

*THE*  
**NEW TESTAMENT**  
**FOR EVERYONE** Third  
Edition



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**NEW TESTAMENT**  
**FOR EVERYONE** Third  
Edition

**A FRESH TRANSLATION**  
by N. T. WRIGHT

ZONDERVAN®

*The New Testament for Everyone, Third Edition*

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Published by Zondervan, 2023  
3900 Sparks Drive SE  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546 USA  
www.zondervan.com

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2022941184

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Originally published in hardback in Great Britain in 2011 by The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Paperback edition published 2019. Previously published as “The Kingdom New Testament.”

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*Printed in India*

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23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 /BPI/ 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## PREFACE to the First and Second Editions

The first thing that happened in the life of the church was *translation*. On the Day of Pentecost, God’s powerful wind swept through Jesus’ followers, filling them, like the sails of a great ocean-going sailing ship, so that they could take God’s good news to the ends of the earth. And they found themselves speaking other languages, so that everyone in the crowd could understand.

Part of the point of Jesus’ message, after all, is that it’s about God coming to people where they are, not sitting back sternly and waiting for them to come to him. Not for nothing does John call Jesus “the *word* of God.” There’s no point speaking a word that nobody can understand.

So, right from the start, they translated. Sometimes it happened, as at Pentecost, by the direct action of the holy spirit. Mostly, though, it was through people eagerly turning the message into other languages. Much of the time, Jesus himself spoke Aramaic, an updated dialect of Hebrew, but the gospels are written in Greek. Greek was everybody’s second language at the time, a bit like English in many parts of our world today. So, since the message was designed to be good news for everyone, not just native speakers of one language, it was important to translate it. Once begun, the process continued.

It took fifteen hundred years for the whole Bible to appear in English, but once that had happened—particularly through the work of one of my lifelong heroes, William Tyndale (who died in 1536)—the idea caught on quickly. Several translations appeared during the sixteenth century, culminating in the King James (“Authorized”) Version at the start of the seventeenth. And in the twentieth century, too, there have been several new English versions. Some have been quite strict translations, almost word for word; others have been paraphrases, trying to convey the message in a looser, less formal way.

Two questions, then: is this new version really a translation, or a paraphrase? And why do we need yet another one?

It’s a translation, not a paraphrase. I have tried to stick closely to the original. But, as with all translations, even within closely related modern European languages, there are always going to be places where you simply can’t do it word by word. To do so would be “correct” at one level and deeply incorrect at another. There is no “safe” option: all translation is risky, but it’s a risk we have to take.

This is particularly so when the language in question is, in the technical sense, “dead.” Nobody today speaks first-century Greek, so we can’t simply phone a native speaker and ask what they mean by a particular phrase. Even if we could do so, there’s no guarantee that the person we called would necessarily understand all that a New Testament writer has put into a word,

phrase or sentence. The New Testament, after all, is telling a story which is deeply rooted in the ancient scriptures of Israel. Often its key technical terms mean something more like their equivalents in Hebrew than their regular usage in secular, non-Christian Greek.

Greek often goes quite easily into English, but not always. A couple of examples may help, one about little words and one about big ones.

Greek often uses little words to join sentences together; English often makes do with punctuation. (That last sentence is a good example: I could have written “*but* English often makes do with punctuation,” but the semicolon does the job more elegantly.) St. Paul, in particular, uses the little word *gar* a great deal to connect his sentences, and English versions often translate it as “for” in the sense of “because.” But people today don’t often use the word “for” in that way. It sounds formal and stilted, especially if you repeat it over and over as Paul does. People don’t say it much in conversation, and a lot of the New Testament is more like conversation than like a great literary work. So, on various occasions, I have done it differently. “If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live,” writes Paul in Romans 8.13–14 in the New Revised Standard Version translation, “*for* all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” I decided, instead of that “for,” to put in the colloquial English “you see”: “all who are led by the spirit of God, *you see*, are God’s children.” Or, sometimes, I have linked the two points by asking a question, and answering it: “there is no condemnation for those who are in the Messiah, Jesus! *Why not? Because* the law of the spirit of life in the Messiah, Jesus, released you from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8.1–2). That “Why not? Because . . .” is how I’d say it, if I were Paul giving a lecture.

Or take the bigger words. Some of the great New Testament words are like ships loaded with several different kinds of cargo, and we simply haven’t got words that can carry all that freight today. Thus, for instance, the English word “righteousness” has been a technical term in theology for many years, and has often been used to translate the Greek *dikaiosynē*. But for many English speakers today it means *self*-righteousness: it’s become a proud, “churchy” sort of word. So what are the alternatives? We simply haven’t got them. We want a word that can pack “justice,” “covenant faithfulness,” and “right standing or relationship” all into the same hold, and can set off, with this cargo safely on board, to sail around the world. There isn’t such a word. So I have done my best to bring out the different flavor which *dikaiosynē* seems to carry in this or that passage. I have done the same with *Christos*: most translations simply say “Christ,” but most modern English speakers assume that that word is simply a proper name (as though “Jesus” were Jesus’ “Christian” name and “Christ” were his “surname”). For all sorts of reasons, I disagree; so I have experimented not only with “Messiah” (which is what the word literally means) but sometimes, too, with “King.” These experiments are risky. But they also present a glorious opportunity.

It’s an opportunity (here is the answer to the second question, why yet another translation?) because translating the New Testament is something that, in fact, each generation ought to be doing. This is a special, peculiar and exciting point about the very nature of Christian faith. Just as Jesus taught

us to pray for our *daily* bread, our bread for each day, we can never simply live on yesterday's bread, on the interpretations and translations of previous generations. To be sure, we can and must learn from those who have gone before us in the faith. But they themselves would tell us that living faith requires that we do business with God for ourselves. Inherited spiritual capital may help to get you started, but you need to do fresh work for yourself, to think things through, to struggle and pray and ponder and try things out. And a new translation, as carefully faithful as it ought to be but also as open to new possibilities as it needs to be, is a key tool for that larger task.

There are two ways to use a tool like this. First, it's good to read right through chapters, sections and entire books at a single sitting. The "books" which make up the New Testament weren't written to be read in ten-verse sections at a time; imagine what would happen if you tried to listen to a symphony that way, or to read a novel at the rate of a single page once a week. I hope this present translation will make it easier for people to do this, to feel the flow and pull, the energy and power, of large chunks at a time.

But, second, it's always worth sitting down with a short passage and studying it intensely, trying to work out precisely what is meant by each sentence, each phrase, each word. And for that (even if you know Greek itself, but especially if you don't) you should always have at least two English translations open in front of you. No one translation—certainly not this one—will be able to give you everything which was there in the Greek. But I hope this one will take its place as one of the two or three that will help the next generation to do its own homework, to acquire its own first-hand, rather than second-hand, understanding of what the New Testament said in its own world, and what it urgently wants to say in ours.

That sense of urgency, indeed, has pushed me into a less formal and academic, and a more deliberately energetic, style. Most of the New Testament isn't "great literature" in terms of the high standards of the day. Mark's gospel is more like a revolutionary tract; Paul's letters, though capable of poetic brilliance, often seem to reflect the kind of animated discussion you might have after a lecture in a crowded room. Again, it has seemed to me more important to convey that sense of excitement than to imitate the more formal, somewhat stately English prose we know from the traditions of the King James or Revised Standard Versions, good in their way though they have been.

This has affected all kinds of decisions: for instance, how to reproduce Jesus' discussions and debates. We simply don't say, in today's English, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard.'" As with a novel, we'd be much more likely to say, "'Go and tell John,' replied Jesus, 'what you've seen and heard.'" So that's what I've done. I think it makes quite a difference as to how we hear, and feel, the whole story.

In particular, this translation was made originally in order to accompany a series of "guides" or popular commentaries on the New Testament. This series (*Matthew for Everyone* and the rest) was itself designed for people who would never normally read a "biblical commentary," but who just wanted some help to get into the text for themselves. People like that might well have

been confused if I'd always been saying, "Well, the RSV says this, the NIV says that, but I'm telling you something different." I wanted to comment on a text without having to make that kind of remark all the time. Equally, as with all translations ever made, I have taken a particular view on point after point of interpretation, and my understanding of the many controversial passages in the New Testament shows up, naturally enough, in the translation as well.

A couple of final comments. First, all translations of the New Testament depend on other people's work in producing editions of the Greek New Testament from the literally thousands of manuscripts that have survived from the first few centuries. From time to time, I have had to make tricky decisions about which text to follow, but in a work of this sort I haven't wanted to distract the reader by inserting notes saying, "other ancient authorities say . . ." For that you will have to look elsewhere. In the same way, sometimes whole verses were added to biblical manuscripts, often by scribes who remembered (say) the equivalent passage in Mark to the one they were transcribing from Matthew, or vice versa. Thus, for instance, Matthew 6.15 has crept into some manuscripts of Mark 11, creating an extra verse (verse 26). Modern editions leave these "extra" verses out, because they aren't there in the best and earliest manuscripts. But occasionally this means that the verse-numbering has to skip, since the numbering was done several centuries ago before these much better manuscripts turned up. Again, translations which include footnotes will make this clear. There are two extra "endings" for Mark's gospel. They are not found in the best manuscripts. Most likely the original version was damaged; this often happened to scrolls. (Some think Mark intended to stop with 16.8, but I consider this less likely.) Then, some time later, two copyists decided to add "endings" to round the story off, and these found their way into the manuscript tradition. The shorter of the two endings (printed in double square brackets) doesn't have a verse number. The second is known as Mark 16.9–20.

Finally, I have tried to use gender-neutral language throughout when referring to human beings. Sometimes this has been, to put it mildly, quite difficult. I have often had to use what some people regard as an ugly and ungrammatical form, saying "they" rather than "he or she." This is a classic example of what happens when a language is going through a time of change. That can't be helped. Indeed, it is because languages are constantly changing that we regularly need fresh translations.

My hope and prayer for this book is that many people will discover through it just how exciting and relevant the New Testament really is. If it helps the church as a whole, and individuals within it, to be refreshed in their faith and reinvigorated to take forward God's mission in tomorrow's world, I will be delighted. I have had the amazing privilege of spending the best years of my life studying and teaching the New Testament in both church circles and academic settings, and I hope that this translation will enable that work to reach a wider audience.

I am extremely grateful to my friends and publishers at SPCK in London, especially Simon Kingston and Joanna Moriarty, who commissioned the For

x Everyone series in the first place and have provided constant encouragement

all the way through. And I am very grateful to HarperOne in San Francisco, especially Mickey Maudlin and Mark Tauber, for their publishing this translation in the United States. If only all working relationships could be as happy. I owe a special, enormous debt of gratitude to Dr. Michael Lakey of Ripon College Cuddesdon who, in the last stages before publication, has worked through the whole text with a meticulous eye, a theologian's heart, and a grammarian's delight in the precise nuance of language. He has not only rescued me from a few howlers but gently suggested numerous excellent emendations. The mistakes that remain are my own, some of them the result of my not taking his advice.

Finally, in connection with my constant attempt to write clear, brisk English, I should also mention my beloved wife and children. They have regularly stopped me from using long, fuzzy words where short, sharp ones would do instead. This version of the New Testament is dedicated to them in gratitude and love.

### PREFACE to the Third Edition

I am delighted that the publishers have decided to issue this translation in the form of an Audiobook. In preparing the text for recording, I have taken the opportunity to make several small changes where I have sensed the need for improvement. I have also reversed my earlier decision, especially in Paul's letters, to translate the word *Christos* as "king," and have instead used "Messiah." I still believe it's important to hear the "royal" overtones of the word, but the English word "king" in our day doesn't easily communicate the rich biblical meanings that Paul intended.

I am very grateful to the publishers, particularly Philip Law at SPCK and Melinda Bouma at Zondervan, for their enthusiastic help and encouragement with this project.

What I said in the original Preface about my wife and children now happily extends to another generation. I hope my grandchildren will enjoy this version of the New Testament as much as I have enjoyed their contributions to our family life.

## INTRODUCTION

We call them “books,” but the twenty-seven writings that make up the “New Testament” are much shorter than most “books” in our world. The longest are about the same length as a short modern paperback; the shortest would struggle to fill a single page in a magazine. But in the first-century world a “book” usually meant a scroll, a roll of parchment with a stick attached at either end, usually written on one side only. Such “books” had to be fairly short to avoid getting too bulky; the longest of the New Testament books included about as much as a long scroll could hold.

The early followers of Jesus saw the books that were written about him, and the writings of the first generation or so of his followers, as the indispensable framework for understanding who Jesus really was, what he had achieved in launching God’s kingdom “on earth as in heaven,” and what they were called to be and to do as a result. These early writings mattered, in other words, because Jesus matters. He had claimed to be renewing God’s covenant (“testament”) with Israel, and through Israel with the whole creation; the early Christians believed that he had indeed done so. Hence “new covenant” or “new testament.” These books are central to all Christian understanding and living because of the centrality of the Jesus to whom they bear witness.

These books offer, in particular, a framework for understanding what the word “God” itself actually means. At the heart of the New Testament, glimpsed in story, poetry and vision, is the sense that with Jesus, and with his powerful spirit, the one God who had created the world had made himself known in a new way by rescuing that world. This one God was to be known in worship, but was to be known too in understanding, in thinking things through with the “renewed mind,” as Paul puts it (see Romans 12.2). The writers of these books wanted their hearers (the books were written to be read out loud) not only to think new thoughts about these key topics but *to think in a whole new way*, a way which combined rigorous intellectual engagement with the disciplined imagination of the artist and the praying heart of the believer.

We may suspect that this combination was as challenging to the early Christians as it is for many today. But, they might have said, come into the house by whichever door is the most natural for you, and these books will draw you into the other rooms as well. And the “house” with these doors, and these rooms, is the home of the one true God, where we all are invited as honored guests; guests who then discover they are part of the family. The New Testament is designed to issue that invitation, to offer that welcome,

xii and to explain what it all means.

## The gospels

For many people, the most natural starting point will be one or other of the four gospels, the books which stand at the head of the New Testament. These offer “the story of Jesus”; but like all good stories they are much more than just a string of events. For a start, they tell the story of Jesus *as the fulfillment of the ancient story of Israel*. Matthew begins with the genealogy that runs from Abraham to David, from David to the exile in Babylon, and then from the exile to the Messiah who would save his people and, thereby, the whole world. Mark opens with the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi that look ahead to the one God renewing the covenant at last; Luke, with a personal story that echoes the books of Samuel, introducing John the Baptist as the one who summed up the Old Covenant dispensation and ushered in the New. John opens with a clear echo of Genesis 1.1 (“in the beginning”): this is the start of the new creation itself.

But there’s more. The four gospels also tell the story of Jesus as the story of how the dark forces of evil, active in the wider world, seemed to converge onto a point when Jesus was announcing God’s kingdom. Herod the Great, and his son Herod Antipas, loom up threateningly; the populist pressure group called the “Pharisees” are constantly trying to catch Jesus out and accuse him; tormented souls shriek at him, sneering aristocrats mock him, his own followers misunderstand him and one of them ends up betraying him to the authorities. The Roman governor sums it all up, sending Jesus to his undeserved death. The gospel writers see all this as part of the point: evil gathers itself together and does its worst to Jesus, so that, when he dies under its weight, evil itself loses its ultimate power. That is why, then, the story of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, coming at the conclusion of all four gospels, is not simply a strange “happy ending” after the crucifixion. It is the launching of God’s new creation. This is, indeed, the underlying message of the whole “New Testament”: Israel’s God has acted in and through Jesus to renew the covenant with Israel and so to open the way for new creation to be born.

That is why, ultimately, the four gospels demand to be read as the story of *how God became King*. (“What?” people ask. “Is God not already King?” “Yes,” answer the gospels, “but his role has been usurped by the power of evil, and this is the story of how he overcame evil and won back his rightful rule.”) They tell the story of Jesus announcing that “the time is fulfilled” for God’s kingdom to appear on earth as in heaven, a reference to scriptural prophecies, especially in the book of Daniel. They also portray Jesus as constantly redefining what that “kingdom” would look like, through stories and acted symbols, especially healings and celebrations with the “wrong” kind of people: a very different “kingdom,” then, from the national and military revolution many of his contemporaries were expecting. Throughout, Jesus was talking about “God’s kingdom” *to explain what he himself was doing*, and the four gospel writers put the picture together, particularly through their allusions to Israel’s scriptures: this, they are saying, is what it looked like when *Israel’s God came back in person to rescue his people and the world*.

The four gospels are thus many-layered stories, which can be read simply to find out “what happened” but also, in more depth, to discover “what it meant.” There is no agreement about their date. Many think Mark was the first to be written; it is certainly the shortest, and has a clipped, punchy style, getting straight to the point. Matthew’s more leisurely presentation, taking the time to lay out Jesus’ public career and teaching in a way which evokes more explicitly the great traditions of Israel, particularly the law of Moses, shows Jesus as the Emmanuel, the God-with-us person, fulfilling every aspect of the scriptural promises up to and including his elevation, as Israel’s Messiah, to sovereignty over the whole world. Luke sets Jesus within the wider world of the non-Jewish nations: the story of Israel now fulfilled for the sake of the world. John’s breathtaking vision of new creation focuses on Jesus as the true “Temple,” the place where heaven and earth come together, through which his followers are themselves commissioned to be heaven-and-earth people, animated by the new breath of the spirit.

All four gospels, finally, are written in such a way as to show how the movement of Jesus’ followers began, and why it must take a certain shape. The mission, the unity, the prayerfulness and the obedience of the church all begin with Jesus’ call to the first disciples. They, like the ancient Israelites through the events of the exodus, will discover who they really are through Jesus’ own Passover, his final meal which interprets in advance his death and resurrection. The gospels thus invite their readers not just to look back at far-off events—though it matters that those events were unique and unrepeatable—but also to live within the story as it moves forward, or, perhaps better, to allow this story to live in fresh ways in and through them.

### Acts

Luke wrote a second volume, a sequel to his gospel. We call this “The Acts of the Apostles,” though it is in fact highly selective, focusing particularly on Peter in the first half and Paul in the second. It takes forward into the first Christian generation the key themes of the surprising kingdom of God and the vocation of Jesus’ followers to live and witness as a new kind of community. The book ends with Paul in Rome, announcing God as king and Jesus as Lord, “with all boldness and with no one stopping him.” That is Luke’s way of saying that what was accomplished by Jesus himself is now well and truly launched into the wider world.

### The letters

Letters, an obvious substitute for personal presence, mattered more in the ancient world than in today’s world of telephones and email. A letter written in, say, Ephesus might take a week to arrive in Corinth by sea, or a month if sent overland, so a writer like Paul would plan thoughtfully what to say. Some of his letters may have been written in a hurry, but in many cases, above all in Romans, it looks as though he has mapped it out carefully and taken pains with the structure and balance.

The letters written by Paul and others were not, however, designed to be systematic presentations of all that the early Christians believed. Not

even Romans, Paul's most "systematic" letter, is like that. The letters cover many topics, but they aim to meet particular needs and challenges and to warn of specific problems and difficulties. In particular, they are regularly attempting, not to close off further thought but to teach the hearers *how to think for themselves* as spirit-led, Jesus-focused communities. No letter could possibly cover everything the writer might have wanted to say; Paul and the others wanted people to take what had been written and to work things out from there. Paul urged his hearers to "grow up in their thinking"; to be "transformed by the renewing of the mind." The letters were an aid to that, not a substitute for it.

There are thirteen letters ascribed to Paul. There is no agreement as to whether he wrote them all, but most would say that the disputed ones come at least from sources close to him. It is actually quite easy to fit the letters (except the "Pastorals," that is, the two letters to Timothy and the one to Titus) into the narrative of Acts. Thus, if the Pastorals were written by Paul they must reflect a further journey or journeys after the conclusion of Acts, and we must also suppose that Paul had changed his style and tone somewhat.

Paul's letters are, in fact, the only parts of the New Testament which we may date reasonably securely. In my judgment, Galatians is the earliest, written most likely in AD 48; 1 and 2 Thessalonians are written around 50, with 1 Corinthians following in 52 or 53 and then the "prison letters" being written from Ephesus in 53 or 54 (Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, with Ephesians being a circular written to many churches in the region of western Turkey). Then, after Paul's release, he writes 2 Corinthians—the most painful of his letters—while on his way to Corinth for the last time; then, as he is leaving Greece for his journey to Jerusalem and then Rome, he writes Romans. Other schemes are possible but this one has the merit of simplicity and coherence.

The main themes of Paul's letters, and indeed all the other letters in the New Testament, focus on Jesus himself: Jesus as the embodiment of Israel's God, returning to rescue his people and the world; Jesus as Israel's Messiah, summing up in himself the covenantal obedience of Israel from Abraham onwards; Jesus whose death and resurrection form the fulcrum of all history, opening up a new world in which the evil powers have been defeated so that idolatrous and sinful humans can be rescued from their grip; Jesus whose spirit animates the believer and the whole church in the present and will breathe new life into dead bodies at the final resurrection. Jesus, in other words, as the inaugurator of the "new covenant" (2 Corinthians 3).

## Revelation

The last book of the Bible stands out by itself. It belongs in the genre we loosely call "Apocalyptic," in which the writer reports visions and revelations which bring the truth of the heavenly world to bear on the earthly. However, the difference of genre should not mask the fact that the book deals with the same realities as the gospels and the letters, namely the victory of God, through Jesus the Messiah, over all the powers of evil, and the inauguration of God's new creation in fulfillment of the ancient scriptural promises.



## Galilee, Samaria and Judaea in the First Century AD



## MATTHEW

All four gospels are emphatically Jewish in tone and content, but Matthew's is the most obviously so. The book is structured around five blocks of Jesus' teaching, corresponding to the five books of Moses. The early chapters have Jesus re-enacting the exodus from Egypt; the closing chapters highlight Jesus' death at Passover. The book opens with a genealogy from Abraham to the Messiah, and closes with a scene echoing Daniel's picture of the enthroned son of man. Matthew repeatedly draws attention to the way in which events concerning Jesus fulfill biblical promises. At every turn he insists that Jesus is what Israel had been waiting for—even though this fulfillment turned out to be shocking.

The genealogy itself tells the whole story, for those with eyes to see. Matthew organizes it into three sequences of fourteen generations, from Abraham to David, David to the Babylonian exile, and the exile to Jesus. Abraham is the founder of the family through whom the one God would rescue the world; David is the king who is promised an heir to rule the world; the Babylonian exile is the point at which, in line with the covenantal warnings in Deuteronomy, the world seems to have won and the promise to be lost forever. But God's faithfulness continues, and the Messiah is the one who will save his people from their sins. He inaugurates the seventh "seven," the Jubilee of forgiveness. But the Messiah is not simply the long fulfillment of Israel's promises. He is also "Emmanuel," "God with us."

The story unfolds as Jesus embodies Israel's history, going into Egypt as a baby and then returning, and then, in his baptism, re-enacting the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan. In his wilderness temptations, he succeeds where ancient Israel had failed. All this prepares us for Jesus' opening announcement of God's kingdom arriving on earth as in heaven, and his enactment of this, throughout the story, in powerful deeds of healing, in his feasting with tax-collectors and sinners, and in his refashioning of the kingdom—hope in sermon and parable. The five great blocks

of teaching open with the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5—7) and continue with the instructions to the disciples (chapter 10), the parables of seeds and sowing (chapter 13) and the further instructions for his followers' communal life (chapter 18), before the last block mirrors the first in its length (chapters 23—25), looking ahead with warnings and promises to the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the rescue and vindication of Jesus' followers.

Throughout the story the question of who Jesus really is, and how exactly he will bring God's kingdom, is never far away. It reaches a central climax with Peter's confession that Jesus is "the Messiah . . . the son of the living God," and with the transfiguration. But Matthew leads the eye relentlessly towards the final events of Jesus' dramatic entry into Jerusalem, his action in the Temple, the Last Supper, and the arrest, trial and crucifixion. Matthew makes it clear that these events all interpret one another, and together point to the long-awaited act of divine and messianic rescue: the forces of evil do their worst and are defeated. Texts from the Psalms, Isaiah, Daniel and elsewhere are drawn together to say that this is the ultimate saving act promised all along. The resurrection of Jesus is then the beginning of an entirely new phase of history for the people of God, as Jesus commissions his followers to announce the good news to the whole world.

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

### Jesus' genealogy

**1** The book of the family tree of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham became the father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup>Judah of Peres and Zara (by Tamar), Peres of Esrom, Esrom of Aram, <sup>4</sup>Aram of Aminadab, Aminadab of Naason, Naason of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>Salmon of Boaz (by Rahab), Boaz of Obed (by Ruth), Obed of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon (by the wife of Uriah), <sup>7</sup>Solomon of Rehoboam, Rehoboam of Abijah, Abijah of Asaph, <sup>8</sup>Asaph of Jehosaphat, Jehosaphat of Joram, Joram of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>Uzziah of Joatham, Joatham of Ahaz, Ahaz of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>Hezekiah of Manasseh, Manasseh of Amoz, Amoz of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>Josiah of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the exile in Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>After the Babylonian exile, Jeconiah became the father of Salathiel, Salathiel of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>Zerubbabel of Abioud, Abioud of Eliakim, Eliakim of Azor, <sup>14</sup>Azor of Sadok, Sadok of Achim, Achim of Elioud, <sup>15</sup>Elioud of Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, Matthan of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob of Joseph the husband of Mary, from whom was born Jesus, who is called "Messiah."

<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David add up to fourteen; from David to the Babylonian exile, fourteen generations; and from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

### The birth of Jesus

<sup>18</sup>This was how the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place. His mother, Mary, was engaged to Joseph; but before they came together she turned out to be pregnant—by the holy spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her husband-to-be, was an upright man. He didn't want to make a public example of her. So he decided to set the marriage aside privately. <sup>20</sup>But, while he was considering this, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream.

"Joseph, son of David," said the angel, "don't be afraid to get married to Mary. The child she is carrying is from the holy spirit. <sup>21</sup>She is going to have a son. You are to give him the name Jesus; he is the one

**4** who will save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup>All this happened so that what the Lord said through the prophet might be fulfilled: <sup>23</sup>“Look: the virgin is pregnant, and will have a son, and they shall give him the name Emmanuel,”—which means, in translation, “God with us.”

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up from his sleep he did what the Lord’s angel had told him to. He married his wife, <sup>25</sup>but he didn’t have sexual relations with her until after the birth of her son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

### The Magi visit Jesus

**2** When Jesus was born, in Bethlehem of Judaea, at the time when Herod was king, some wise and learned men came to Jerusalem from the East.

<sup>2</sup>“Where is the one,” they asked, “who has been born to be king of the Jews? We have seen his star rising in the East, and we have come to worship him.”

<sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was very disturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He called together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, and inquired from them where the Messiah was to be born.

<sup>5</sup>“In Bethlehem of Judaea,” they replied. “That’s what it says in the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>You, Bethlehem, in Judah’s land  
are not the least of Judah’s princes;  
from out of you will come the ruler  
who will shepherd Israel my people.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod called the wise men to him in secret. He found out from them precisely when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem.

“Off you go,” he said, “and make a thorough search for the child. When you find him, report back to me, so that I can come and worship him too.”

<sup>9</sup>When they heard what the king said, they set off. There was the star, the one they had seen rising in the East, going ahead of them! It went and stood still over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were beside themselves with joy and excitement. <sup>11</sup>They went into the house and saw the child, with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. They opened their treasure-chests and gave him presents: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup>They were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they returned to their own country by a different route.

## Travels to Egypt

<sup>13</sup>After the Magi had gone, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

“Get up,” he said, “and take the child, and his mother, and hurry off to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to hunt for the child, to kill him.”

<sup>14</sup>So he got up and took the child and his mother by night, and went off to Egypt. <sup>15</sup>He stayed there until the death of Herod. This happened to fulfill what the Lord said through the prophet:

Out of Egypt I called my son.

<sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the Magi, he flew into a towering rage. He dispatched people to kill all the boys in Bethlehem, and in all its surrounding districts, from two years old and under, according to the time the Magi had told him. <sup>17</sup>That was when the word that came through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup>There was heard a voice in Rama,  
crying and loud lamentation.  
Rachel is weeping for her children,  
and will not let anyone comfort her,  
because they are no more.

<sup>19</sup>After the death of Herod, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.

<sup>20</sup>“Get up,” he said, “and take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel. Those who wanted to kill the child are dead.”

<sup>21</sup>So he got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel.

<sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judaea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there. After being advised in a dream, he went off to the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>When he got there, he settled in a town called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what the prophet had spoken:

He shall be called a Nazorean.

## The preaching of John the Baptist

**3** In those days John the Baptist appeared. He was preaching in the Judaeian wilderness.

<sup>2</sup>“Repent!” he was saying. “The kingdom of heaven is coming!”

**6** <sup>3</sup>John, you see, is the person spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, when he said,

The voice of someone shouting in the desert:  
 “Prepare the route that the Lord will take,  
 straighten out his paths!”

<sup>4</sup>John himself had clothing made from camel’s hair, and a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Jerusalem, all Judaea, and the whole area around the Jordan, were going off to him. <sup>6</sup>They were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup>He saw several Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized by him.

“You brood of vipers!” he said to them. “Who warned you to escape from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>You’d better prove your repentance by bearing the right sort of fruit! <sup>9</sup>And you needn’t start thinking to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ Let me tell you, God is quite capable of raising up children for Abraham from these stones! <sup>10</sup>The axe is already taking aim at the root of the trees. Every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit is to be cut down and thrown into the fire.

### Jesus’ baptism

<sup>11</sup>“I am baptizing you with water, for repentance,” John continued. “But the one who is coming behind me is more powerful than me! I’m not even worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the holy spirit and fire! <sup>12</sup>He’s got his shovel in his hand, ready to clear out his barn, and gather all his corn into the granary. But he’ll burn up the chaff with a fire that will never go out.”

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus arrived at the Jordan from Galilee, and came to John to be baptized by him.

<sup>14</sup>John tried to stop him.

“I ought to be baptized by you,” he said, “and are you going to come to me?”

<sup>15</sup>“This is how it’s got to be right now,” said Jesus. “This is the right way for us to complete God’s whole saving plan.”

So John consented, <sup>16</sup>and Jesus was baptized. All at once, as he came up out of the water, suddenly the heavens were opened, and he saw God’s spirit coming down like a dove and landing on him.

<sup>17</sup>Then there came a voice out of the heavens.

“This is my son, my beloved one,” said the voice. “I am delighted with him.”

### Temptation in the wilderness

**4** Then Jesus was led out into the wilderness by the spirit to be tested by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and at the end of it was famished. <sup>3</sup>Then the tempter approached him.

“If you really are God’s son,” he said, “tell these stones to become bread!”

<sup>4</sup>“The Bible says,” replied Jesus, “that it takes more than bread to keep you alive. You actually live on every word that comes out of God’s mouth.”

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him off to the holy city, and stood him on a pinnacle of the Temple.

<sup>6</sup>“If you really are God’s son,” he said, “throw yourself down. The Bible does say, after all, that ‘God will give his angels a command about you’; and ‘they will carry you in their hands, so that you won’t hurt your foot against a stone.’”

<sup>7</sup>“But the Bible also says,” replied Jesus, “that you mustn’t put the Lord your God to the test!”

<sup>8</sup>Then the devil took him off again, this time to a very high mountain. There he showed him all the magnificent kingdoms of the world.

<sup>9</sup>“I’ll give the whole lot to you,” he said, “if you will fall down and worship me.”

<sup>10</sup>“Get out of it, satan!” replied Jesus. “The Bible says, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone!’”

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and angels came and looked after him.

### Announcing the kingdom

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he went off to Galilee. <sup>13</sup>He left Nazareth, and went to live at Capernaum, a small town by the sea in the region of Zebulon and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup>This happened so that the word spoken through Isaiah the prophet might come true:

<sup>15</sup>The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali,  
the road by the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee, land of the nations:

<sup>16</sup>the people who sat in the dark saw a great light;  
light dawned on those who sat in the shadowy land of death.

<sup>17</sup>From that time on Jesus began to make his proclamation.

“Repent!” he would say. “The kingdom of heaven is arriving!”

### Jesus calls the disciples

<sup>18</sup>As Jesus was walking beside the sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon (also called Peter) and Andrew his brother. They were fishermen, and were casting nets into the sea.

<sup>19</sup>“Follow me!” said Jesus. “I’ll make you fish for people!”

<sup>20</sup>Straight away they abandoned their nets and followed him.

<sup>21</sup>He went on further, and saw two other brothers, James the son of  
8 Zebedee and John his brother. They were in the boat, mending their

nets, with Zebedee their father. He called them. <sup>22</sup>At once they left the boat, and their father, and followed him.

<sup>23</sup>He went on through the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, healing every disease and every illness among the people.

<sup>24</sup>Word about him went out around the whole of Syria. They brought to him all the people tormented with various kinds of diseases and ailments, demon-possessed people, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. <sup>25</sup>Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, Judaea and beyond the Jordan.

### The Beatitudes

**5** When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the hillside, and sat down. His disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>He took a deep breath, and began his teaching:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessings on the poor in spirit! The kingdom of heaven is yours.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessings on the mourners! You’re going to be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessings on the meek! You’re going to inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessings on people who hunger and thirst for God’s justice! You’re going to be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessings on the merciful! You’ll receive mercy yourselves.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessings on the pure in heart! You will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessings on the peacemakers! You’ll be called God’s children.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessings on people who are persecuted because of God’s saving plan! The kingdom of heaven belongs to you.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessings on you, when people slander you and persecute you, and say all kinds of wicked things about you falsely because of me!

<sup>12</sup>Celebrate and rejoice: there’s a great reward for you in heaven. That’s how they persecuted the prophets who went before you.”

### Fulfilling the law

<sup>13</sup>“You’re the salt of the earth! But if the salt becomes tasteless, how is it going to get salty again? It’s no good for anything. You might as well throw it out and walk all over it.

<sup>14</sup>“You’re the light of the world! A city can’t be hidden if it’s on top of a hill. <sup>15</sup>People don’t light a lamp and put it under a bucket; they put it on a lampstand. Then it gives light to everybody in the house.

<sup>16</sup>That’s how you must shine your light in front of people! Then they will see what wonderful things you do, and they’ll give glory to your father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup>“Don’t suppose that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn’t come to destroy them; I came to fulfill them! <sup>18</sup>I’m telling you the truth: until heaven and earth disappear, not one stroke, not one dot, is going to disappear from the law, until it’s all come true. <sup>19</sup>So

anyone who relaxes a single one of these commandments, even the little ones, and teaches that to people, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But anyone who does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>20</sup>“Yes, let me tell you: unless your covenant behavior is far superior to that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get in to the kingdom of heaven.”

### On murder and reconciliation

<sup>21</sup>“You heard that it was said to the ancient people, ‘You shall not murder’; and anyone who commits murder shall be liable to judgment.

<sup>22</sup>But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; anyone who uses foul and abusive language will be liable to the lawcourt; and anyone who says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to the fires of Gehenna.

<sup>23</sup>“So, if you are coming to the altar with your gift, and there you remember that your brother has a grievance against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift right there in front of the altar, and go first and be reconciled to your brother. Then come back and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup>Make friends with your opponent quickly, while you are with him in the street, in case your opponent hands you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you find yourself being thrown into jail. <sup>26</sup>I’m telling you the truth: you won’t get out until you’ve paid every last copper coin.”

### On adultery and oaths

<sup>27</sup>“You heard,” Jesus continued, “that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup>But I say to you: everyone who gazes at a woman in order to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your right eye trips you up, tear it out and throw it away. Yes: it’s better for you to have one part of your body destroyed than for your whole body to be thrown into Gehenna. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand trips you up, cut it off and throw it away. Yes: it’s better for you to have one part of your body destroyed than for your whole body to go into Gehenna.

<sup>31</sup>“It was also said, ‘If someone divorces his wife, he should give her a legal document to prove it.’ <sup>32</sup>But I say to you: everyone who divorces his wife, unless it’s in connection with immorality, makes her commit adultery; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

<sup>33</sup>“Again, you heard that it was said to the people long ago: ‘You shall not swear falsely, but you shall give to the Lord what you promised under oath.’ <sup>34</sup>But I say to you: don’t swear at all! Don’t swear by heaven (it’s God’s throne!); <sup>35</sup>don’t swear by the earth (it’s God’s footstool!); don’t swear by Jerusalem (it’s the city of the great king!); <sup>36</sup>don’t swear by your head (you can’t make one hair of it turn white or black!). <sup>37</sup>When

you're talking, say 'Yes' when you mean Yes, and 'No' when you mean No. Anything more than that comes from the evil one."

### Loving your enemies

<sup>38</sup>"You heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup>But I say to you: don't use violence to resist evil! Instead, when someone hits you on the right cheek, turn the other one towards him. <sup>40</sup>When someone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your cloak, too. <sup>41</sup>And when someone forces you to go one mile, go a second one with him. <sup>42</sup>Give to anyone who asks you, and don't refuse someone who wants to borrow from you.

<sup>43</sup>"You heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' <sup>44</sup>But I tell you: love your enemies! Pray for people who persecute you! <sup>45</sup>That way, you'll be children of your father in heaven! After all, he makes his sun rise on bad and good alike, and sends rain both on the upright and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>Look at it like this: if you love those who love you, do you expect a special reward? Even tax-collectors do that, don't they? <sup>47</sup>And if you only greet your own family, what's so special about that? Even Gentiles do that, don't they? <sup>48</sup>Well then: you must be perfect, just as your heavenly father is perfect."

### Piety in secret

**6** "When you are practicing your piety, mind you don't do it with an eye on the audience! Otherwise, you won't have any reward from your father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>"So when you give money to the poor, don't sound a trumpet in front of you. That's what people do when they're just play-acting, in the synagogues and the streets. They do it so that people will be impressed at them. I'm telling you the truth: they've received their reward in full. <sup>3</sup>No: when you give money, don't let your left hand have any idea what your right hand is up to. <sup>4</sup>That way, your giving will be in secret. And your father, who sees in secret, will repay you.

<sup>5</sup>"When you pray, you mustn't be like the play-actors. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on street corners, so that people will notice them. I'm telling you the truth: they have received their reward in full. <sup>6</sup>No: when you pray, go into your own room, shut the door, and pray to your father who is there in secret. And your father, who sees in secret, will repay you."

### The Lord's Prayer

<sup>7</sup>"When you pray, don't pile up a jumbled heap of words! That's what the Gentiles do. They reckon that the more they say, the more likely they are to be heard. <sup>8</sup>So don't be like them. You see, your father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup>“So this is how you should pray:

Our father in heaven,  
 may your name be honored.  
<sup>10</sup>May your kingdom come.  
 May your will be done,  
 as in heaven, so on earth.  
<sup>11</sup>Give us today the bread we need now;  
<sup>12</sup>and forgive us the things we owe,  
 as we too have forgiven what was owed to us.  
<sup>13</sup>Don’t bring us into the great trial,  
 but rescue us from evil.

<sup>14</sup>“Yes: if you forgive people the wrong they have done, your heavenly father will forgive you as well. <sup>15</sup>But if you don’t forgive people, neither will your heavenly father forgive you what you have done wrong.”

### On fasting and lasting treasure

<sup>16</sup>“When you fast, don’t be gloomy like the play-actors. They make their faces quite unrecognizable, so that everyone can see they’re fasting. I’m telling you the truth: they have received their reward in full. <sup>17</sup>No: when you fast, tidy your hair and beard the way you normally do, and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that others won’t notice you’re fasting—except your father, privately. Then your father, who sees in private, will repay you.

<sup>19</sup>“Don’t store up treasure on earth. Moths and rust will eat it away, and robbers will break in and steal it. <sup>20</sup>No: store up for yourselves treasure in heaven! Moths and rust don’t eat it away there, and no robbers break in and steal it. <sup>21</sup>Show me your treasure, and I’ll show you where your heart is.

<sup>22</sup>“The eye is the lamp of the body. So if your eye is honest and clear, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eye is evil, your whole body is in the dark. So, if the light within you turns out to be darkness, darkness doesn’t come any darker than that.

<sup>24</sup>“Nobody can serve two masters. Otherwise, they will either hate the first and love the second, or be devoted to the first and despise the second. You can’t serve both God and wealth.”

### Do not worry

<sup>25</sup>“So let me tell you: don’t worry about your life—what to eat, what to drink; don’t worry about your body—what to wear. There’s more to life than food! There’s more to the body than a suit of clothes! <sup>26</sup>Have a good look at the birds in the sky. They don’t plant seeds, they don’t bring in the harvest, they don’t store things in barns—and your father

in heaven feeds them! Think how different you are from them! <sup>27</sup>Can any of you add fifteen inches to your height just by worrying about it?

<sup>28</sup>“And why worry about what to wear? Take a tip from the lilies in the countryside. They don’t work; they don’t weave; <sup>29</sup>but, let me tell you, not even Solomon in all his finery was dressed as well as one of these. <sup>30</sup>So if God gives that sort of clothing even to the grass in the field, which is here today and on the bonfire tomorrow, isn’t he far more likely to clothe you too, you little-faith lot?

<sup>31</sup>“So don’t worry away with your ‘What’ll we eat?’ and ‘What’ll we drink?’ and ‘What’ll we wear?’ <sup>32</sup>Those are all the kinds of things the Gentiles fuss about, and your heavenly father knows you need them all. <sup>33</sup>Instead, make your top priority God’s kingdom and his way of life, and all these things will be given to you as well.

<sup>34</sup>“So don’t worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow can worry about itself. One day’s trouble at a time is quite enough.”

### On judging others

**7** “Don’t judge people, and you won’t be judged yourself. <sup>2</sup>You’ll be judged, you see, by the judgment you use to judge others! You’ll be measured by the measuring-rod you use to measure others! <sup>3</sup>Why do you stare at the splinter in your neighbor’s eye, but ignore the plank in your own? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your neighbor, ‘Here—let me get that splinter out of your eye,’ when you’ve got the plank in your own? <sup>5</sup>You’re just play-acting! First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you’ll see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your neighbor’s eye.

<sup>6</sup>“Don’t give holy things to dogs. Don’t throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they will trample them under their feet—and then turn round and attack you!”

### On prayer

<sup>7</sup>“Ask and it will be given to you! Search and you will find! Knock and the door will be opened for you! <sup>8</sup>Everyone who asks receives; everyone who searches finds; everyone who knocks will have the door opened. <sup>9</sup>Don’t you see? Supposing your son asks you for bread—which of you is going to give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish—which of you is going to give him a serpent? <sup>11</sup>Well then: you may be evil, but you still know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more will your father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

<sup>12</sup>“So whatever you want people to do to you, do just that to them. Yes; this is what the law and the prophets are all about.”

### The two ways

<sup>13</sup>“Go in by the narrow gate. The gate that leads to destruction, you see, is nice and wide, and the road going there has plenty of room. Lots of

people go that way. <sup>14</sup>But the gate leading to life is narrow, and the road going there is a tight squeeze. Not many people find their way through.

<sup>15</sup>“Watch out for false prophets. They will come to you dressed like sheep, but inside they are hungry wolves. <sup>16</sup>You’ll be able to tell them by the fruit they bear: you don’t find grapes growing on thorn-bushes, do you, or figs on thistles? <sup>17</sup>Well, in the same way, good trees produce good fruit, and bad trees produce bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>Actually, good trees *can’t* produce bad fruit, nor can bad ones produce good fruit! <sup>19</sup>Every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit is cut down and thrown on the fire. <sup>20</sup>So: you must recognize them by their fruits.

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Master, Master’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; only people who do the will of my father in heaven. <sup>22</sup>On that day lots of people will say to me, ‘Master, Master—we prophesied in your name, didn’t we? We cast out demons in your name! We performed lots of powerful deeds in your name!’

<sup>23</sup>“Then I will have to say to them, ‘I never knew you! You’re a bunch of evildoers—go away from me!’”

### True obedience

<sup>24</sup>“So, then, everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>Heavy rain fell; floods rose up; the winds blew and beat on that house. It didn’t fall, because it was founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup>And all those who hear these words of mine and don’t do them—they will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>Heavy rain fell; floods rose up; the winds blew and battered the house—and down it fell! It fell with a great crash.”

<sup>28</sup>When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching. <sup>29</sup>He was teaching them, you see, on his own authority, quite unlike their scribes.

### Two healings

**8** When Jesus came down from the hillside, large crowds followed him. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly someone with a virulent skin disease approached, and knelt down in front of him.

“Master,” he said, “if you want, you can make me clean!”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him.

“I do want to,” he said. “Be clean!” At once his disease was cured.

<sup>4</sup>“Take care,” Jesus said to him, “not to say anything to anyone. Instead, go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering which Moses commanded. That will be a proof to them.”

<sup>5</sup>Jesus went into Capernaum. A centurion came up and pleaded with him.

<sup>6</sup>“Master,” he said, “my servant is lying at home, paralyzed. He’s in a very bad state.”

<sup>7</sup>“I’ll come and make him better,” said Jesus.

<sup>8</sup>“Master,” replied the centurion, “I don’t deserve to have you come under my roof! Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup>I know what authority’s all about, you see—I’ve got soldiers answering to me, and I can say to one of them, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another one, ‘Come here!’ and he comes, and I can say, ‘Do this,’ to my slave, and he does it!”

<sup>10</sup>Jesus was fair amazed when he heard this.

“I’m telling you the truth,” he said to the people who were following. “I haven’t found faith like this—not even in Israel! <sup>11</sup>Let me tell you this: lots of people will come from East and West and join the great party of celebration with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup>But the children of the kingdom will be thrown into outer darkness, where people will weep and gnash their teeth.”

<sup>13</sup>Then he turned to the centurion.

“Go home,” he said. “Let it be for you as you believed.”

And his servant was healed at that very moment.

### On following Jesus

<sup>14</sup>Jesus went into Peter’s house. There he saw Peter’s mother-in-law laid low with a fever. <sup>15</sup>He touched her hand. The fever left her, and she got up and waited on him.

<sup>16</sup>When evening came, they brought to him many people who were possessed by demons. He cast out the spirits with a word of command, and healed everyone who was sick. <sup>17</sup>This happened so that the word spoken by Isaiah the prophet might come true:

He himself took our weaknesses  
and bore our diseases.

<sup>18</sup>When Jesus saw the crowd all around him, he told them to go across to the other side of the lake. <sup>19</sup>A scribe came up and spoke to him.

“Teacher,” he said, “I will follow you wherever you go!”

<sup>20</sup>“Foxes have their dens,” replied Jesus, “and the birds in the sky have their nests. But the son of man has nowhere he can lay his head.”

<sup>21</sup>“Master,” said another of his disciples, “let me first go and see to my father’s funeral.”

<sup>22</sup>“Follow me!” replied Jesus. “And leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

### The calming of the storm

<sup>23</sup>So Jesus got into the boat, and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup>All of a sudden a great storm blew up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves. Jesus, however, was asleep. <sup>25</sup>They came and woke him up.

“Help! Master! Rescue us!” they shouted. “We’re done for!”

<sup>26</sup>“Why are you so scared, you little-faith lot?” he replied.

Then he got up and told the wind and the sea to behave themselves, and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup>They were all astonished.

“What sort of man is this,” they said, “that the winds and the sea do what he says?”

### The healing of the demoniacs

<sup>28</sup>So he went across to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes. Two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs. They were very violent and made it impossible for anyone to go along that road.

<sup>29</sup>“What is it with us and you, son of God?” they yelled. “Have you come here to torture us ahead of the time?”

<sup>30</sup>Some way off from where they were there was a large herd of pigs feeding.

<sup>31</sup>“If you cast us out,” the demons begged Jesus, “send us into the herd of pigs!”

<sup>32</sup>“Off you go, then!” said Jesus.

So the demons went out of the men and into the pigs. Then and there the entire herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake, and were drowned in the water.

<sup>33</sup>The herdsmen took to their heels. They went off to the town and told the whole tale, including the bit about the demon-possessed men.

<sup>34</sup>So the whole town came out to see Jesus for themselves. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their district.

### The healing of the paralytic

**9** Jesus got into the boat, and crossed back over to his own town.

<sup>2</sup>Some people brought to him a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Cheer up, my son! Your sins are forgiven!”

<sup>3</sup>“This fellow’s blaspheming!” said some of the scribes to themselves.

<sup>4</sup>Jesus read their thoughts. “Why let all this wickedness fester in your hearts?” he said. <sup>5</sup>“Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?” <sup>6</sup>But, to let you know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he spoke to the paralyzed man—“Get up, pick up your bed, and go home!”

<sup>7</sup>And he got up, and went away to his home. <sup>8</sup>When the crowds saw it they were frightened, and praised God for giving authority like this to humans.

### The call of Matthew

<sup>9</sup>As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-office.

**16** “Follow me!” he said to him. And he got up and followed him.

<sup>10</sup>When he was at home, sitting down to a meal, there were lots of tax-collectors and sinners there who had come to have dinner with Jesus and his disciples. <sup>11</sup>When the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?”

<sup>12</sup>Jesus heard them.

“It isn’t the healthy who need a doctor,” he said, “it’s the sick. <sup>13</sup>Go and learn what this saying means: ‘It’s mercy I want, not sacrifice.’ My job isn’t to call upright people, but sinners.”

<sup>14</sup>Then John’s disciples came to him with a question.

“How come,” they asked, “we and the Pharisees fast frequently, but your disciples don’t fast at all?”

<sup>15</sup>“Wedding guests can’t fast, can they,” replied Jesus, “as long as the bridegroom is with them? But sooner or later the bridegroom will be taken away from them. They’ll fast then all right.

<sup>16</sup>“No one,” he went on, “sews a patch of unshrunk cloth onto an old coat. The patch will simply pull away from the coat, and you’ll have a worse hole than you started with. <sup>17</sup>People don’t put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the skins will split, the wine will be lost, and the skins will be ruined. They put new wine into new skins, and then both are fine.”

### The raising of the little girl

<sup>18</sup>As Jesus was saying this, suddenly an official came up and knelt down in front of him.

“It’s my daughter!” he said. “She’s just died! But—if you’ll come and lay your hand on her, she’ll come back to life!”

<sup>19</sup>Jesus got up and followed him. So did his disciples.

<sup>20</sup>Just then a woman appeared. She had suffered from internal bleeding for twelve years. She came up behind Jesus and touched the hem of his coat.

<sup>21</sup>“If I can only touch his coat,” she said to herself, “I’ll be rescued.”

<sup>22</sup>Jesus turned round and saw her.

“Cheer up, my daughter!” he said. “Your faith has rescued you.”

And the woman was healed from that moment.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus went into the official’s house. There he saw the flute-players, and everybody in a great state of agitation.

<sup>24</sup>“Go away!” he said. “The little girl isn’t dead. She’s asleep!” And they laughed at him.

<sup>25</sup>So when the crowd had been put out, he went in and took hold of her hand, and she got up. <sup>26</sup>The report of this went out around the whole of that region.

### Jesus’ fame increases

<sup>27</sup>As Jesus was leaving the area, two blind men followed him, shouting “Have pity on us, son of David!” at the tops of their voices.

<sup>28</sup>Jesus went into the house, and the blind men came to him.

“Do you believe that I can do this?” asked Jesus.

“Yes, Master,” they replied.

<sup>29</sup>Then Jesus touched their eyes. “As you have believed, so let it happen,” he said. <sup>30</sup>And their eyes were opened.

Then Jesus gave them a stern warning. “Take good care,” he said, “that nobody gets to know about this.” <sup>31</sup>But they went out and spread the news in the whole of that region.

<sup>32</sup>After they had left, people brought to Jesus a demon-possessed man who couldn’t speak. <sup>33</sup>Jesus cast out the demon, and the man spoke. The crowds were amazed. “Nothing like this ever happened in Israel,” they said. <sup>34</sup>But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the prince of demons.”

<sup>35</sup>Jesus went around all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, announcing the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup>When he saw the crowds, he felt deeply sorry for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup>Then he said to his disciples, “There’s plenty of harvest to be had, but not many workers! <sup>38</sup>So pray the master of the harvest to send more workers to harvest his fields!”

### The Twelve are sent out

**10** Jesus called his twelve disciples to him, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal every disease and every sickness.

<sup>2</sup>These are the names of the twelve apostles. First, Simon, who is called Peter (“the rock”), and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup>Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector, James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup>Simon the Cananaean; and Judas Iscariot (who betrayed him).

<sup>5</sup>Jesus sent these Twelve off with the following instructions.

“Don’t go into Gentile territory,” he said, “and don’t go into a Samaritan town. <sup>6</sup>Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup>As you go, declare publicly that the kingdom of heaven has arrived. <sup>8</sup>Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse people with skin diseases, cast out demons.

“You received without cost; give without charge. <sup>9</sup>Don’t take any gold or silver or copper in your belts; <sup>10</sup>no bag for the road, no second cloak, no sandals, no stick. Workers deserve their keep.

<sup>11</sup>“When you go into a town or village, make careful inquiry for someone who is good and trustworthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup>When you go into the house give a solemn greeting. <sup>13</sup>If the house is trustworthy, let your blessing of peace rest upon it, but if not, let it return to you. <sup>14</sup>If anyone won’t welcome you or listen to your message,

go out of the house or the town and shake the dust off your feet. <sup>15</sup>I'm telling you the truth: it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town."

### Sheep among wolves

<sup>16</sup>"See here," Jesus continued, "I'm sending you out like sheep surrounded by wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes, and as innocent as doves.

<sup>17</sup>"Watch out for danger from people around you. They will hand you over to councils, and flog you in their synagogues. <sup>18</sup>You will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as evidence to them and to the nations. <sup>19</sup>But when they hand you over, don't worry how to speak or what to say. What you have to say will be given to you at that moment. <sup>20</sup>It won't be you speaking, you see; it will be the spirit of your father speaking in you.

<sup>21</sup>"One brother will betray another to death; fathers will betray children, and children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>22</sup>You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who holds out to the end will be delivered.

<sup>23</sup>"When they persecute you in one town, run off to the next one. I'm telling you the truth: you won't have gone through all the towns of Israel before the son of man comes."

### Warnings and encouragements

<sup>24</sup>"The disciple isn't greater than the teacher; the slave isn't greater than the master. <sup>25</sup>It's quite enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave to be like the master. If they called the master of the house 'Beelzebul,' think what they're going to call his family!

<sup>26</sup>"Don't be afraid of them. Nothing is hidden, you see, that won't come to light; nothing is secret that won't be made known. <sup>27</sup>What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light, and what you hear whispered in your ears, announce from the roofs of the houses.

<sup>28</sup>"Don't be afraid of people who can kill the body, but can't kill the soul. The one you should be afraid of is the one who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna. <sup>29</sup>How much would you get for a couple of sparrows? A single copper coin if you're lucky? And not one of them falls to the ground without your father knowing about it. <sup>30</sup>When it comes to you—why, every hair on your head is counted. <sup>31</sup>So don't be afraid! You're worth much more than a great many sparrows."

### Jesus causes division

<sup>32</sup>"So: everyone who owns up in front of others to being on my side, I will own them before my father in heaven. <sup>33</sup>But anyone who disowns me in front of others, I will disown that person before my father in heaven.