28	-
28.3	244	Signs of the end	24:32-36, 42-51	13:28-37	12:35-48 21:29-36	-
28.4	245	Ten virgins	25:1-13	-	-	-
28.5	246	Coming judgment	25:31-46	-	-	-
29.1	249	Jesus predicts his death, fourth time; Sanhedrin plots	26:1-5	14:1-2	22:1-2	-
29.2	250	Mary anoints Jesus	26:6-13	14:3-9	-	12:2-8
29.3	250	Judas agrees to betray Jesus	26:14-16	14:10-11	22:3-6	-
30.1	253	Preparation for Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	-
30.2	254	Disciples' feet washed	26:20	14:17	22:14-16	13:1-20
30.3	255	Greatness in the kingdom, again	-	-	22:24-30	-
30.4	255	Betrayal predicted	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21- 30
30.5	256	Bread and wine (1 Corinthians 11:23b-25)	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:17-20	13:31a
30.6	258	Peter's denial predicted	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31b, 32b-38
31.1	261	Where Jesus is going	-	-	-	14
31.2	263	Vine and branches; love each other; opposition	-	-	-	15 16:1-4
31.3	264	Why Jesus is going	-	-	-	16:5-33
31.4	266	Prayer for believers	-	-	-	17
32.1	269	Prayer in Gethsemane	26:30, 36- 46	14:26, 32-42	22:39-46	18:1
32.2	271	Arrest	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-11

<u>CH.</u>	<u>PG.</u>	<u>PASSAGE</u>	<u>MATT</u>	<u>MARK</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
33.1	273	First Jewish trial	-	-	-	18:12-14, 19-24
33.2	274	Peter's denials; second Jewish trial	26:57-75	14:53-72	22:54-65	18:15-18, 25-27
33.4	277	First Roman trial	27:2, 11-14	15:1b-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
33.5	280	Second Roman trial; Jesus beaten; Barabbas released	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-16, 18-25	18:39-40 19:1-16
34.1	287	To Golgotha	27:31-34	15:20-23	23:26-33a	19:17
34.2	288	Crucifixion	27:35-44	15:24-27, 29-32	23:33b- 43	19:18- 25a
34.3	290	Death	27:45-56	15:33-41	23:44-49	19:25b-30
34.4	292	Death ensured	-	-	-	19:31-37
35.1	295	Burial	27:57-66	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:38-42
36.1	297	Women at empty tomb	28:1-8	16:1-8	24:1-8, 10a	20:1
36.2	298	Peter and John at empty tomb	-	-	24:9, 10b-12	20:2-10
37.1	301	Mary and Martha see Jesus	28:9-10	-	-	20:11-18
37.2	302	Soldiers told to lie	28:11-15	-	-	-
37.3	302	Two disciples travel with Jesus (1 <i>Corinthians</i> 15:5a)	-	-	24:13-35	-
37.4	304	Disciples visited	-	-	24:36-43	20:19-23
37.5	304	Disciples visited, with Thomas (1 <i>Corinthians</i> 15:5b)	-	-	-	20:24-31
37.6	305	Appearance while fishing; Peter's con- fession, again	-	-	-	21:1-24
37.7	307	Appearance in Galilee (1 <i>Corinthians</i> 15:6-7)	28:16-20	-	-	-
37.8	308	Ascension ( <i>Acts</i> 1:3-12)	-	-	24:44-53	-
38.1	311	Disciples gather; Judas replaced ( <i>Acts</i> 1:1-2, 13-17, 20-26)	-	-	-	21:25
38.2	312	Holy Spirit comes; Peter preaches ( <i>Acts</i> 2:1-36)	-	-	-	-
38.3	315	Church expands ( <i>Acts</i> 2:37-47)	-	-	-	-

Omitted passages (see sidebar on *Omission of Scripture*, page 309)

Matthew 6:13b	Mark 11:26	Luke 23:17
Matthew 18:11	Mark 15:28	John 5:3b-4
Matthew 23:14	Mark 16:9-20	John 13:32a
Mark 7:16	Luke 9:55b-56a	
Mark 9:44, 46	Luke 17:36	