

Language: English

Book: Matthew

Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew

Overview

Matthew wrote certain things about Jesus in his gospel. These things helped people to know about Jesus. They helped them to know that Jesus was the Messiah even though he did not free the Jews from the Roman Empire.

See: [Gospel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who wrote this gospel?

The book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times scholars have thought that the apostle Matthew wrote this gospel.

See: [Apostle](#); [Gospel](#)

To whom did Matthew write?

Matthew wrote to Christians and non-Christians. Scholars think he was thinking more about the Jews when he wrote than the Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#)

What did Matthew write about in this gospel?

The Gospel of Matthew is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of Jesus' life. The authors of the gospels wrote in different ways about who Jesus was and what he did. Matthew showed that Jesus is the Messiah and that God would save Israel through him. Matthew often explained that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Israel](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did Matthew write this gospel?

Matthew wanted his readers to know that Jesus is the messiah. He was different than the messiah they were expecting, but he is still their king. He wanted people to know why the Jews rejected him and the plans God has for Israel in the future.

Outline of the Gospel of Matthew

1. The birth of Jesus Christ and when he began to serve God in a certain way (1:1-4:25)
2. Jesus' teaching on the side of the mountain (5:1-7:28)
3. Jesus illustrates the kingdom of God by healing people (8:1-9:34)
4. Jesus' teaching about his the things God wanted him to do and the kingdom of God (9:35-10:42)
5. Jesus' teaching about the gospel of the kingdom of God. The beginning of opposition to Jesus (11:1-12:50)
6. Jesus' parables about the kingdom of God (13:1-52)
7. Further opposition to Jesus and misunderstanding of the kingdom of God (13:53-17:57)
8. Jesus' teaching about life in the kingdom of God (18:1-35)
9. Jesus' serving God in Jerusalem (19:1-23:39)
10. Jesus' teaching on the end of the age (24:1-25:46)
11. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus (26:1-28:15)
12. The final instruction of Jesus to his disciples (28:16-20)

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Parable](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Disciple](#)

Matthew

Chapter 1

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram.

⁴ Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon.

⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse.

⁶ Jesse was the father of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

⁷ Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa.

⁸ Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram an ancestor of Uzziah.

⁹ Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah.

¹⁰ Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah.

¹¹ Josiah was an ancestor of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

¹² After the deportation to Babylon, Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel was an ancestor of Zerubbabel.

¹³ Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor.

¹⁴ Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud.

¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob.

¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

¹⁷ All the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way. His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ But Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to publicly disgrace her, so he intended to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ As he thought about these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, because the one who is conceived in her is conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² Now all this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ²³ "Behold, the virgin will become pregnant and will bear a son, and they will call his name Immanuel"—which being translated is, "God with us." ²⁴ Joseph got up from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and he took her as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not know her until she gave birth to a son. Then he called his name Jesus.

Matthew Commentary

1:1-17

Why did Matthew write about Jesus' ancestors?

[1:1]

Matthew wrote about Jesus' ancestors so people would know that he rule Israel because he was a descendant of King David.

See: [Son of David](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Son of David](#)

What does the name, "Jesus," mean?

[1:1]

"Jesus" was the Greek form of the Hebrew name "Joshua." The name "Joshua" meant "God saves." Other men of the Israelites also had this name, but Jesus was unlike them because he was also the "son of David." The title "son of David" was also a name for the messiah.

See: [Son of David](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Son of David](#)

1:18-25

What did it mean "to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit"?

[1:18, 1:20]

Scholars think that "to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit" meant that the Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant. It was a miracle.

See: [Virgin](#); [Miracle](#); [Incarnation](#); [Virgin](#)

What did it mean that Joseph was a "righteous man"?

[1:19]

When Matthew wrote that Joseph was a "righteous man" it meant that he was a man that obeyed the Law of Moses. Joseph thought that Mary must have committed adultery in order for her to become pregnant. Joseph thought he should end his engagement with Mary because this was taught in the Law of Moses. Other scholars think Matthew wanted people to know that Joseph was a righteous man because he wanted to end his engagement with Mary in a quiet way, so as not to dishonor Mary.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Adultery](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did the words, "disgrace her publicly" mean in Joseph's day.

[1:19]

In ancient Israel, when a woman was disgraced publicly, she was brought to court because she did something wrong. This would have caused great shame and embarrassment for Mary. Perhaps she would also have been punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What did Matthew mean with the words, "fulfill what was spoken"?

[1:22]

When Matthew wrote the words, "fulfill what was spoken," he was speaking about prophecies being fulfilled. It was prophesied that Mary would become pregnant, and Jesus would be born.

See: Isaiah 7:14 See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What was meant by “he took her as his wife” when Matthew spoke about Joseph and Mary?

[1:24]

That Joseph took Mary as his wife meant that Mary became Joseph’s wife and he took her into his home. This showed everyone that Joseph accepted Mary as his wife.

Chapter 2

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, ² "Where is he who was born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ Herod brought together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, and he asked them, "Where is the Christ to be born?" ⁵ They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what was written by the prophet,

⁶ 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are not the least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you will come one who rules,
who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷ Then Herod secretly called the learned men to ask them exactly what time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the young child. When you have found him, bring me a report so that I also may come and worship him." ⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star that they had seen in the east went before them until it came and stood still over where the young child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with very great joy. ¹¹ They went into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother. They fell down and worshiped him. They opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² God warned them in a dream not to return to Herod, so they departed to their own country by another way.

¹³ After they had departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the young child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Remain there until I tell you, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." ¹⁴ That night Joseph rose and took the young child and his mother and departed into Egypt. ¹⁵ He remained there until the death of Herod. This fulfilled what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I have called my Son."

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he had been mocked by the learned men, was very angry. He sent and killed all the male children that were in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old and under, according to the time that he had determined exactly from the learned men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she refused to be comforted,
because they were no more."

¹⁹ When Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰ "Get up and take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹ Joseph rose, took the child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. After God warned him in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee ²³ and went and lived in a city called Nazareth. This fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Matthew 2

2:1-12

Where was Bethlehem?

[2:1]

See Map: Bethlehem

What were the days of Herod?

[2:1]

The days of Herod was the time when Herod the Great ruled the Jewish people. Herod ruled as a Jewish king when Jesus was born.

See: [King Herod](#)

Who were the learned men from the east?

[2:1]

The learned men were most likely scholars from Babylon who studied how the stars moved. In ancient times, people in the Middle East were often guided by how the stars appeared in the sky. Matthew wrote about the visit of these men so that people would be amazed. The birth of Jesus was more than just good news for the people in Israel. It was good news for the entire world. God guided Gentile scholars to see Jesus.

See: [Babylon](#)

See Map: Babylon

Who was “the king of the Jews”?

[2:2]

The term “king of the Jews” is a title which the Gentiles often used to speak about the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was the “star in the east”?

[2:2]

Matthew wrote about a “star in the east.” This was a star people could see in the sky. The scholars lived west of Israel. These men studied the stars in the sky. Therefore, they saw the light to the east of them. They followed the star in some way. It took them to Bethlehem. The believed star would bring them to something they wanted to see. Why was all Jerusalem troubled? Matthew wrote that Herod was disturbed because of the news he heard. These scholars reported that the messiah had been born. Herod was afraid of this because the messiah was the king of the Jews. Herod believed there could only be one “King of the Jews” (See: Matthew 2:1). Herod was afraid that the people would no longer want him to be king. The people of Jerusalem were afraid that Herod would become angry and hurt them.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is a chief priest?

[2:4]

See: [Chief Priest](#)

What is a scribe?

[2:4]

See: [Scribe](#)

What is the Christ?

[2:4]

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Matthew write the same thing Micah wrote?

[2:5]

Matthew wrote the same thing Micah wrote (see: Micah 5:2). Micah said that the messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was Bethlehem least among the rulers of Judah?

[2:6]

Matthew and Micah wrote that Bethlehem were least among the rulers of Judah. Many cities were greater than Bethlehem. Bethlehem was a small town. People did not think the messiah would come from a place like Bethlehem.

See Map: Bethlehem; Judah

How old was Jesus when the learned men came to visit him?

[2:7]

Matthew does not say how old Jesus was when the learned men came. When Herod learned about the birth of Jesus he ordered the killing of all male children under two years of age living near Bethlehem. Jesus was younger than this.

Did Herod want to worship the young child?

[2:8]

Herod directed the learned men to go to Bethlehem to “search thoroughly” for the young child. He wanted them to talk to people in Bethlehem. However, Herod did not want to worship Jesus. Instead, he wanted these men to find Jesus for him. He wanted to kill Jesus so he could continue to rule Israel.

See: [King Herod](#)

What were the gifts the learned men brought to Jesus?

[2:11]

In ancient times, someone gave a gift to a person that was greater than them in order to honor the other person (see: Genesis 14:17-20 and Hebrews 7:1-7). The gifts which the learned men gave to Jesus were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The gifts were very valuable and honored Jesus who they believed was a king. These gifts were very expensive.

Why did the learned men return to their country another way?

[2:12]

The learned men returned to their country in a different way than they came to Israel. They did not want Herod to be angry and kill them. God warned them by giving them a dream.

2:13-15

What is an angel of the Lord?

[2:13]

See: [Angel](#)

Would a Jew go to Egypt?

[2:13]

Egypt was about 100 kilometers south of Bethlehem. During this period, Egypt was not ruled by Herod. However, Egypt and Israel were part of the Roman Empire. At this time, Jews would often travel to Egypt. Many Jews lived in Egypt. Because there were so many Jews in Egypt, a Jewish temple had been built for them in Egypt. Because Herod did not rule Egypt, it was safe for Mary and Joseph to stay there.

See Map: Bethlehem; Egypt; Israel; Roman Empire

Why did Matthew write the same thing Hosea wrote?

[2:15]

Matthew wrote the same thing Hosea wrote (see: Hosea 11:1). Jesus fulfilled the prophecy Hosea made about the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

2:16-23

What are the land of Israel and the land of Judea?

[2:20, 2:21, 2:22]

When Matthew wrote about the land of Judea and the land of Israel, he was talking about the same place.

Why was Joseph afraid of Herod Archelaus?

[2:22]

Herod Archeaus was the son of Herod the Great. He put many people into prison and killed many people. This is why Joseph was afraid of him.

See: [King Herod](#)

How was Jesus a Nazarene?

[2:23]

Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the town of Nazareth to live. Jesus was a Nazarene.

Chapter 3

¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ³ For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying,

"The voice of one calling out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.'"

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan River went out to him. ⁶ They were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him for baptism, he said to them, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming? ⁸ Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹ Do not think of saying among yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham even out of these stones. ¹⁰ Already the ax has been placed against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ I baptize you with water for repentance. But he who comes after me is mightier than I, and I am not worthy even to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor and to gather his wheat into the storehouse. But he will burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out."

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John kept trying to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ Jesus responded and said to him, "Permit it now, for it is right for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John permitted him. ¹⁶ After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him. He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting upon him. ¹⁷ Behold, a voice came out of the heavens saying, "This is my beloved Son. I am very pleased with him."

Matthew 3

3:1-12

Why did John the Baptist preach in the wilderness?

[3:1]

John the Baptist belonged to and spoke for God. He lived outside of the cities like a prophet from the Old Testament. John fulfilled the promise of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3) that said that someone from the wilderness would tell the people that Jesus was coming. Many Jews believed that a deliverer would come from the desert to free them from their Roman oppressors (Ezekiel 20:33-38; Hosea 2:14-23).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did John say “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near”?

[3:2]

John told the people to “repent” or “turn away from” (μετανοέω/g3340) their sinful thoughts and actions. By doing so they would be prepared for the Messiah who was about to come.

See: [Sin](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the author of Matthew write the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[3:3]

The author of Matthew wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 40:3). The ancient Jews disobeyed God. God punished the Israelites and sent them to Babylon. God promised that he would forgive them and

return them to their home in Israel (see: Isaiah 40:1-2). Matthew said that Isaiah also wrote about John the Baptist because John's message announced the coming of Jesus the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Babylon

Why did John live in the way that he lived?

[3:4]

John wore clothes made of camel's hair and a belt made of leather. He ate locusts and wild honey. John lived in this way to show that he was a prophet like Elijah (See: 2 Kings 1:8). He lived simply and avoided luxuries in order to prepare God's people for the coming of Jesus the messiah.

See: [People of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [People of God](#)

Why did John baptize people?

[3:6]

John prepared people for the messiah to arrive. He baptized in water those people who repented of their sins (3:6).

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Confess \(Confession\)](#); [Sin](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did the Pharisees and Sadducees come to the baptism?

[3:7]

The Pharisees and Sadducees were religious and political leaders among the Jewish people. Some scholars think that the Pharisees and Sadducees to whom John spoke were coming to be baptized, too. They likely came to the baptism to learn about the things John taught. John was attracting many followers, and people were coming to him to be baptized. The Jewish leaders worried about people following John the Baptist.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Why did John rebuke the Jewish leaders?

[3:7]

John understood that the Pharisees and Sadducees came to learn why John served God in the way he did. They did not want to repent of their sins. If the Pharisees and Sadducees actually came to be baptized it is likely that John believed they just wanted people to see them and think they honored God.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How does someone have Abraham as their father?

[3:9]

The Pharisees and Sadducees were the descendants of Abraham. However, they did not trust God in the way Abraham did.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did John talk about a tree?

[3:10]

John wrote about fruit and a tree (see: Matthew 3:10). This was a metaphor. He wanted people to know that Israel was about to be judged. John wanted them to know that God would quickly judge Israel. The

Old Testament often used the axe as a symbol of judgement (See: Isaiah 10:15). God was often portrayed there as expecting good fruit from His people (see: Isaiah 5:2; Jeremiah 2:21; 11:16-17).

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Who did John talk about when he talked about someone greater than him?

[3:11]

John spoke to a people group who wanted people to honor him. John wanted people to know that he needed to honor the messiah and he was unworthy to untie his sandals (See: Matthew 3:11). In ancient Israel, only servants untied the sandals of other people.

How will Jesus baptize people with the Holy Spirit and fire?

[3:11]

Some scholars think John's was a prophecy. This was fulfilled by Christians and non-Christians. Non-Christians do not repent and God will judge them. Other scholars think the promise of fire was about Christians. The Holy Spirit purifies Christians.

See: Hebrews 12:29

See: [Purify \(Pure\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Fire](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#)

Why did John talk about a winnowing fork?

[3:12]

John talked about a winnowing fork because this tool was used by farmers in the field to separate the wheat from the chaff. Field workers would use this big fork to toss the harvested wheat into the wind. The heavy kernels of wheat would then fall to the ground, and the chaff would blow away. The chaff was often burned by fire. John used this as a metaphor. John wanted people to know that the Holy Spirit makes Christians clean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

3:13-17

Where were Galilee and the Jordan River?

[3:13]

See Map: Galilee; Jordan River

Why did Jesus want to be baptized by John?

[3:13]

Jesus told John that John needed to baptize him. Jesus wanted John to baptize him in order "for us to fulfill all righteousness."

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did John think that he should not baptize Jesus?

[3:14]

John said that he needed to be baptized by Jesus. John believed that Jesus was greater than him. He knew Jesus did not need to repent of his sins. He did not understand that Jesus was baptized for a different reason than the reason John baptized people.

See: [Sin](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the Spirit come down on Jesus like a dove?

[3:16]

Many times in the Old Testament, human authors recorded the presence of doves in their stories. Doves were a sign of peace and new life.

See: Genesis 1:2; 8:8-12

See: [Sign](#)

Why did the voice from heaven say “this is my beloved son”?

[3:17]

God said that Jesus was his beloved son. Matthew wanted people to know that Jesus is holy and Jesus is God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² When he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread."

⁴ But Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.'"

⁵ Then the devil took him into the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple building, ⁶ and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels to take care of you,'

and

'They will carry you in their hands,
so that you will not hit your foot against a stone.'"

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'"

⁸ Again, the devil took him up to a very high hill and showed him all the kingdoms of the world along with all their glory. ⁹ He said to him, "All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Go away from here, Satan! For it is written, 'You will worship the Lord your God, and you will serve only him.'"

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and served him.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been handed over, he withdrew into Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and went and lived in Capernaum, which is by the Sea of Galilee in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴ This happened to fulfill what was said by Isaiah the prophet,

¹⁵ "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
toward the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles!

¹⁶ The people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and to those who sat in the region and shadow of death,
upon them has a light arisen."

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ¹⁸ As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ Immediately they left the nets and followed him. ²¹ As Jesus was going on from there he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and John his brother. They were in the boat with Zebedee their father mending their nets. He called them, ²² and they immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went about in all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ The news about him went out into all of Syria, and the people brought to him all those who suffered from various diseases and pains, those who were possessed by demons, the epileptics, and the paralytics. Jesus healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Matthew 4

4:1-11

How was Jesus led by the Holy Spirit?

[4:1]

Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit descended like a dove and rested on Jesus in Matthew 3:16. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested to show Jesus completely obey God.

See: [Test](#); [Test](#)

Where was the wilderness?

[4:1]

The wilderness was not far from where John was baptizing. The wilderness area had few or no people living in it. There was not much food and water in the wilderness.

See: [Wilderness](#); [Wilderness](#)

How was someone tempted?

[4:1]

The Greek word which Matthew used for “tempted” can mean “testing.” When Jesus was tempted, he completely obeyed God.

See: [Test](#); [Test](#)

Who is the devil?

[4:1]

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is fasting?

[4:2]

See: [Fasting](#)

What is the Son of God?

[4:3]

See: [Son of God](#)

Why did Jesus say that “man shall not live on bread alone”?

[4:4]

When Jesus said, “Man shall not live on bread alone,” he said the same thing Moses wrote (see: Deuteronomy 8:3). God gave manna to the people who followed Moses through the wilderness. This was a miracle which God used to teach the people that the word of God is more important than food.

See: [Miracle](#); [Word of God](#); [Miracle](#)

What was the holy city?

[4:5]

The holy city is Jerusalem. It was a city that was different than other cities. It was the place where people worshipped God.

See: [Worship](#); [Zion](#); [Worship](#)

What was the temple?

[4:5]

See: [Temple](#)

Why did Satan say, God “will command his angels to take care of you”?

[4:6]

When Satan said that God “will command his angels to take care of you,” he said the same things written in Psalm 91:11-12. He told Jesus that if he were to throw himself down from the highest place of the temple, God would protect him. Satan wanted Jesus to forget that God the Father cared for Jesus.

See: [God the Father](#); [Angel](#); [Temple](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus tell Satan, “You must not test the Lord your God”?

[4:7]

Jesus told Satan, “You must not test the Lord your God” because he understood that Satan wanted Jesus to not trust God the Father and to disobey God the Father. Jesus only wanted to serve and obey God the Father.

See: [God the Father](#); [Test](#); [Lord](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Satan want Jesus to worship him?

[4:9]

Satan wanted Jesus to forget about his loyalty to God the Father. If Jesus became loyal to Satan, then Jesus could have the entire world as his reward. Satan wanted Jesus to disobey God.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus say that someone should only worship God?

[4:10]

Jesus said that someone should only worship God because God alone was worthy to be worshipped.

See: [Worship](#)

4:12-22

How had John been handed over?

[4:12]

John had been “handed over.” That is, John was arrested.

Where were Nazareth, Capernaum, Zebulun, and Naphtali?

[4:13]

See Map: Galilee; Nazareth; Capernaum; Zebulun; Naphtali

How was Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled?

[4:14]

Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus moved from Nazareth to Capernaum (see: Isaiah 9:1,2).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

See Map: Galilee; Nazareth; Capernaum

Why did Jesus preach, "repent for the kingdom of heaven is near"?

[4:17]

Jesus preached, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near." He was preaching the same thing John the Baptist preached.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Where was the Sea of Galilee?

[4:18]

See Map: Sea of Galilee

How will Peter and Andrew become "fishers of men"?

[4:19]

When Jesus said that Peter and Andrew would become "fishers of men," this was a metaphor. He wanted them to know that they would help other people to believe in Jesus and obey Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Peter and Andrew immediately follow Jesus?

[4:20]

Peter and Andrew left their jobs fishing to become disciples of Jesus. Matthew wrote that they immediately left their nets to follow Jesus. Some scholars think that Peter and Andrew had heard about Jesus before this. Other scholars do not think they heard about Jesus before this.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why were James and John mending their nets?

[4:21]

James and John mended their nets. Fishermen always mended their nets after they finished fishing because the nets would have holes or garbage in them. James and John were getting their nets ready so that they could fish again later or the next day.

Advice to translators: When someone mended their fishing net, they fixed any holes in the net.

What was a synagogue?

[4:23]

See: [Synagogue](#)

How was someone possessed by demons?

[4:24]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What is an epileptic?

[4:24]

The word translated “epileptic” is a word which meant “moon-struck.” In ancient times, a popular belief was that when a person had seizures, his health was under attack by the moon. Jesus healed the epileptic person. He controlled the moon.

Advice to translators: A seizure is a type of illness that causes someone to shake violently and they cannot control it.

What was a paralytic?

[4:24]

A paralytic was a person who had no control over his body.

What was the Decapolis?

[4:25]

The Decapolis was a group of ten cities in ancient Syria. People in these cities spoke Greek and Latin. They were great cities in the Roman empire.

See Map: Decapolis; Syria

Why does Matthew speak of Galilee and the Decapolis, Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan?

[4:25]

Matthew said that great crowds followed Jesus from Galilee and the Decapolis, Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan river. Many different groups of people lived in these places. They spoke many different languages. Matthew wants us to know that many different groups of people loved Jesus. He also wants us to know that Jesus welcomed all people to follow him.

See Map: Galilee; Decapolis; Jerusalem; Judea; Jordan River

Chapter 5

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain. When he had sat down, his disciples came to him. ² He opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely for my sake. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For in this way people persecuted the prophets who lived before you.

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? It is never again good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but rather on the lampstand, and it shines for everyone in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before people in such a way that they see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have come not to destroy them, but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly I say to you that until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will in any way pass away from the law, until all things have been accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven.

²¹ "You have heard that it was said to them in ancient times, 'Do not murder,' and, 'Whoever murders will be subject to judgment.' ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment; and whoever says to his brother, 'You worthless person!' will be subject to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be subject to the fire of hell. ²³ Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has anything against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go on your way. First be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Agree with your adversary quickly while you are with him on the way to court, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I say to you, you will never come out from there until you have paid the last penny you owe.

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. For it is better for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should be thrown into hell. ³⁰ If your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. For it is better for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should go into hell. ³¹ It was also said, 'Whoever sends his wife

away, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' ³² But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on account of sexual immorality, makes her an adulteress. Whoever marries her after she has been divorced commits adultery.

³³ "Again, you have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, 'Do not swear a false oath, but carry out your oaths to the Lord.' ³⁴ But I say to you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is the footstool for his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Neither swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ But let your speech be 'Yes, yes,' or 'No, no.' Anything that is more than this is from the evil one.

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹ But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. Instead, whoever strikes you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰ If anyone wishes to bring a lawsuit against you and takes away your tunic, let that person also have your cloak. ⁴¹ Whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to anyone who asks you, and do not turn away from anyone who wishes to borrow from you.

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ^[1]⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you get? Do not even the tax collectors do the same thing? ⁴⁷ If you greet only your brothers, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same thing? ⁴⁸ Therefore you must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Footnotes

5:44 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have

Matthew 5

5:1-12

What is the "Sermon on the mount"?

[5:1]

In Matthew 5-7, Jesus taught people on the side of a mountain. Scholars call this the "sermon on the mount." Scholars disagree about why Jesus taught these things.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was teaching Christians how to live.
2. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about how to make the whole world live in a way that honors God.
3. Some scholars think Jesus was teaching people how to live in a way that honors God. If they did not live in this way, then they needed to believe in Jesus so they could be at peace with God.
4. Some scholars think Jesus was teaching Christians how to live when he rules on the earth for 1000 years (see: Revelation 20:1-7).

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

Why does Jesus say "blessed" many times?

[5:3, 5:4, 5:5, 5:6, 5:7, 5:8, 5:9, 5:10, 5:11]

Jesus said the word "blessed" many times. He was talking about different people whom God blessed. God favored these people in some way.

Advice to translators: Some scholars call Matthew 5:3-7 the "Beatitudes."

See: Luke 6:20-26

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Who are the poor in spirit?

[5:3]

Jesus taught that God approved of those who were “poor.” Scholars think Jesus spoke of the spiritually poor (see: Matthew 5:3). That is, they knew their great need for God. These people trusted in Jesus and because of this were at peace with God. Because of this, they will inherit the kingdom of God.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Who are those who mourn?

[5:4]

Jesus taught that God approved those who mourn. Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about people being sorry for their sins or the sins of other people. This sorrow caused them to weep. They repented. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about the evil of the world. This also caused Christians to weep. These scholars think Jesus spoke about the day when God gathers his people into his kingdom. There will be no mourning in the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Who are the meek?

[5:5]

The meek are people who know they cannot do certain things without help. They know they cannot be at peace with God by themselves. They need Jesus. Because of this, they will inherit the earth. Some scholars think they will reign with Jesus on the earth (see: 2 Timothy 2:12). Other scholars think this was a metaphor. They will inherit the promises God gave to other people.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Who are the people who hunger and thirst for righteousness?

[5:6]

Jesus taught that God approved of those who were hungry. He wanted to say that those who were hungry and thirsty really wanted to do the things that God wanted them to do. Scholars think the words, “they will be filled” spoke about God’s promise to approve those who hungered for him in this way.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Who are the merciful?

[5:7]

The merciful are people who forgive other people. They forgive other people because God forgave them.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Who are the pure in heart?

[5:8]

The pure in heart are those whom God has made clean. These people will live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Who are the peacemakers?

[5:9]

The peacemakers are people who try to be at peace with other people. They love other people because God loves all people. Because of this, they try to help people be at peace with God and with other people. They will be sons of God because they will be adopted into God's family.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

Who has been persecuted for righteousness' sake?

[5:10]

Christians are persecuted by non-Christians. This is because they try to do the right things, things that honor God. People who reject Jesus do not like this and persecute Christians. Christians will inherit the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#) ; [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

How does God favor Christians when others persecute them?

[5:11]

Jesus said that God blesses people when other people do evil things to them. This is because God blesses Christians when they are persecuted. They are rewarded when they honor God and evil people punish them for it. They will be rewarded.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Reward](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What is a prophet?

[5:12]

See: [Prophet](#)

5:13-16

Why did Jesus compare Christians to salt?

[5:13]

Jesus compared Christians to salt. This was a metaphor. If salt stops being salt, then it does not do any good. Instead, it is thrown out. In the ancient world, salt was used to preserve food. Some scholars think Jesus wanted to say that if Christians do not do things that honor God, then they too are useless. Salt also makes people thirsty. Other scholars think Jesus wanted to say that Christians made people thirsty. This was a metaphor. They made non-Christians want to know more about God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus compare Christians to light?

[5:14, 5:15, 5:16]

Jesus said that Christians were like light in some way. This was a metaphor. In ancient times, a light helped people know where to go. Christians are to help non-Christians know how to live in a way that honors God and how to be at peace with God. This is how they let their light shine before people. If non-Christians saw Christians loving other people and living in a way that honors God, then they would want to do the same.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why can a city on a hill not be hidden?

[5:14]

When a city is on the top of a hill. People can see it from far away. This is because there are lights in the city that cannot be hidden.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why do people not put a lamp under a basket?

[5:15]

People do not put a light under a basket because it would hide the light. If they did this, then people could not see the light. Therefore, they put the light on a lampstand so that other people can see the light.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Who is your father in heaven?

[5:16]

Christians have a father in heaven. This is God. He lives in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

5:17-20

How did Jesus come to fulfill the law and the prophets?

[5:17]

Jesus said that he did not come to destroy the law and the prophets. Rather, he came to fulfill them. Jesus was speaking about the Old Testament. He did not reject the things taught in the Old Testament. Instead, he fulfilled the many prophecies about the messiah in the Old Testament.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Did Jesus say that the Law of Moses will remain until the end of the world?

[5:18]

Jesus said that the Law will not pass away until all things have been accomplished. He was speaking about the Law of Moses. Nothing in the Law of Moses would “pass away” until certain things were fulfilled. He was not saying that the heaven and the earth will end before these things happen. Instead, the Law of Moses would remain until he lived a perfect life and died for the sins of those who believe in him. Some scholars think that after this, the Law of Moses ended. Other scholars think that Christians obey certain parts of the Law of Moses.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What is a jot and tittle?

[5:18]

When Jesus spoke about the jot and tittle, he was talking about Hebrew letters. He wanted to say that not one letter will change of the Old Testament until certain things happened.

Who taught other people to break certain commandments?

[5:19]

Jesus taught that certain people taught other people to break certain commandments in the Law of Moses. In ancient Israel, there were Jewish teachers who taught these things. However, Jesus said that, at this time, the Jews must obey every commandment in the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How are people least and greatest in the kingdom of God?

[5:19]

Jesus said that certain people will be least in the kingdom of heaven and other people will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. They will be rewarded. However, he does not say how certain people will be rewarded and other people will not be rewarded.

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

How does someone enter into the kingdom of heaven?

[5:20]

People will enter into the kingdom of heaven. However, they need to be righteous to enter the kingdom of God. They need to be more righteous than the scribes and pharisees. People thought the scribes and pharisees were the most righteous. The righteousness that Jesus talked about was not something that people could do. Rather, it could only be given. Jesus lived a perfect life. After he did this, he gave this to Christians in some way so they could be at peace with God and enter into the kingdom of heaven.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

5:21-26

What did the Jewish teachers teach the people?

[5:21]

The Jewish teachers taught people that it was evil to kill other people. Jesus explained to them that it was wrong to kill someone. However, there were many other wrong things that happened before someone killed another person. Before they killed someone, they were angry with the other person. This was sin. God judges this sin too.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did someone say “you worthless person”?

[5:22]

When someone said, “you worthless person,” this was a great insult. The Jewish leaders might judge this person. However, if someone said a small insult, Jesus said they might go to hell. This is because everyone who sins deserves to go to hell and live there forever. However, if someone believes in Jesus their sins are forgiven and they will not go to hell.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How did Jesus want people to make sacrifices to God?

[5:23, 5:24]

Jesus did not want someone to offer a sacrifice to God if they were angry with someone else. He wanted people to be at peace with others before they made a sacrifice to God. This is because God wanted people to love one another more than he wanted a sacrifice. After they were at peace with other people, then they should make a sacrifice to God.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did Jesus talk about going to court?

[5:25]

Jesus talked about going to court. This was a type of parable. People should be afraid to go to court when someone is angry with them. If they do this, then the judge may punish them greatly. Because of this, they should make peace with the other person before they are judged. In the same way, people should make peace with other people before God judges them. They should also make peace with God before God judges them.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

5:27-32**How does someone commit adultery?**

[5:27]

Jesus spoke about committing adultery. Someone commits adultery when they have sex with someone they are not married to. However, Jesus said that people also commit adultery before they have sex with someone else. They do this when they think about and want to have sex with this person. They sin when they desire to have sex with this person.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Did Jesus want people to pluck out their eyes?

[5:29]

Jesus said that people should pluck out their eyes. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that it was better for them to not have eyes than to sin with their eyes.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Who will be thrown into hell?

[5:29]

Certain people will be sent to hell. Everyone who sins will be sent to hell unless they believe in Jesus.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What is a certificate of divorce?

[5:31]

In ancient times, a certificate of divorce is a piece of paper that was given to a woman after she was divorced. This helped her to marry another man. Many people did this in ancient Israel. However, if people did this, then they caused the woman and the man who remarried her to commit adultery. This is unless the husband committed sexual immorality.

See: 1 Corinthians 7:15

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Adultery](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

5:33-37**What is false oath?**

[5:33]

A false oath is a promise someone makes but they do not do the things they promised to do.

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

How does someone carry out an oath to the Lord?

[5:33]

Jesus spoke about carrying an oath to the Lord. He was speaking about making a promise as if someone was making a promise to God.

See: [Lord](#); [Lord](#)

Why did Jesus not want people to make oaths?

[5:34, 5:35]

Jesus did not want people to make oaths. In ancient times, people swore to many different things. The Jewish teachers had many rules about how someone could make an oath and break an oath. However, Jesus did not want people to swear by anything. If they made any promise and did not do it, then they sinned. He wanted people to do the things they promised to do.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Who is the evil one?

[5:37]

The evil one is Satan, or the devil (see: Matthew 4:1).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

5:38-48

What is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth?

[5:38]

In the Law of Moses, it said that people were to be punished in a certain way (see: Exodus 21:23-24). People were not supposed to punish people more than the wrong they did to be punished. The Law of Moses protected people from being punished too much. However, Jesus taught that Christians do not need to punish people when people wrong them. Instead, they can forgive other people because God forgave them.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Who said that people were supposed to hate their enemies?

[5:43]

The Pharisees taught that people were supposed to love other people, but to hate their enemies. However, Jesus taught that Christians are to pray for those who persecute them. This is because God will reward Christians for honoring God when they are persecuted. However, they should pray for the people who persecute them so they can come to believe in Jesus.

See: [Reward](#) ;[Pharisees](#); [Reward](#)

What did Matthew say in verse 44?

[5:44]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words, "bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you." More and older copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Matthew wrote these words.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How is someone a son of the Father in heaven?

[5:45]

Christians are children of God. They are sons of God the Father in heaven. Here, Jesus was saying that Christians do the things that God the Father wants them to do when he said they were sons of the Father in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the sun and the rain?

[5:45]

Jesus talked about the sun and the rain. He wanted to say that God is gracious to Christians and non-Christians. He shows everyone some favor. Because of this, Christians should do the same.

See: [Grace](#)

What were tax collectors?

[5:46]

People in Israel hated the tax collectors because they thought they were evil. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. They paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

What did Jesus want Christians to do?

[5:47]

Jesus wanted Christians to do more good things than other people. They needed to do more good things than evil people.

See: [Gentile](#)

How does God want people to live?

[5:48]

God wants people to be perfect. That is, he wants people to always do good things. While no one is able to do this except Jesus, this is what God wants.

Chapter 6

¹ "Watch out that you do not do your acts of righteousness before people to be seen by them, or else you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. ² So when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before yourself as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing ⁴ so that your alms may be given in secret. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵ "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward.

⁶ But you, when you pray, enter your inner chamber. Shut the door and pray to your Father, who is in secret. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷ When you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the pagans do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Therefore, do not be like them, for your Father knows what things you need before you ask him.

⁹ Therefore pray like this:

'Our Father in heaven,
may your name be honored as holy.

¹⁰ May your kingdom come.
May your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ Do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.' [1]

¹⁴ For if you forgive people their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶ "When you fast, do not have a sad face as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to people to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face ¹⁸ so that you may not appear to people to be fasting, but only to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹ "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Instead, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. ²² The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is good, the whole body is filled with light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body is full of darkness. Therefore, if the light that is in you is actually darkness, how great is that darkness! ²⁴ No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. ²⁵ Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. For is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not more valuable than they are? ²⁷ Which one of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his lifespan? ²⁸ Why are you anxious about clothing? Think about the lilies in the fields, how they grow. They do not labor, and they do not spin cloth. ²⁹ Yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ If God so clothes the grass in the fields, which exists today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious and say, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What clothes will we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles search for these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you. ³⁴ Therefore, do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Each day has enough evil of its own.

Footnotes

6:13 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have

Matthew 6

6:1-4

Why did Jesus not want people to do good things in certain ways?

[6:1]

Jesus did not want people to do good things so that other people could see them doing good things. If they do this, other people will reward them. They received their full reward when other people saw them and praised them for it. However, God will not reward them.

See: [Praise](#); [Praise](#)

Why did people give alms?

[6:2, 6:3, 6:4]

When someone gave alms, they gave money to people who needed it. When people did this, they should not sound a trumpet. That is, they are not to announce they are giving money to poor people when they do this.

What is a hypocrite?

[6:2]

A hypocrite is someone who says one thing but does something else.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

What is a synagogue?

[6:2]

See: [Synagogue](#)

How is someone not supposed to let their left hand know what their right hand is doing?

[6:3]

Jesus spoke about having someone's left hand not know what their right hand is doing. When he said this, he wanted people to do things secretly, that is, without other people knowing about it. If they did this, then only God would know. Then God would reward them.

See: [Reward](#)

6:5-15

Who are the hypocrites?

[6:5]

Jesus spoke about hypocrites. He was speaking about certain Jewish teachers. These teachers did things so that many people could see them and think that they greatly honored God. This was their reward, other people thought these Jewish teachers honored God. However, they did not honor God when they did this and God did not reward them.

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

What is an inner chamber?

[6:6]

Jesus spoke about an inner chamber. This is a place inside a person's home. He wanted people to go to a place where no one else could see them. When people do this, God will reward them.

See: [Reward](#)

What is a useless repetition?

[6:7]

In ancient times, people who worshipped many gods would pray in a certain way. When they prayed, they would say the same things over and over again. They did this so that their false gods would pay attention to them so they could tell these gods what they need. This was not how Jesus wanted people to pray. God knows what people want when they pray. However, Jesus still wanted people to pray.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What is the Lord's prayer?

[6:9]

Jesus taught people to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. Scholars call this the "Lord's prayer."

Who is "our father in heaven"?

[6:9]

Jesus spoke about "our father in heaven." God is the father of Christians and he lives in heaven.

See: [Family of God](#); [Heaven](#); [Family of God](#)

What is holy?

[6:9]

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, "may your kingdom come"?

[6:10]

Jesus prayed for the kingdom of God to come. He wanted Christians to pray for this to happen soon.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What is the will of God?

[6:10]

See: [Will of God](#)

Why did Jesus pray for daily bread?

[6:11]

God gave the disciples daily bread by providing for everything they needed. Bread was a metaphor for food. That is, it included any food the disciples needed. Some scholars say it also included everything else the disciples needed for living. That is, God provided clothing, housing, and everything else they needed. Other scholars say bread was a metaphor for the things in heaven God will give to them.

See: [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Heaven](#)

Why should Christians pray to have their debts forgiven?

[6:12]

In ancient Israel, people thought that sins created a kind of debt where someone owed someone else. God's forgiveness of the disciples' sins was related to the disciples forgiveness of sins people did against them because God wanted the disciples to love other people. God did not forgive the disciples' sins because they did good things. God forgave them because of his mercy. However, when the disciples prayed and asked God to forgive their sins, they needed to be ready to forgive sins people did against them.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Mercy](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

How did Jesus use the word "temptation"?

[6:13]

Some scholars say Jesus when he used the word "temptation" (πειρασμός/g3986) he was thinking about sin. Other scholars say Jesus was thinking about testing. That is, persecution or suffering the disciples had.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Test](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Who is the evil one?

[6:13]

Satan, or the devil (see: Matthew 4:1), is the evil one.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What did Matthew write in verse 13?

[6:13]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words "for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." More and older ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Therefore, scholars do not think Matthew wrote these words.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about trespasses?

[6:14, 6:15]

In verses 14 and 15, Jesus spoke about trespasses. He was saying the same thing he said in verse 12. A trespass is something someone does that goes against the law or against God in some way. It is sin.

See: [Sin](#)

6:16-18

What is fasting?

[6:16, 6:17, 6:18]

See: [Fasting](#)

Who were the hypocrites?

[6:16]

Jesus spoke about hypocrites. He was speaking about Jewish teachers. They fasted so that people could see them fast and think these teachers did things to honor God.

See: [Fasting](#); [Fasting](#)

Why did Jesus tell people to wash when they fasted?

[6:17]

Jesus wanted people to anoint or wash their face and head when they fasted. This was the opposite of what the Jewish leaders did. If they did this, they did not look like they were hungry. He did not want other people to know they were worshipping God in this way. If they did this, God would reward them.

See: [Worship](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Reward](#); [Worship](#)

6:19-34

Why did Jesus talk about treasures?

[6:19, 6:20, 6:21]

Jesus talked about treasures. Treasures are things people keep that are very valuable. Jesus did not want people to collect things that were valuable on the earth. This is because they did not last long. They were destroyed or someone took them. He wanted people to not care very much about the things they had on the earth. They only have these things while they are alive. Instead, they should store treasures in heaven. This is a metaphor. They should collect rewards from God. These rewards will last forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus talk about someone's eyes?

[6:22, 6:23]

Jesus talked about a person's eye. He said it was like a lamp. A person uses their eyes to see, which helps them know where they are going. A lamp shines a light so that a person can see where they are going. A person's eye shows what is important to them because it will be the thing they look at the most. In this way, the eye works like a lamp to show a person what is most important to them.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about serving God and wealth?

[6:24]

Jesus talked about serving God and wealth. He wanted to say that people could only truly serve one master. He wanted people to serve God completely. However, many people served money instead. This was a metaphor. For these people money was a type of false god. They could not serve God and this false god at the same time.

See: [False gods](#)

How long is a cubit?

[6:27]

Jesus spoke about adding a cubit to how long one lives. This was a short length of time. He wanted to say that no one could make themselves live any longer. This is because only God can do this.

See: [Cubit](#)

How is someone anxious?

[6:27, 6:28]

A person is anxious when he is worried about something. A person can be anxious about things like not having enough money or food. Who was Solomon?

Solomon was the most powerful king of ancient Israel. He had a lot of money and built many great things in Israel.

Why did Jesus ask so many questions?

[6:31]

Jesus asked many questions, but he did not expect anyone to answer him. He wanted people to know that God cares more for people than anything else he created. He would care for them and give people everything they need. He corrected them and said they have "little faith." That is, they did not trust in God very much.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the Gentiles?

[6:32]

Jesus talked about the Gentiles being anxious about getting the things they need to live. This was because they did not know God and they did not know He would provide for them. Jesus wanted Christians to trust in God for these things because he promised to give them the things they need. Instead, they are to be concerned about other things. That is, they were to think about how to honor God and teaching other people about Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#)

How do people seek first the kingdom and God's righteousness?

[6:33]

Jesus spoke about seeking first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. He wanted Christians to think about how they could serve God and his kingdom and how they could do things that honor him.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Chapter 7

¹ "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. ² For with the judgment you judge, you will be judged, and with the measure that you measure, it will be measured out to you. ³ Why do you look at the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye, but you do not take notice of the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take out the piece of straw that is in your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the piece of straw that is in your brother's eye. ⁶ Do not give what is holy to the dogs, and do not throw your pearls in front of the pigs. Otherwise they may trample them underfoot, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives; everyone who seeks, finds; and to the person who knocks, it will be opened. ⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ Therefore, if you who are evil 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? ¹² Therefore, whatever things you want people to do to you, you should also do to them, for this is the law and the prophets.

¹³ "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many people who go through it. ¹⁴ But the gate is narrow and the way is difficult that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but are truly ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruits you will know them. Do people gather grapes from a thornbush or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but the bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So then, you will recognize them by their fruits. ²¹ Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many people will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, in your name drive out demons, and in your name do many miracles?' ²³ Then will I openly declare to them, 'I never knew you! Get away from me, you who practice lawlessness!'

²⁴ "Therefore, everyone who hears my words and obeys them will be like a wise man who built his house upon a rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall down, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears my words and does not obey them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and struck that house, and it fell, and its destruction was complete."

²⁸ It came about that when Jesus finished speaking these words, the crowds were astonished by his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Matthew 7

7:1-14

Why did Jesus not want Christians to judge one another?

[7:1, 7:2]

Jesus did not want Christians to judge one another. That is, Christians should not condemn other people. This is something that God does. Scholars think that when Christians do this, God will condemn them. God will condemn Christians as severely as Christians condemn other people. However, he did not say that Christians should not judge other Christian's actions to know whether they were doing right or wrong. Also, this does not mean that these Christians will not get to live forever in heaven with God.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus speak about a piece of straw and a log?

[7:3, 7:4, 7:5]

Jesus said that Christians should remove the log from their own eye before they try to remove a piece of straw from their brother's eye. A log is a large piece of wood. This was a metaphor. He wanted Christians to judge themselves before they judge other people. That is, they should know they are doing the right things before they say other people are doing the wrong things.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why should people not give holy things to dogs and pearls to pigs?

[7:6]

Jesus said that people should not give holy things to dogs and pearls to pigs. That is, they should not give holy things to unholy people. This was a metaphor. In ancient Israel, dogs and pigs were unclean animals. Jesus was not just talking about not condemning other people. Here, some scholars think he wanted the Christians to stop teaching the truth of the gospel to those who were condemning them and rejecting the gospel, the messiah, and the kingdom of God. These people may kill those who tell them about Jesus.

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Gospel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

Will Jesus give anything that is asked for to Christians?

[7:7, 7:8]

Jesus talked about God wanting to give things to Christians. He wanted Christians to ask God for things they wanted. However, God would not give them everything they asked. Instead, he would give it to them if it was his will.

Christians were to trust that God would give them what they need and whatever was best for them. Evil people still help their children. God loves Christians more than evil people love their children. Because of this, Christians can trust that God will give them whatever he knows is best for them.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

What things should Christians do for others if they want others to do things for them?

[7:12]

Jesus said that Christians should do things for others in the same way they want others to do things for them. This meant that a Christian must treat people in the way they themselves want to be treated. This included Jesus' command that Christians must love their neighbor.

See: Matthew 22:35-40

What is the law and the prophets?

[7:12]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did Jesus say about wide and narrow gates?

[7:13, 7:14]

Jesus talked about wide and narrow gates. Wide gates were easy to get through and narrow gates were hard to get through. This was a metaphor. Jesus wanted to say that it was difficult to do things to honor God, but it is easy to sin and do things that dishonor God. He also wanted to say that it was easy for people to reject him, and difficult for people to believe in him.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

7:15-23**How were false prophets like wolves in sheep's clothing?**

[7:15]

Jesus compared false prophets to wolves dressed to look like sheep. This was a metaphor. These wolves dress like sheep to make the sheep think they were also sheep so they could eat them. Jesus wanted to say that false prophets tried to do things that made people think they were Christians who honored God. However, they really were false teachers and trying to harm these Christians.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How will people know the false prophets?

[7:16]

Jesus said that people will know the false prophets by their fruit. They are like a tree that produces bad fruit. This was a metaphor. People will know they are false prophets because they live in a way that dishonors God. In the same way, true prophets will live in a way that honors God.

Jesus also talked about destroying the bad tree. He wanted people to know that the false prophets would die and be punished. They would live in hell forever.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Hell](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Who will enter into the kingdom of Heaven?

[7:21]

Jesus said that everyone who calls Jesus their master in that day will enter the kingdom of heaven. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about a future time when Jesus will judge the false prophets. They will not be allowed to enter into the kingdom of heaven. While they said they did many things to serve Jesus, Jesus knew why they did the things they did and that they did not do anything to serve Jesus. Instead, they did lawlessness. That is, they did things Satan wanted them to do.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

7:24-29**Why did Jesus talk about someone building their house?**

[7:24]

Jesus spoke about someone building a house. This was a metaphor. In ancient Israel, people wanted to build their houses on rocks. This protected their houses from falling. If they built their houses on sand, they would be destroyed by the wind and rain. This was a metaphor. People who do the things the false prophets taught would be punished. However, people who did things God taught in the word of God were not punished.

See: [False Prophet](#); [False Prophet](#)

Why did the scribes teach without authority?

[7:29]

When Jesus taught these things, he knew they were true. The scribes taught many different things and did not agree with one another. Therefore, when they taught, they did not teach as if they knew the things they taught were true. Therefore, people did not know whether to believe them.

See: [Scribe](#)

Chapter 8

¹ When Jesus had come down from the hill, large crowds followed him. ² Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³ Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean." Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. ⁴ Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to any man. Go on your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

⁵ When he was coming into Capernaum, a centurion came to him, begging him ⁶ and saying, "Lord, my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible agony."

⁷ Then Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

⁸ The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Only say the word and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I also am a man under authority, and I have soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another one, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those who were following him, "Truly I say to you, I have not found anyone with such faith in Israel. ¹¹ I tell you, many will come from the east and the west, and they will recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." ¹³ Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! As you have believed, so may it be done for you." And the servant was healed at that very hour.

¹⁴ When Jesus had come into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ Jesus touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and started serving him. ¹⁶ When evening had come, the people brought to Jesus many who were possessed by demons. He drove out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

"He took our illnesses
and bore our diseases."

¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave instructions to leave for the other side of the Sea of Galilee. ¹⁹ Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰ Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

²¹ Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father."

²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

²³ When Jesus had entered a boat, his disciples followed him into it. ²⁴ Behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But Jesus was asleep. ²⁵ The disciples came to him and woke him up, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!"

²⁶ Jesus said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea. Then there was a great calm.

²⁷ The men marveled and said, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

²⁸ When Jesus had come to the other side and to the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were possessed by demons met him. They were coming out of the tombs and were very violent, so that no traveler could pass that way. ²⁹ Behold, they cried out and said, "What do we have to do with you, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the set time?"

³⁰ Now a herd of many pigs was there feeding, not too far away from them. ³¹ The demons kept pleading with Jesus and saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into that herd of pigs."

³² Jesus said to them, "Go!" The demons came out and went into the pigs; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep hill into the sea and they died in the water. ³³ Those who had been tending the pigs ran away and they went into the city and reported everything, especially what had happened to the men who had been possessed by demons. ³⁴ Behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Matthew 8

8:1-9

Why did the leper bow before Jesus?

[8:2]

A leper bowed before Jesus. He did this to honor Jesus. He believed that Jesus could heal him and make him clean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus touch the leper?

[8:3]

Jesus touched the leper. This would have been shocking. When someone touches a leper, they can become a leper too. When someone touched a leper, they became unclean (see: Leviticus 5:3). However, Jesus healed this man when he touched him and made him clean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus tell the leper not to tell anyone he had been healed?

[8:4]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

Why did the leper go to the priest?

[8:4]

According to the Law of Moses, the leper needed to go to the priest after he was healed to be declared clean (see: Leviticus 14:2-8). He wanted this man to go to the priest so they priest would see him and know that Jesus healed the leper. No one had been healed of leprosy in a very long time (see: Numbers 12). When they saw this man, the priests should have known that Jesus is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#), [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Where was Capernaum?

[8:5]

See Map: Capernaum

What was a centurion?

[8:5]

A centurion was a type of Roman soldier. They led 100 soldiers.

Why did the centurion think that he was not worthy to have Jesus in his home?

[8:8]

This centurion believed that Jesus deserves great honor. He deserved so much honor, that he thought he was too great to enter into his home. He thought that this would dishonor him in some way. This man knew that God gave Jesus permission to do many things. He even believed that his servant could be healed when Jesus spoke.

8:10-17

Why was Jesus amazed at the centurion?

[8:10]

Jesus was amazed at the centurion man. He was a powerful man and he was a Gentile. Despite this, he trusted in Jesus and believed he had great power from God. This is what the Jews should have believed about Jesus, but they did not.

See: [Gentile](#)

Who will eat at the table in the kingdom of heaven?

[8:11]

Jesus said people from all over the world will eat at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. That is, Gentiles from all over the world will believe in Jesus and be in the kingdom of heaven with the Jews who believe in Jesus. However, the sons of the kingdom, that is, the unbelieving Jews, would not be in the kingdom of heaven. That is, many Jews would not be in the kingdom because they reject Jesus.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Who was Peter's mother-in-law?

[8:14]

Matthew wrote about Peter's mother-in-law, that is, the mother of Peter's wife. Some scholars think Peter was married at this time. Fewer scholars think Peter was married before he began to follow Jesus and his wife died before he met Jesus.

Why did Matthew write that this woman got up and started serving Jesus?

[8:15]

Matthew wrote that this woman got up and served Jesus after he healed her. When he wrote this, people knew that Jesus healed her immediately and completely when he touched her. She did not get better over a long period of time.

What was demon possession?

[8:16]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

How did Jesus drive out spirits?

[8:16]

Matthew wrote that Jesus drove out spirits. That is, Jesus cast out demons from people by speaking to them.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Where did Isaiah say these words?

[8:17]

Isaiah said these words many years before Jesus was born (see: Isaiah 53:4). When Jesus healed people, Matthew wrote that it fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

8:18-34

Where was the sea of Galilee?

[8:18]

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Why did Jesus speak in this way to the scribe and the person who followed him?

[8:19, 8:20]

Jesus spoke in a certain way to the scribe. This is because Jesus knew what the scribe thought and believed. He said that because he served God, Jesus was always moving from one place to another place. He told this man he must be willing to give up everything to follow him.

The other person, who was a follower of Jesus, wanted to wait to completely follow Jesus. Jesus knew that by him wanting to wait, the follower of Jesus did not really believe in Jesus. If he did, then he would have immediately followed Jesus.

Advice to translators: In this verse (Matthew 8:21), Matthew wrote about a disciple. This was a man who followed Jesus. He was not one of the twelve disciples.

See: [Scribe](#); [Scribe](#)

How were the dead to bury the dead?

[8:22]

Jesus told a man to let the dead bury the dead. This was a metaphor. Jesus spoke about the people who rejected him as being dead in some way. That is, they were spiritually dead. This meant that they could not know or understand things about God. Jesus wanted this man to let these dead people bury his father so that he could follow Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus rebuke the disciples?

[8:26]

Some scholars think Jesus rebuked the disciples because they were afraid that the boat would sink and they would die. They did not trust that God would protect Jesus and them.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why were the disciples amazed?

[8:27]

The disciples were amazed that Jesus rebuked the wind and the seas. In ancient Israel, people believed that no one could control the seas. No one can control the weather except God. This amazed the disciples because they saw Jesus do something only God could do.

See: [Disciple](#)

Where was the country of the Gadarenes?

[8:28]

See Map: Gadarenes

Why did the demon possessed man call Jesus the Son of God?

[8:29]

The demon possessed man called Jesus the Son of God. This is because the demon knew that Jesus is the Son of God.

See: [Demon](#); [Son of God](#); [Demon](#)

What was the set time?

[8:29]

The demons talked about a set time. They knew that there was a time when Jesus would judge them. They also knew that it was not time for Jesus to judge all of the demons.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did the demons want to go into a herd of pigs?

[8:30, 8:31]

The demons asked Jesus to be sent into a herd of pigs. According to the Law of Moses, pigs were unclean. Matthew did not say why they wanted to go into the pigs. Perhaps the demons wanted to have control of the pigs in the same way as they controlled the two men.

See: Matthew 12:43

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did the pigs kill themselves?

[8:32]

Matthew wrote that the pigs killed themselves after the demons entered into them. He did not say why they did this.

See: [Demon](#)

Why did the people want Jesus to leave Gadarenes?

[8:34]

After the pigs died, the people who cared for the pigs went into the city and told people about what happened. They told them that the two men had been healed. They did not have demons in him anymore.

After they heard what happened to the pigs, the people in Gadarenes wanted Jesus to leave. The demons caused many pigs to die. These pigs were worth a lot of money. They worried that something else would happen and they would lose a lot more money. They did not care that Jesus healed the demon possessed men. They rejected Jesus after they saw that he did these things.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

Chapter 9

¹ Jesus entered a boat, crossed over, and came into his own city. ² Behold, they brought to him a paralyzed man lying on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Son, be encouraged. Your sins have been forgiven."

³ Behold, some of the scribes said among themselves, "This man is blaspheming." ⁴ Jesus knew their thoughts and said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, ... " he said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your mat, and go to your house." ⁷ Then the man got up and went away to his house. ⁸ When the crowds saw this, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to people. ⁹ As Jesus passed by from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's tent. He said to him, "Follow me." He got up and followed him.

¹⁰ As Jesus sat down to eat in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and dined with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² When Jesus heard this, he said, "People who are strong in body do not need a physician, only those who are sick. ¹³ You should go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous to repent, but sinners."

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees often fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "Can the sons of the wedding hall mourn while the bridegroom is still with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No man puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment, for the patch will tear away from the garment, and a worse tear will be made. ¹⁷ Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed. Instead, they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both will be preserved."

¹⁸ While Jesus was saying these things to them, behold, an official came and bowed down to him. He said, "My daughter has just now died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ Then Jesus got up and followed him, and so did his disciples.

²⁰ Behold, a woman who suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his garment. ²¹ For she had said to herself, "If only I touch his clothes, I will be made well."

²² But Jesus turned and saw her, and said, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed from that hour. ²³ When Jesus came into the official's house, he saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion. ²⁴ He said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead, but she is asleep." But they laughed at him in mockery. ²⁵ When the crowd had been put outside, he entered the room and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ The news about this spread into all that region.

²⁷ As Jesus passed by from there, two blind men followed him. They kept shouting and saying, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

²⁸ When Jesus had come into the house, the blind men came to him. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"

They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "Let it be done to you according to your faith," ³⁰ and their eyes were opened. Then Jesus strictly commanded them and said, "See that no one knows about this." ³¹ But the two men went out and spread the news about this throughout that region.

³² As those two men were going away, behold, a mute man possessed by a demon was brought to Jesus.
³³ When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!"

³⁴ But the Pharisees were saying, "By the ruler of the demons, he drives out demons."

³⁵ Jesus went about all the cities and the villages. He continued teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged. They were like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore urgently pray to the Lord of the harvest, so that he may send out laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9

9:1-9

Where was Jesus' own city?

[9:1]

Jesus went to his own city, Capernaum (see: Matthew 4:13).

See Map: Capernaum

Why did these men bring the paralyzed man to Jesus?

[9:2]

Men brought a paralyzed man to Jesus. These men believed in Jesus and knew that he could heal this man who could not walk. Because he knew this man believed in him, Jesus spoke that he forgave this man's sins.

See: Mark 2:3-4; Luke 5:17-26

See: [Sin](#)

Why did the scribes think Jesus blasphemed?

[9:3]

The scribes thought that Jesus blasphemed because he forgave this man's sins. They knew that only God could forgive sins. Therefore, they thought Jesus tried to do something that only God could do. However, they did not know that Jesus is God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Sin](#); [Jesus is God](#)

How did Jesus know what the scribes were thinking?

[9:4]

Jesus knew what the scribes were thinking because he is God. Therefore, he knew they were thinking evil things.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, "which is easier to say"?

[9:5]

Jesus asked the scribes whether it was easier to tell this man that his sins were forgiven or to tell him to get up and walk. It was easier for someone to say your sins are forgiven because no one knew whether

this man's sins were forgiven except God. However, if someone told this paralyzed man to walk and he could not, then everyone knew he could not heal the paralyzed man.

Jesus said these things so that the people could know that he could do both of these things.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why were the people afraid?

[9:8]

When the people saw these things, they were "afraid" (φοβέω/g5399). They were not scared of Jesus. Instead, they were amazed that Jesus could do these things. Because of this, they glorified God. They were amazed that God gave Jesus permission to do these things.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

9:10-17

What was a tax collector?

[9:10]

Matthew was a tax collector. People in Israel hated the tax collectors. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. They paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

Who were sinners?

[9:10]

Matthew wrote about sinners. All people sinned. However, these were people who sinned in a way that other people knew they sinned. People judged them as evil. The Jews would not be friends with these people. The Pharisees would not eat with them because they thought they were unclean.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Pharisees](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why were people needing a physician?

[9:12]

Jesus talked about people needing a physician. This was a metaphor. He wanted people to know that people who sinned needed Jesus to forgive them. Because of this, all people needed Jesus to forgive them. The Pharisees also needed Jesus to forgive their sins.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Sin](#); [Pharisees](#)

Why does God want mercy and not sacrifice?

[9:13]

God said that he wanted mercy and not sacrifice (see: Hosea 6:6). Sacrifices were part of the Law of Moses. God wanted sacrifice, but he did not want people to make sacrifices to him in the wrong way. That is, if people did not love one another or show mercy to one another, their sacrifices would be given in the wrong way.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Who did Jesus come to call?

[9:13]

Jesus said that he came to earth to call certain people to God. That is, he wanted to make it so that sinners could be at peace with God. He did not do this for righteous people, that is, people who thought they were righteous and did not need to be forgiven. However, there is no one who is righteous (see: Romans 3:10).

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Pharisees](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did the Pharisees fast, but the disciples did not fast?

[9:14]

Certain people who followed Jesus asked him why the Pharisees fasted but his disciples did not fast. In ancient Israel, people fasted when they were sad. However, the disciples were not sad because Jesus was with them. It was not a time for them to fast. Rather, it was a time for them to celebrate. Jesus told them that the disciples would fast after he died.

See: [Disciple](#); [Pharisees](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus talk about garments and wineskins?

[9:16, 9:17]

Jesus talked about putting a cloth patch on a garment. If someone put a new piece of cloth on an old piece of clothing, the new piece of cloth would become smaller and cause the clothing to rip. Wineskins were bags of leather that held wine. When someone put wine into an old wineskin, it would burst open. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that he was going to do something different than the Pharisees. Scholars think that Jesus taught people to do different things than were taught in the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#)

9:18-31

Why did this man bow before Jesus?

[9:18]

This man bowed before Jesus. This was a way to honor Jesus. He believed that Jesus was able to bring his daughter back to life just by touching her.

Why did this woman touch Jesus?

[9:20]

A woman was constantly bleeding for 12 years. She thought that if she touched Jesus, it would heal her. However, this could not heal her. Jesus knew that she believed in him and because of this, he healed her. She was healed because she trusted in Jesus.

Why was there many people in this man's house?

[9:23]

There were many people in this man's house. They were playing music and many people were very sad. In ancient Israel, this happened when someone died.

Why did these men call Jesus the son of David?

[9:27]

These blind men called Jesus the son of David. They believed Jesus is the Messiah. The Messiah needed to be a descendant of David who would fulfill the covenant God made to David (see: 2 Sam. 7).

See: [Covenant with David](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Covenant](#); [Son of David](#); [Covenant with David](#)

Why did Jesus not want the blind men to tell other people Jesus healed them?

[9:30]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

9:32-38

What was a mute man?\

[9:32]

A mute man was someone who could not talk. Perhaps this man could not talk because he was possessed by demons.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

How did the Pharisees think that Jesus drove out demons?

[9:34]

The Pharisees said that Satan gave Jesus permission to remove demons from people.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was a synagogue?

[9:35]

See: [Synagogue](#)

What was preaching the gospel?

[9:35]

See [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What did it mean that people were like sheep without a shepherd?

[9:36]

Jesus said the people were like sheep without a shepherd. This was a metaphor. The people did not have anyone to lead them and to teach them about how to live in a way that honors God. The Pharisees could not do this.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Metaphor](#); [Pharisees](#)

How was the harvest plentiful, but the laborers few?

[9:37]

Jesus said that the harvest was plentiful but the laborers few. This was a metaphor. There were many people who wanted to learn about Jesus, but there were few people who could go and tell them about Jesus. Therefore, he told the people to pray and ask God to get people to do this.

See: [Harvest](#)

Chapter 10

¹ Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out, and to heal all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness. ² Now the names of the twelve apostles were these. The first, Simon (whom he also called Peter), and Andrew his brother; James son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who would betray him.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out. He instructed them and said, "Do not go to any place where Gentiles live, and do not enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; ⁷ and as you go, preach and say, 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹ Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper in your belts. ¹⁰ Do not take a traveling bag for your journey, or an extra tunic, or sandals, or a staff, for a laborer deserves his food. ¹¹ Whatever city or village you enter, find who is worthy in it, and stay there until you leave. ¹² As you enter into the house, greet it. ¹³ If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ As for those who do not receive you or listen to your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. ¹⁵ Truly I say to you, it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

¹⁶ "See, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Watch out for people! They will deliver you up to councils, and they will whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ Then you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you up, do not be anxious about how or what you will speak, for what to say will be given to you at that time. ²⁰ For it is not you who will speak, but the Spirit of your Father who will speak in you. ²¹ Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. ²² You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But whoever endures to the end, that person will be saved. ²³ When they persecute you in this city, flee to the next, for truly I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man has come.

²⁴ "A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the disciple that he should be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much worse would be the names they call the members of his household! ²⁶ Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight, and what you hear softly in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul. Instead, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Do not fear. You are more valuable than many sparrows. ³² Therefore everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven. ³³ But he who denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring peace upon the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I came to set

a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

³⁶ A man's enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ He who does not pick up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it. But he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰ "He who welcomes you welcomes me, and he who welcomes me also welcomes him who sent me. ⁴¹ He who welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and he who welcomes a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴² Whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple, truly I say to you, he will in no way lose his reward."

Matthew 10

10:1-15

Who were the twelve disciples and the twelve apostles?

[10:1, 10:2]

The twelve disciples and twelve apostles were the same twelve men.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

What did it mean that Jesus sent out the disciples?

[10:5]

That Jesus sent out the disciples meant that he sent them into the towns near where they were. They were to tell other people about Jesus.

Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans?

[10:5]

Jesus told the disciples not to go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans. At this time, he wanted them to go to the people of Israel and tell them about Jesus before they told the Gentiles and the Samaritans.

See: [Disciple](#); [Samaria](#); [Disciple](#)

How were the people of Israel lost sheep?

[10:6]

Jesus said the people of Israel were lost sheep. This was a metaphor. The people of Israel did not know that Jesus was their messiah. They did not know that Jesus was their king.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What did the disciples preach to people?

[10:7]

The disciples preached to people that the kingdom of heaven was near. Some scholars think this meant that Jesus offered to be the king ruling over Israel if they believed in him. Other scholars think Jesus meant that he wanted people to obey him and let him rule over their lives.

See: Matthew 3:2; 4:17

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What did Jesus give the disciples permission to do?

[10:8]

Jesus gave the disciples permission to cast out unclean spirits. He also gave them permission to heal people.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

How was someone raised from the dead?

[10:8]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What was a leper?

[10:8]

See: [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#)

What was casting out demons?

[10:8]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What have the disciples been freely given?

[10:8]

Jesus talked about the disciples being given something for free. That is, they were given the permission to preach the truth about Jesus, and to perform miracles. He wanted them to teach people about the truth of Jesus, and to do miracles without taking any money from people.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus not want the disciples to take many things with them?\

[10:9, 10:10]

Jesus did not want the disciples to bring money with them or many other things. He wanted them to trust God and he wanted other people to give them the things they needed as they went from one place to another.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was a traveling bag?

[10:10]

A traveling bag was something people put things in when they traveled.

What was an extra tunic?

[10:10]

The disciples were not to have two tunics. A tunic was the main piece of clothing worn against the skin.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why were the disciples to remain in one house?

[10:11]

The disciples were told to remain in one house. At this time, it was a great honor to have someone stay in your home. Jesus did not want his disciples to dishonor a host by leaving that house.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who was someone who was worthy?

[10:13]

Jesus spoke about someone and a house that was worthy. He was talking about going to a place and finding people who were willing to welcome the disciples into their homes. He did not want them to spend time with people who were going to reject Jesus.

Why were the disciples to shake the dust off their feet?

[10:14]

If the people in a town rejected the disciples, the disciples were told to shake the dust off their feet when they left the town. In ancient Israel, when someone shook the dust off their feet, this was a symbol. This meant they were not friends with the people in that town. It showed that the person shaking the dust off their feet rejected the people in the town.

See: [Symbol](#); [Symbol](#)

What was the peace Jesus talked about?

[10:13]

Jesus talked about people being at peace and not being at peace. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about being at peace with God. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about have the peace that came with the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What were Sodom and Gomorrah?

[10:15]

Sodom and Gomorrah were cities God punished for being very evil (see: Genesis 19). God completely destroyed these cities.

When is the day of judgment?

[10:15]

The day of judgment is the day of the lord.

See: [Day of the Lord](#); [Day of the Lord](#)

10:16-23

Why did Jesus talk about these different animals?

[10:16]

Jesus said the disciples were sheep in the middle of wolves. This was a metaphor. They were going to places where people were going to try to harm them in some way or to destroy them. He also wanted the disciples to be as wise as serpents. People often thought serpents were the wisest of all animals. He wanted the disciples to be very wise. He also wanted them to be innocent as doves. That is, he did not want anyone to be able to say bad things about them.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why were people going to deliver the disciples to the councils?

[10:17]

Jesus said people were going to try to capture the disciples and send them to the council. That is, they were going to bring them to the Jewish leaders to be beaten because they preached about Jesus. They would do this in the synagogues.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Synagogue](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

How will the disciples speak to the governors and kings?

[10:18]

When the disciples were going to speak to the governors and kings, the Holy Spirit would help them to say the right things.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

When would these things happen?

[10:19]

Jesus was telling the disciples these things would happen in their time. However, he was also speaking about a time after he died. People will hate Christians because of Jesus' name. That is, they will hate Christians because they believe in Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

How will Christians be saved?

[10:22]

Jesus said that people who "endure until the end" will be saved. Some scholars think Jesus will only let people who keep believing in him live with God in heaven forever. They think that if someone rejects Jesus, they are no longer at peace with God or were never at peace with God. Other scholars think that God promised to protect people during the tribulation.

See: [Tribulation](#); [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#); [Tribulation](#)

What is persecution?

[10:23]

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

When will the son of man come?

[10:23]

Jesus said that the disciples will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the son of man has come. Some scholars think that Jesus was speaking about returning to help Christians before the end of the tribulation. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jesus returning to the earth after he died.

See: Daniel 7:13-14

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Disciple](#); [Tribulation](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

10:24-33

Why did Jesus talk about servants and masters?

[10:24, 10:25]

Jesus talked about servants and masters. Jesus wanted the disciples to do the same types of things that he did. He gave them permission to do these things. He wanted them to know that people would insult them for doing these things. They also insulted Jesus. Jesus wanted them to know that people insulted him the same way people will insult the disciples.

Certain people said that Jesus served Satan. These people feared the disciples less than they feared Jesus. Therefore, they may insult the disciples even more than they insulted Jesus.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Who was Beelzebul?

[10:25]

Beelzebul was another name for Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why should the disciples not fear other people?

[10:26]

Jesus did not want the disciples to fear people who insulted them. This was because God would judge these people. God knows all the evil things they would do because nothing can be hidden from God.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “What I tell you in the darkness”?

[10:27]

Jesus spoke to the disciples in the darkness. That is he told them things at night. He also talked to them when no one else was around. Now he wanted them to tell other people about the things he taught them.

See: [Disciple](#)

How was someone able to kill the body but not the soul?

[10:28]

Jesus said that the people who would persecute the disciples were able to kill them physically. However, they were not able to kill their soul. That is, they could not stop them from living with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#) ; [Soul](#); [Heaven](#)

Who is able to kill the body and the soul?

[10:28]

Only God can kill a person's body and soul. Only God can punish someone by sending them to live in hell forever.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

Why did Jesus talk about sparrows?

[10:29]

Jesus talked about sparrows. These were small birds. People thought they were not worth much. This was a metaphor. God cared for even these small birds that people thought were worthless. He wanted people to know that God cared for them very much.

How does someone confess or deny Jesus?

[10:32, 10:33]

Jesus said that he would tell God the Father about people who confess, that is to acknowledge that Jesus is the messiah to other people. However, if they rejected Jesus in some way, then Jesus will reject them in some way. Some scholars think Jesus taught that people who deny Jesus were not truly Christians or they stopped being Christians. Other scholars think Jesus taught people that they would lose rewards if they denied Jesus in some way.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Reward](#); [God the Father](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

10:34-42**Why did Jesus come to bring the sword to the earth?**

[10:34]

Jesus taught people to love God and to love other people. He wanted people to forgive one another. However, he also said that he came to the earth to bring a sword and not to bring peace. This was a metaphor. A sword was used to divide. Jesus divided people. Jesus did not make it so that everyone was at peace with God. Only those who believe in Jesus are at peace with God. This is how Jesus divided people. Those who believe in him have peace. Those who reject Jesus will be punished. One must either believe in Jesus or reject him. A person cannot do both of these things.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)**Why will people be enemies with other people in their house?**

[10:36]

Jesus divided people as Christians and non-Christians. Christians believe in Jesus. Non-Christians reject Jesus. It did not matter what other people in someone's house believed about Jesus. Every person must believe in Jesus for themselves to have peace with God. Those who rejected Jesus remained enemies of God and enemies of Christians.

Why did Jesus talk about mothers and fathers?

[10:37]

Jesus talked about mothers and fathers. He did this because he wanted people to know that he wanted people to love him more than they loved their own mother and father. How does someone pick up their cross?

Jesus spoke about someone picking up their cross. This was a metaphor. He wanted people to serve and obey him, even if it was difficult.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)**How will someone lose their life and find it and someone who finds his life lose it?**

[10:39]

Jesus spoke about someone finding their life but losing it. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that someone who did not want to serve Jesus would not live together with God in heaven forever. However, if someone was killed because they believed in Jesus, even though they died, they would live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)**How did someone welcome a prophet in the prophet's name and receive a prophet's reward?**

[10:41]

Jesus said that someone who welcomed a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. He wanted them to know that whoever welcomed prophets to serve Jesus will be rewarded in some way. The disciples were prophets because they spoke the words God wanted them to say to other people.

See: [Disciple](#); [Reward](#); [Disciple](#)**How did someone welcome a righteous man in the name of a righteous man and receive a righteous man's reward?**

[10:41]

Jesus wanted people to know that whoever welcomed a righteous man into their towns and homes, because he served Jesus, will be rewarded in some way. People thought the disciples were righteous men.

See: [Disciple](#); [Reward](#); [Disciple](#)

How will someone be rewarded for giving someone a cup of water?

[10:42]

Jesus spoke about giving someone a cup of water to drink. This was a small way someone served another person. He wanted to say that if someone served Jesus, even in a small way, Jesus will reward this person.

See: [Reward](#)

Chapter 11

¹ It came about that when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. ² Now when John heard in the prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent a message by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?"

⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you see and hear. ⁵ The blind are receiving sight, the lame are walking, lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing again, the dead are being raised back to life, and the gospel is being preached to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble because of me."

⁷ As these men went on their way, Jesus began to say to the crowds about John, "What did you go out in the desert to see—a reed being shaken by the wind? ⁸ But what did you go out to see—a man dressed in soft clothing? Really, those who wear soft clothing live in kings' houses. ⁹ But what did you go out to see—a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and much more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is he of whom it was written,

'See, I am sending my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ Truly I say to you that among those born of women, there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist. Yet the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force.

¹³ For all the prophets and the law have been prophesying until John; ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear. ¹⁶ To what should I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces calling out to the others, ¹⁷ saying:

'We played a flute for you,
and you did not dance.
We mourned,
and you did not weep.'

¹⁸ For John came not eating bread or drinking wine, and they say, 'He has a demon.' ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her deeds."

²⁰ Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles were done, because they had not repented. ²¹ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But, I tell you it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. ²³ You, Capernaum, do you think you will be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. For if in Sodom there had been done the miracles that were done in you, it would still have remained until today. ²⁴ But I say to you that it will be easier for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this was pleasing in your sight. ²⁷ All things have been entrusted to me from my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke on you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11

11:1-6

What was a disciple?

[11:1]

See: [Disciple](#)

What was preaching?

[11:2]

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Which John was Matthew writing about?

[11:2]

Matthew wrote about John the Baptist here.

What did John's disciples ask Jesus?

[11:3]

People who followed John the Baptist asked Jesus if he was "the one who is coming." They wanted to know if Jesus was the messiah. John already knew that Jesus was the Messiah (see: Matthew 3:11). Here, John wanted Jesus to tell him again that he was the messiah. Perhaps he wanted to know why he was in prison if Jesus was the Messiah. Or perhaps Jesus did not do the things John thought the messiah would do.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean that someone was lame?

[11:5]

Someone who was lame could not walk.

What was a leper?

[11:5]

According to the Law of Moses, a leper is not unclean.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How are the dead raised back to life?

[11:5]

Jesus said the dead are raised back to life. That is, they are resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did Jesus preach the gospel?

[11:5]

Jesus preached the gospel to the poor.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How was someone blessed?

[11:6]

Jesus said blessed is anyone who does not stumble because of him. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say the people who believed he was the messiah would be blessed.

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

11:7-19

What were the things Jesus had to say about John the Baptist?

[11:7]

Jesus talked to the crowd about John the Baptist. John the Baptist lived in the desert and wore clothing that was not comfortable. Jesus talked about a reed shaken by the wind. He wanted to say that John did not change because of what people thought about him. He did what God wanted him to do no matter what people said. He did not live in the way powerful kings lived. Instead, he lived as a prophet lived. He focused on telling people about God, not on living in a certain way.

See: [Prophet](#)

How was John greater than a prophet?

[11:9]

John the Baptist was a prophet. However, he did something that no previous prophet did. He prophesied to prepare people for the coming of the Messiah. John's message was the greatest message of all.

See: Malachi 3:1

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was someone in the kingdom of heaven greater than John the Baptist?

[11:11]

Jesus said that John the Baptist was the greatest person who ever lived, except Jesus. However, anyone who lives in the kingdom was greater than John the Baptist. That is, anyone who lives in the kingdom, was greater in some way that anyone who lived under the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did the kingdom of heaven suffer violence?

[11:12]

Some scholars think the kingdom was being violently attacked. That is, there was evil forces attacked the kingdom of God. These scholars think an example of this was John the Baptist being put into prison and then later killed because he spoke about the messiah (see: Mark 6:17-29). Other scholars think the kingdom was forcefully advancing into the world. That is, Jesus was casting out demons and performing miraculous signs, showing the power of the kingdom of God.

See: [Sign](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Sign](#)

What was the Law and the Prophets?

[11:13]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How was John the return of Elijah?

[11:14]

Malachi prophesied that the prophet Elijah would return (see: Malachi 4:5-6). Jesus taught the people that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of the prophecy about the return of Elijah. That is, Malachi was prophesying about a man who was like Elijah would return, and that man was John.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Prophet](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did Jesus say the Jews were like children?

[11:16]

Jesus said that these Jews were like children. This was metaphor. Just like children will complain when no one dances to their songs, so the people complained against all of God's prophets, including John the Baptist and Jesus.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

What was a gluttonous man?

[11:19]

A gluttonous man was someone who ate too much. They spend most of their life eating and thinking about eating.

What was a drunkard?

[11:19]

A drunkard was someone who drank too much alcohol and often became drunk.

What was a tax collector?

[11:19]

Matthew was a tax collector. People in Israel hated the tax collectors. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. They paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

Who were sinners?

[11:19]

Matthew wrote about sinners. All people sinned. However, these were people who sinned in a way that other people knew they sinned. People judged them as evil. The Jews would not be friends with these people. The Pharisees would not eat with them because they thought sinners were unclean.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Pharisees](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How was wisdom justified by her deeds?

[11:19]

Jesus said that wisdom was justified by her deeds. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that he and John were right for living in the way they did. The way they lived helped people to know that they served God because they did the things God sent them to do.

See: [Metaphor](#)

11:20-30

Why did Jesus reproach certain cities?

[11:20]

Jesus reproached certain cities. He rebuked the people who lived in these cities because they rejected him. The people in these cities did not repent.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Where were Chorazin, Bethsaida, Tyre, and Sidon?

[11:21, 11:22]

See: Map: Chorazin; Bethsaida; Tyre and Sidon

Why did people wear sackcloth and ashes?

[11:21]

People wore sackcloth and ashes when they were mourning or to show people they were sad. Sackcloth was a rough cloth and was known to irritate the skin. To wear sackcloth was a sign that the people repented.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Where was Capernaum?

[11:23]

See Map: Capernaum

Why did Jesus talk about Sodom?

[11:23]

Sodom was an ancient city. The people of Sodom were very evil (see: Genesis 19). No one in Sodom obeyed God. Jesus was saying that if he had done the same kind of miracles in Sodom as he did in the regions around Jerusalem, the people of Sodom would have repented. But, because the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Tyre, and Sidon rejected Jesus, these cities would be punished more than Sodom in the day of judgement.

See: [Miracle](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Miracle](#)

Why was Jesus pleased that God only helped certain people to know about him?

[11:25]

Jesus praised God because he concealed things from people who thought they were wise. When Jesus said that God “revealed them to little children” he used a metaphor. That is, Jesus said that God revealed his truth to people who were humble and knew they needed help from God.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

How did Jesus talk about himself and God the Father?

[11:27]

Scholars think Jesus spoke about himself and God the Father as being one. That is, they are of the same nature and character. They know each other perfectly.

See: [Trinity](#); [Son of God](#); [Trinity](#)

How does God reveal?

[11:27]

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “I will give you rest”?

[11:28]

Jesus said, “I will give you rest.” Some scholars think Jesus meant that he will refresh those who were weary. Other scholars think Jesus meant that he would encourage and strengthen them to do difficult things. In addition, people can be at rest because they are at peace with God.

What was a yoke?

[11:29, 11:30]

A “yoke” was a thick wooden beam that was set across the neck and shoulders of animals. This allowed the animals to pull heavy loads in a cart, or to pull a plow. When Jesus spoke about a yoke, he used a metaphor. That is, Jesus was willing to share any burden or hardship a Christian might have in their life.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 12

¹ At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. His disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. ² But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to Jesus, "See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath."

³ But Jesus said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was hungry, and the men who were with him? ⁴ He went into the house of God and ate the bread of the presence, which was unlawful for him to eat and unlawful for those who were with him, but lawful only for the priests. ⁵ Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath but are guiltless? ⁶ But I say to you that one greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what this meant, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

⁹ Then Jesus left from there and went into their synagogue. ¹⁰ Behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. The Pharisees asked Jesus, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" so that they might accuse him of sinning.

¹¹ Jesus said to them, "What man would there be among you, who, if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a pit on the Sabbath, would not take hold of it and raise it out? ¹² How much more valuable, then, is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." ¹³ Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored to health, just like the other hand. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him. They were seeking how they might destroy him.

¹⁵ Jesus, knowing this, withdrew from there. Many people followed him, and he healed them all. ¹⁶ He commanded them not to make him known to others, ¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled, what had been said through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

¹⁸ "See, my servant whom I have chosen;
my beloved one, in whom my soul is well pleased.
I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

¹⁹ He will not strive nor cry aloud;
neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

²⁰ He will not break any bruised reed;
he will not quench any smoking flax,
until he leads justice to victory,

²¹ and in his name the Gentiles will have hope."

²² Then someone blind and mute, possessed by a demon, was brought to Jesus. He healed him, with the result that the mute man spoke and saw. ²³ All the crowds were amazed and said, "Can this man be the Son of David?"

²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard of this miracle, they said, "This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons."

²⁵ But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶ If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason they will be your judges. ²⁸ But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ How can anyone enter the house of the strong man and take away his belongings without tying up the strong man first? Then he will steal his belongings from his house. ³⁰ The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters. ³¹ Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Whoever speaks any word against the Son of Man, that will be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, that will not be forgiven him,

neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. ³³ Make a tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴ You offspring of vipers, since you are evil, how can you say good things? For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil. ³⁶ I say to you that in the day of judgment people will give an account for every idle word they will have said. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

³⁸ Then certain scribes and Pharisees answered Jesus and said, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."

³⁹ But Jesus answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign. But no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of the big fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation of people and will condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and see, someone greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them. She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see, someone greater than Solomon is here. ⁴³ When an unclean spirit has gone away from a man, it passes through waterless places and looks for rest, but does not find it. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' Having returned, it finds the house empty—it had been swept clean and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they all come in to live there. Then the final condition of that man becomes worse than the first. It will be just like that with this evil generation."

⁴⁶ While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, seeking to speak to him. ⁴⁷ Someone said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers stand outside, seeking to speak to you."

⁴⁸ But Jesus answered and said to him who told him, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?" ⁴⁹ Then he stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, "See, here are my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, that person is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Matthew 12

12:1-8

Why did the Pharisees think that it was wrong to pluck heads of grain and eat them?

[12:2]

The pharisees thought that it was against the Law of Moses to pluck heads of grain and eat them on the Sabbath. This is because they thought it was work, which was forbidden on the Sabbath. However, they misunderstood the Law of Moses regarding the picking of grain on the Sabbath.

See: Deuteronomy 23:25

See: [Pharisees](#); [Sabbath](#); [Pharisees](#)

How did Jesus tell the pharisees that the disciples did not break the Law of Moses?

[12:3, 12:4, 12:5]

Jesus told the Pharisee that the disciples did not break the Law of Moses. They were allowed to do this because they were traveling and hungry. This was similar to what King David did (see: 1 Samuel 21:1-6). He also told them that the priests violated the rules the Pharisees made about the sabbath by working in the temple on the Sabbath. He also wanted them to know that he is greater than the Sabbath. Jesus created the Sabbath and the rules for the Sabbath. This made him ruler over the Sabbath.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Sabbath](#); [Son of Man](#); [Pharisees](#); [Disciple](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

What was the house of God?

[12:4]

The temple was the house of God.

See: [Temple](#)

Why did God desire mercy and not sacrifice?

[12:7]

God said that he wanted mercy and not sacrifice (see: Hosea 6:6). God wanted sacrifice, but he did not want people to make sacrifices to him in the wrong way. That is, if people did not love one another or show mercy to one another, their sacrifices would be given in the wrong way.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

12:9-23

Why did the Pharisees want to ask Jesus about healing this man on the Sabbath?

[12:10]

The Pharisees asked Jesus about healing this man on the Sabbath. They taught that someone could not be healed on the Sabbath unless that person was going to die. If someone healed this person, then this was work and broke the Law of Moses. They wanted Jesus to heal this man so they could tell people that Jesus sinned. However, this was not sin. They just thought it was a sin.

The pharisees thought that it was not against the Law of Moses to help their sheep on the Sabbath. Therefore, Jesus wanted them to know that it was also good to heal this man on the sabbath because people are more valuable than animals. He wanted the pharisees to think about this and know that they were wrong in their thinking.

See: [Sin](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the Pharisees want to destroy Jesus?

[12:14]

The Pharisees were angry after Jesus healed this man. They thought he sinned and he made them look like they were evil.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Jesus not want people to tell other people about the things he did?

[12:16]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

How did Jesus fulfill the words of Isaiah?

[12:17, 12:18, 12:19, 12:20, 12:21]

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (see: Isaiah 42:1-4) by serving God. The Holy Spirit gave him power to do great things. He taught the Gentiles about how to live in a way that honors God. He was humble and compassionate.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Holy Spirit](#)

How did the Gentiles have hope in Jesus' name?

[12:21]

The Gentiles could be at peace with God if they believed in Jesus. At this time, the Jews did not think the Gentiles could be at peace with God.

See: [Name](#); [Name](#)

How was someone possessed by a demon?

[12:22]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Who was the Son of David?

[12:23]

The Son of David was the messiah. He was the one who fulfilled the promises God made to David (see: 2 Samuel 7).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of David](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

12:24-37

Who was Beelzebul?

[12:24]

Beelzebul was a name for Satan. Satan was the prince of the demons. He ruled the demons. However, God ruled Satan.

See: Luke 11:17-23

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

How did the Pharisees think Jesus was able to remove demons from people?

[12:24]

The Pharisees said that Satan gave Jesus permission to remove demons from people.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was meant by the words, a “kingdom divided against itself”?

[12:25]

A “kingdom divided against itself” referred to a nation or country that divided itself into groups and then fought against each other.

What did it mean that a kingdom divided against itself “is made desolate”?

[12:25]

A kingdom “is made desolate” when the country or nation was destroyed. That is, there would be only a few people left alive and the country would be ruined.

Why did Jesus ask the Pharisees, about driving out demons?

[12:27]

Jesus’ question was a rebuke to the Pharisees. Jesus condemned the Pharisees’ followers for doing the same things they accused Jesus of doing. However, Jesus did not do these things.

How were people with or against Jesus?

[12:30]

Jesus said that people were either with him or against him. That is, people either fought with him in some way or against him in some way. When he said this, he wanted to say that people could either believe in him or reject him. They could not do both of these things at the same time.

What was the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?

[12:31}

Scholars think different things about how someone blasphemes the Holy Spirit.

1. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about people rejecting him. If someone does not believe in Jesus, then they will not be forgiven of their sins.
2. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about someone seeing Jesus do miracles and saying that Satan gave him the power to do this. Therefore, people today cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
3. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people who said that the Holy Spirit did not do the things that he did.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Miracle](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about trees and fruit?

[12:33]

Jesus talked about trees and fruit. This was a metaphor. Scholars think different things about what this metaphor meant:

1. Some scholars Jesus compared himself to a tree, and the miracles he did as the fruit. They think Jesus was telling the Pharisees that they could not say that his miracles were good, but that he, as a person, was bad.
2. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the Pharisees. That is, the things they did were different from the things they said they believed.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Pharisees](#)

What did Jesus mean by calling the Pharisees the “offspring of vipers”?

[12:34]

Some scholars think Jesus was saying the Pharisees were men whose ancestor was the serpent himself, that is, the Devil. Scholars think Jesus used the metaphor of a viper to show that the Pharisees were both evil and dangerous.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What were the treasures of someone’s heart?

[12:35]

The treasures of a person’s heart was a metaphor. That is, from deep within a person’s mind and soul comes what that person truly believes, whether good or evil.

See: [Soul](#); [Metaphor](#); [Mind](#); [Soul](#)

What is the day of judgment?

[12:36]

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

How was someone justified?

[12:37]

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

How is someone condemned?

[12:37]

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

12:38-50

What was an “adulterous generation”?

[12:39]

When Jesus spoke about an “adulterous generation” he used a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking directly to the Scribes and Pharisees, and told them they were an “adulterous generation”. That is, the Scribes and Pharisees did not truly obey and follow God completely.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Adultery](#); [Generation](#); [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#)

What was a sign?

[12:39]

See: [Sign](#)

What was the “sign of the prophet Jonah”?

[12:39]

Jonah was a prophet in ancient Israel (see: Jonah 1-4). He was swallowed by a very large fish and was in the fish for three days. After three days, he was released. Something like this was going to happen to Jesus. He would die and after three days, he would come back to life.

See: [Sign](#) ; [Son of Man](#); [Prophet](#); [Sign](#)

Where was Nineveh?

[12:41]

See Map: Nineveh

How were the people of Nineveh going to judge the Jews?

[12:41]

When Jesus spoke about standing up to judge the Jews, he used a metaphor. When God sent Jonah the prophet to Nineveh to speak for God, the people there repented. However, when God sent Jesus into the world, the Scribes and Pharisees rejected Jesus and the things he taught. Therefore in some way, this will serve as a judgment against people who do not repent from their evil ways, that they might obey and follow Jesus.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

See Map: Nineveh

See: Jonah 3:1-10

Who was the Queen of the South?

[12:42]

Jesus spoke about the queen of the south. He was thinking about the Queen of Sheba (see: 1 Kings 10). Her country was far to the south of Israel.

See Map: Sheba

What was an unclean spirit?

[12:43]

See: [Demon](#)

What were waterless places?

[12:43]

Waterless places referred to areas that were dry, or a desert. The demons wandered through those areas, but did not stay there.

See: [Demon](#)

What was meant by the words, “it finds that house swept out and put in order”?

[12:44]

When Jesus spoke about a house being “swept out and put in order” he used a metaphor. That is, he was speaking about a person who had a demon cast out from him. When that person did not believe in Jesus the house remained empty, and therefore able to be inhabited once again by demons.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Who were Jesus’ mother and brothers?

[12:46]

When Jesus was speaking, his mother and brothers wanted to speak with him. This was his mother Mary and her sons. Jesus told them about another type of mother and brother. Scholars think Jesus wanted people to know that people who obeyed God were his true family.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

What is the will of God?

[12:50]

See: [Will of God](#)

Chapter 13

¹ On that day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² A very large crowd gathered around him, so he got into a boat and sat in it while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ Then Jesus said many things to them in parables. He said, "Behold, a farmer went out to sow seed. ⁴ As he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil. Immediately they sprang up because the soil had no depth. ⁶ But when the sun had risen, they were scorched because they had no root, and they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among the thorn plants. The thorn plants grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and produced a crop, some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear."

¹⁰ The disciples came and said to Jesus, "Why do you talk to the crowd in parables?"

¹¹ Jesus answered and said to them, "You have been given the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. ¹² For whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³ This is why I talk to them in parables:

Though they are seeing,
they do not see;
and though they are hearing,
they do not hear, or understand.

¹⁴ To them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, that which says,

'Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

¹⁵ For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn again,

and I would heal them.'" ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. ¹⁷ Truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that you see and did not see them. They desired to hear the things that you hear and did not hear them. ¹⁸ Listen then to the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom but does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the seed that was sown beside the road. ²⁰ What was sown on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet he has no root in himself and he endures for a while. When tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he quickly falls away. ²² What was sown among the thorn plants, this is the person who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ The seed that was sown on the good soil, this is the person who hears the word and understands it. He bears fruit and produces a crop, yielding in one case a hundred, in another sixty, and in another thirty times as much as was planted."

²⁴ Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while people slept, his enemy came and also sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ When the blades sprouted and then produced their crop, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷ The servants of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How does it now have weeds?'

²⁸ "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'

"The servants said to him, 'So do you want us to go and pull them out?'

²⁹ "The landowner said, 'No. Because while you are pulling out the weeds, you might uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First pull out the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³¹ Then Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. ³² This seed is indeed the smallest of all seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches." ³³ Jesus then told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen."

³⁴ All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; and he said nothing to them without a parable. ³⁵ This was in order that what had been said through the prophet might be fulfilled, when he said,

"I will open my mouth in parables.

I will say things that were hidden from the foundation of the world."

³⁶ Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."

³⁷ Jesus answered and said, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore, as the weeds are gathered up and consumed by fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness. ⁴² They will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. ⁴³ Then will the righteous people shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. A man found it and hid it. In his joy he goes, sells everything he possesses, and buys that field. ⁴⁵ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a man who is a merchant looking for valuable pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one very valuable pearl, he went and sold everything that he possessed and bought it.

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea, and that gathered all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When it was filled, the fishermen drew it up on the beach. Then they sat down and gathered the good ones into containers, but the bad ones they threw away. ⁴⁹ It will be this way at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from among the righteous. ⁵⁰ They will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all these things?"

The disciples said to him, "Yes."

⁵² Then Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like a man who is the owner of a house, who draws out old and new things from his treasure." ⁵³ Then it came about that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed from that place.

⁵⁴ Then Jesus entered his own region and taught the people in their synagogue. The result was that they were astonished and said, "Where does this man get his wisdom and these miraculous powers from? ⁵⁵ Is not this man the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ Are not all his sisters with us? Where did he get all these things?" ⁵⁷ They were offended by him.

But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own family."

⁵⁸ He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 13

13:1-9

Why did Jesus get into the boat?

[13:2]

Jesus got into a boat near the beach. He did this so that people could hear him.

What was a parable?

[13:3]

See: [Parable](#)

Why did Matthew write about sowing seeds?

[13:4]

In this passage, Matthew wrote about sowing seeds. This was a parable. He wrote about the different types of people. Jesus explained the meaning of this parable later in this chapter.

See: Matthew 13:3-9; Luke 8:5-8

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

What was a thorny plant?

[13:7]

A thorny plant was a type of weed. Weeds are bad plants. They harm the good plants. These plants grew in places where people did not want them to grow. Farmers wanted to stop these plants from growing because they harmed the good plants that they wanted to grow.

Why did Jesus say, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[13:9]

When Jesus said “he who has ears to hear, let him hear,” he wanted someone to really listen to what he said because they needed to hear it.

13:10-23

Who was given the mystery of the kingdom of heaven?

[13:11]

Jesus spoke about the mystery of the kingdom of God. Jesus was speaking to the disciples. However, scholars think all Christians can know about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What was meant by the words, “seeing, they do not see”?

[13:13]

The words, “seeing, they do not see” meant that while a person could see, they did not understand the meaning of what was seen. Jesus also said that there were people who, “hearing, but they do not hear.” People heard Jesus’ words, but they did not understand what they were hearing.

How was Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled?

[13:14]

Jesus said that one of Isaiah's prophecies was fulfilled (see: Isaiah 6:9-10). Isaiah spoke about a time when some people would not understand the things God taught, but other people would understand the things God taught and they would repent.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he spoke about someone's heart becoming dull?

[13:15]

When Jesus spoke about a person with a "dull"(παχύνω/g3975) heart, he meant that person was very slow to understand things about God.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did many prophets and righteous men want to see the things these people now saw?

[13:17]

Jesus said that many prophets and righteous men wanted to see the things these people now saw. That is, they wanted to see Jesus the messiah. However, they did not live at the same time that Jesus lived. Jesus wanted them to know that they were blessed to be able to see the messiah.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the people to listen to the parable of the farmer?

[13:18]

Jesus told the people to listen to the parable of the farmer because he was about to explain the meaning of this parable.

See: [Parable](#)

What was the word?

[13:19]

Jesus explained the parable about sowing seeds. This was a metaphor. The seeds cast by the sower was the word of God. That is, the things about which Jesus taught. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the gospel. Fewer scholars think Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Sow \(Plant\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Word of God](#); [Gospel](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

How were people like seeds sown beside the road?

[13:19]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to some people when they heard the gospel. The road was a place where seeds could not grow. Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about peoples' hearts that were hard, like a road. These people say they were Christians, but they did not do things that honored God. Therefore, they were not at peace with God. Other scholars think that Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. These people did not believe in the things Jesus taught. They did not believe in Jesus.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How were people like seeds sown on rocky ground?

[13:20]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to some people when they heard the gospel. On the rocky ground, the seed could begin to grow. But there was not enough dirt for it to grow very much, so it died. Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about Christians. These people believed in Jesus, but they rejected Jesus when they were persecuted. Therefore, they were not at peace with God. Other scholars think that Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. These people said they were Christians, but rejected Jesus when they were persecuted. Therefore, they were not Christians.

See: [Gospel](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Gospel](#)

How were people like seeds sown with the thorns?

[13:22]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to some people when they heard the gospel. Thorn plants were bad plants. The thorn plants killed the good plants. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about Christians who believed in Jesus, but they made other things more important than Jesus in their life. They did not honor God as much as they should have honored him. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. They said they were Christians, but they cared more for the things they owned than they cared for Jesus. They were not Christians.

Advice to translators: Here, “thorns” is a type of plant that grows among other plants and kills them. It is also not good to be used for anything.

See: [Gospel](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#)

How were people like seeds sown on good soil?

[13:23]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to some people when they heard the gospel. People whose hearts were like “good soil” obeyed God and did things that honored God. They produced fruit when they did this. That is, they did not live in the way they used to live. They helped others to believe in Jesus and did the things that honored Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone bear fruit?

[13:23]

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

13:24-30

How was the kingdom of heaven like a man who sowed good seeds in his field?

[13:24]

Jesus told the people another parable. He compared the kingdom of heaven to a man who sowed good seeds in his field. After this man did this, his enemies sowed weeds in his field. If weeds and wheat grew in the same field, the farmer would have to wait until both the weeds and the wheat were grown before he could remove the weeds. Jesus wanted people to know that there will be people in the world who believe in Jesus and do things that honor God. They are like the wheat in the parable. However, God has an enemy, Satan. Satan fights against God. Jesus wanted people to know that there will also be evil people in the world who reject God. They must remain in the world until a day when God judges everyone and separates the Christians from non-Christians. At this time, God will punish the non-Christians. When Jesus spoke about the harvest, he was speaking about the day of judgment.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Harvest](#); [Day of Judgment](#);

13:31-36

How was the kingdom of heaven like a mustard seed?

[13:31]

Jesus said the kingdom of heaven was like a mustard seed. This was a metaphor. The mustard seed was very small seed. It was about 1 millimeter in size. A mustard tree was very large. Jesus wanted to say that the kingdom of God began very small, but will become very great.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus tell the parable of yeast?

[13:33]

Jesus told the parable of yeast to say that God will reign over the whole world. When a woman mixed a small amount of yeast with a big amount of flour, the flour raised. In the same way, some scholars think God's rule over a few people would spread throughout the whole world. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about his rule over Jerusalem.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

Where did a prophet say these words?

[13:35]

See: Psalm 78:2

13:37-43

Who is the Son of Man?

[13:37]

Jesus is the Son of Man.

See: [Son of Man](#)

Who is the devil?

[13:39]

The devil is Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is the end of the age?

[13:40]

The end of the age is the day of the lord.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Jesus talk about fire?

[13:42]

In the Bible, when someone is punished, they are often talked about as being burned with fire.

See: [Hell](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#)

What is an angel?

[13:41]

See: [Angel](#)

What were “all the things that cause sin and those who commit iniquity”?

[13:41]

When Jesus talked about “all the things that cause sin and those who commit lawlessness”, he was talking about all kinds of temptations and people that cause other people to sin. These people who cause others to sin were people who rejected God. They caused other people to do things that do not honor God. They also lived as if there was no God.

Why did Jesus talk about weeping and the grinding of teeth?

[13:42]

Jesus said that people who were being punished would cry loudly and grind their teeth. Because they were punished, they would have much pain. They would cry because of the pain.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How do righteous people shine like the sun?

[13:43]

Jesus said that the righteous people will shine like the sun. This is a metaphor. Some scholars think Christians will share in the glory and honor of Jesus.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[13:43]

When Jesus said “he who has ears to hear, let him hear,” he wanted someone to really listen to what he said because they needed to hear it.

13:44-53

How was the kingdom of heaven like a treasure hidden in a field?

[13:44]

Jesus said the kingdom of heaven was like a treasure hidden in a field. This was a parable. He wanted people to know that they should do anything they can to be part of Jesus’ kingdom. When someone learns about Jesus, they should be willing to give up everything they have to serve Jesus.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

How was the kingdom of heaven like a man who looked for valuable pearls?

[13:45]

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like a man who looked for valuable pearls. This was a parable. He wanted people to know that they should do anything they can to be of Jesus’ kingdom. When someone learns about Jesus, they should be willing to give up everything they have to serve Jesus.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

How was the kingdom of heaven like a net cast into the sea?

[13:47]

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like a fishing net cast into the sea. This was a parable. Jesus wanted people to know that there will also be evil people in the world who reject God. However, God will judge everyone and will separate the Christians from non-Christians. At this time, God will punish the non-Christians. When Jesus spoke about separating the fish and the end of the age, he was speaking about the day of judgment.

Jesus said the angels would do this. He wanted people to know that the angels will serve God at this time. They will help God when he judges people.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Angel](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about weeping and the grinding of teeth?

[13:50]

Jesus said that people who were being punished would cry and grind their teeth. Because they were punished, they would have much pain. They would cry because of the pain.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about certain scribes?

[13:52]

Jesus spoke about certain scribes. Some scribes heard about Jesus and his kingdom and believed in Jesus. They then understood the things the Old Testament prophets spoke about regarding the kingdom and the Messiah. They also understood the things Jesus taught about the kingdom and the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

13:54-58

Where was Jesus' own region?

[13:54]

Jesus left Capernaum and returned to his own region. That is, he returned to the area near Nazareth.

See Map: Capernaum; Nazareth

What was a synagogue?

[13:54]

See: [Synagogue](#)

Why did the people wonder who taught Jesus?

[13:54]

In ancient Israel, many teachers learned from other teachers. They then taught the same things their teachers taught. This is why they wanted to know who taught Jesus. He did not teach the same things any other teacher taught.

Why did the people ask who gave Jesus the power to do miracles?

[13:54]

The people asked who gave Jesus the power to do miracles. They did not think God gave Jesus the power to do these miracles. They thought Satan gave him the power (see: Mark 3:22).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Did Jesus have brothers and sisters?

[13:55, 13:56]

These people were talking about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Some scholars think that Mary and Joseph had other children after Jesus was born. Fewer scholars think that Mary and Joseph did not have any more children after Jesus. They think these were cousins of Jesus.

What did Matthew mean when he said the people were offended by Jesus?

[13:57]

When Matthew said that the people were offended, he meant that the people rejected Jesus. They did not believe he was sent from God and their messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was a prophet honored?

[13:57]

Jesus said that people honored a prophet, except in his hometown. To honor a prophet was to show him great respect, and to listen closely to the things he spoke, because a prophet spoke the truth from God. Jesus was a prophet. Perhaps he was also thinking about how Israel would reject him as their messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus not do many miracles in Nazareth?

[13:58]

Jesus did miracles so that people would know that God sent him. However, the people in Nazareth did not think God sent Jesus to be the messiah. They would not believe he was the messiah even if Jesus did many miracles. Therefore, Jesus did not do many miracles in Nazareth.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Nazareth

Chapter 14

¹ About that time, Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus. ² He said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead. Therefore these powers are at work in him."

³ For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. ⁴ For John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her as your wife." ⁵ Herod would have killed him, but he feared the people, because they regarded him as a prophet.

⁶ But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst and pleased Herod. ⁷ In response, he promised with an oath to give her whatever she should ask. ⁸ After being instructed by her mother, she said, "Give me here, on a platter, the head of John the Baptist." ⁹ The king was grieved by her request, but because of his oath and because of all those at dinner with him, he ordered that it should be done. ¹⁰ He sent and beheaded John in the prison. ¹¹ Then his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl and she took it to her mother. ¹² Then his disciples came, took up the corpse, and buried it. After this, they went and told Jesus.

¹³ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place. When the crowds heard of it, they followed him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ Then Jesus came before them and saw the large crowd. He had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵ When the evening had come, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour has already passed. Dismiss the crowds, so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

¹⁶ But Jesus said to them, "They have no need to go away. You give them something to eat."

¹⁷ They said to him, "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish."

¹⁸ Jesus said, "Bring them to me." ¹⁹ Then Jesus ordered the crowd to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish. Looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowd. ²⁰ They all ate and were filled. Then they took up what remained of the broken pieces of food—twelve baskets full. ²¹ Those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he sent away the crowds. ²³ After he had sent away the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. ²⁴ But the boat was now a long way from land, being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was blowing against them. ²⁵ In the fourth watch of the night Jesus approached them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said, "It is a ghost," and they cried out in fear.

²⁷ But Jesus spoke to them right away and said, "Be brave! It is I! Do not be afraid."

²⁸ Peter answered him and said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

²⁹ Jesus said, "Come."

So Peter got out from the boat and walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when Peter saw the strong wind, he became afraid. As he began to sink, he cried out and said, "Lord, save me!"

³¹ Jesus immediately stretched out his hand, took hold of Peter, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

³² Then when Jesus and Peter went into the boat, the wind ceased blowing. ³³ Then the disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the Son of God."

³⁴ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. ³⁵ When the men in that place recognized Jesus, they sent messages everywhere into the surrounding area, and they brought to him everyone who was sick. ³⁶ They begged him that they might just touch the edge of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed.

Matthew 14

14:1-12

Who was Herod the tetrarch?

[14:1]

See: [King Herod](#)

What were the powers that were at work with Jesus?

[14:2]

Herod said that certain powers were at work in Jesus. At this time, many Jews thought that someone received great power to do miracles if they were resurrected. Since Herod thought Jesus was John the Baptist resurrected, this is why he thought Jesus received his power to do miracles. Herod did not think God gave Jesus the power to do these things.

See: [King Herod](#) ; [Miracle](#); [King Herod](#)

Why did Herod arrest John the Baptist?

[14:3]

John the Baptist spoke against King Herod. He said the things Herod did were evil. John said it was wrong for Herod to marry Herodias because her husband Philip was still alive. This made Herodias angry. Herodias wanted to kill John. However, Herod worried about what people would do if he killed John because the people knew John to be a prophet. Therefore, he put him into prison.

See: Leviticus 20:21

See: [King Herod](#); [King Herod](#)

Who was Herodias?

[14:3]

Herodias was the wife of King Herod. Before he married her, Herodias was married to Herod's brother Philip.

What was a prophet?

[14:5]

See: [Prophet](#)

What was a "birthday" celebration?

[14:6]

A birthday is a celebration of the day someone was born. Every year on the same day on which a person was born, people celebrated that person.

What did it mean that Herodias' daughter's dance pleased Herod?

[14:6]

Scholars think that in ancient times, it was common for a woman to dance in a sensual way. That is, they danced in a way that made the people watching them want to have sex.

What was an oath?

[14:7]

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why was Herod upset with his step-daughter's request?

[14:9]

Herod was upset because he did not want to kill John the Baptist. He knew John was a man who honored God. However, he did not want people to see him break his oath. Therefore, he had John killed.

See: [King Herod](#); [King Herod](#)

Why did John's disciples take his body and bury it?

[14:12]

John's disciples took his body away and buried it. This honored John as a prophet. According to the Law of Moses, a person who died needed to be buried immediately.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

14:13-21

What were the five loaves about which the disciples spoke?

[14:17]

The loaves of bread about which the disciples spoke were round, flat cakes of bread about the size of a man's hand.

Why did Jesus "bless" the bread?

[14:19]

When Jesus blessed the bread, he was thanking God for giving them the bread.

How much did the people have left over after they ate?

[14:20]

After they ate, the disciples had far more food left than what they began with. Scholars think this was to show how great this miracle was.

See: [Miracle](#)

How many people ate the bread and fish?

[14:21]

Matthew said that 5000 men ate the bread and fish. There were also women and children who needed to eat. Therefore, many more than 5000 people ate.

14:22-33

What was the fourth watch of the night?

[14:25]

When Matthew wrote about the fourth watch, he was writing about a time after midnight, between 3:00 and 6:00 a.m.

What was a ghost?

[14:26]

The disciples saw Jesus walking on the water. They did not think anyone could do this. Therefore, they thought he was a ghost. A “ghost” referred to the spirit of someone who had died. The disciples thought he was not real, even though he could be seen.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What did Peter doubt?

[14:31]

Matthew wrote that Peter doubted something. That is, he did not trust in Jesus to do the thing he promised to do.

Why did the disciples worship Jesus?

[14:33]

The disciples worshipped Jesus because they believed he was the Son of God. They believed Jesus is God because only God could do the miracles Jesus did.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Worship](#); [Son of God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Where was Gennesaret?

[14:34]

See Map: Gennesaret

Chapter 15

¹ Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem. They said, ² "Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

³ He answered and said to them, "Then why do you violate the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions? ⁴ For God said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely die.' ⁵ But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever help you would have received from me is now a gift given to God," ⁶ that person does not need to honor his father.' In this way you have made void the word of God ^[1] for the sake of your traditions. ⁷ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you when he said,

⁸ 'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.

⁹ They worship me in vain
because they teach as their doctrines the commandments of people.'"

¹⁰ Then he called the crowd to himself and said to them, "Listen and understand— ¹¹ Nothing that enters into the mouth defiles a person. Instead, what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person."

¹² Then the disciples came and said to Jesus, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"

¹³ Jesus answered and said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. ¹⁴ Let them alone, they are blind guides. If a blind person guides another blind person, both will fall into a pit."

¹⁵ Peter responded and said to Jesus, "Explain this parable to us."

¹⁶ Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then goes out into the latrine? ¹⁸ But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart. They are the things that defile a person. ¹⁹ For from the heart proceed evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, and slander. ²⁰ These are the things that defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a person."

²¹ Then Jesus went away from there and withdrew toward the regions of the cities of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Behold, a Canaanite woman came out from that region. She shouted out and said, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

²³ But Jesus answered her not a word. His disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is shouting after us."

²⁴ But Jesus answered and said, "I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

²⁵ But she came and bowed down before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

²⁶ He answered and said, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, but even the little dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables."

²⁸ Then Jesus answered and said to her, "Woman, great is your faith; let it be done for you just as you wish." Her daughter was healed from that hour.

²⁹ Jesus left that place and went near to the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up a hill and sat there. ³⁰ Large crowds came to him. They brought with them lame, blind, mute, and crippled people, and many others who were sick. They presented them at Jesus' feet, and he healed them. ³¹ So the crowd marveled when they saw the mute persons speak, the crippled made well, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. They glorified the God of Israel.

³² Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd because they have stayed with me for three days already and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away without eating, or they may faint on the way."

³³ The disciples said to him, "Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy so large a crowd?"

³⁴ Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." ³⁵ Then Jesus commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground.

³⁶ He took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks, he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples. The disciples gave them to the crowd. ³⁷ The people all ate and were satisfied. Then they gathered up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over. ³⁸ Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. ³⁹ Then Jesus sent the crowds away and got into the boat and went into the region of Magadan.

Footnotes

15:6 ^[1]The best ancient copies have

Matthew 15

15:1-20

Why did the Pharisees and scribes come from Jerusalem?

[15:1]

The Pharisees and scribes came from Jerusalem to see what Jesus and the disciples were doing.

See: [Disciple](#); [Scribe](#); [Disciple](#)

What was the tradition of the elders?

[15:2]

The tradition of the elders were the things the Pharisees and Scribes taught. They taught these things because other teachers before them taught these things. These were not things taught in the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Scribe](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did people not eat without washing their hands?

[15:2]

In ancient Israel, the Jews did not eat unless they washed their hands in a certain way. Their hands were not dirty, they were just not washed in the way the Pharisees and scribes taught that they needed to be washed. These were certain rules made by the Jewish teachers, which Matthew called the "traditions of the elders." They taught that Jews needed to wash their hands after they went to the marketplace. They needed to wash because they were Gentiles in the marketplace and Gentiles were unclean. These rules were not in the Law of Moses.

See: [Gentile](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Gentile](#)

What did Matthew say about honoring your father and mother?

[15:4]

In the Law of Moses, children were told to honor their father and mother. However, the Jewish teachers in Israel taught something different. They taught that children could promise something to God. If they did this, they did not need to give it to help their parents. Neither did they need to use it in a certain way or to give it to a priest. Jesus said this did not obey the Law of Moses, nor obey the command to honor your father and mother.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why would someone die for speaking evil about his father or mother?

[15:4]

In the Law of Moses, it said that whoever curses or insults his mother or father will die.

See: Exodus 21:17

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did Matthew write in verse 6?

[15:6]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words "word of God." Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the word "commandment" instead of "word of God." Scholars do not know what Matthew wrote.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How did the Pharisees and scribes make void the word of God?

[15:6]

Jesus said that the Pharisees and Scribes made void the word of God. That is, when they made up their own rules, they emptied the Law of Moses in some way. It made people think they were following the laws God made, but they were following rules made by men.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Scribe](#); [Word of God](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What was a hypocrite?

[15:7]

A hypocrite was someone who said one thing and did something different. The Pharisees and Scribes were hypocrites when they said they lived in a way that honored God when they really lived in a way that dishonored God.

See: [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#); [Scribe](#)

When did Isaiah write these things?

[15:7]

See: Isaiah 29:13

What defiled someone?

[15:11]

Jesus said that things that entered into a person did not defile them, that is, it did not make them unclean. Instead, it was the things that came out of people that defiled them. That is, it was things a person thought and did that made them unclean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

What did Jesus want to teach when he told this parable?

[15:13]

Jesus told the disciples a parable. He spoke about a plant being taken out of the ground. He wanted the disciples to know that God will stop the things the Pharisees taught. He also told them that the Pharisees were like blind people. This is a metaphor. The Pharisees could not help people know how to live in a way that honored God because they themselves did not know how to live in a way that honored God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Disciple](#); [Pharisees](#); [Metaphor](#)

What is sexual immorality?

[15:19]

See: [Sexualimmorality](#)

15:21-39

Where were Tyre and Sidon?

[15:21]

Tyre and Sidon were cities outside of Israel.

See Map: Tyre and Sidon

Why did this woman shout at Jesus?

[15:22]

Matthew wrote that a Canaanite woman came shouting at Jesus. This woman was a Gentile. Despite this, she believed that Jesus was the Messiah and could heal her daughter.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of David](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

See Map: Canaan

What did Jesus teach through this woman?

[15:24, 15:25, 15:26, 15:27, 15:28]

At this time, Jesus was teaching the Jews and wanted the Jews to believe in him. When Jesus spoke about the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," he was speaking about the Jews who needed the messiah.

The Jews believed that the Gentiles were like dogs. That is, they were less than human in some way. This is a metaphor. Jesus used this to talk about how people cared for their dogs and because of this they can know that God cares for and loves the Gentiles. When Jesus healed this woman, he wanted the disciples to know that he loved the Gentiles, even though the Jews were the people of God.

See: [Disciple](#); [Gentile](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Shepherd](#); [People of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Disciple](#)

Who did Jesus heal?

[15:30]

Jesus healed many people near the Sea of Galilee. Many of these people were Gentiles. The crowds were amazed and they glorified God.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

What was meant by the words, “such a deserted place”?

[15:33]

When the disciples talked about being in a deserted place, they were in a place where there was nowhere to buy food. Perhaps they were in the wilderness or desert.

See: [Disciple](#)

How many people would be full after eating one loaf of bread?

[15:34]

Bread was made into a loaf. In ancient times, a person needed at least one loaf a day to live. For a meal, seven loaves and a few fish would have only fed a few small families.

How much fish and bread were left over?

[15:37]

When Matthew said there were 7 large baskets of food left over after everyone ate, this showed that this was a great miracle.

See: [Miracle](#)

Chapter 16

- ¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees came and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from the sky. ² But he answered and said to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' ³ When it is morning, you say, 'It will be foul weather, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. ⁴ An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then Jesus left them and went away.
- ⁵ When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. ⁶ Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
- ⁷ The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, "It is because we took no bread."
- ⁸ Jesus was aware of this and said, "You of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves and say that it is because you have taken no bread? ⁹ Do you not understand? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered up? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you took up? ¹¹ How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? Watch out and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." ¹² Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of yeast in bread, but to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
- ¹³ Now when Jesus came to the regions near Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
- ¹⁴ They said, "Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."
- ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
- ¹⁶ Answering, Simon Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- ¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. The gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then Jesus commanded the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.
- ²¹ From that time Jesus started to tell his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things at the hand of the elders and chief priests and scribes, be killed, and be raised back to life on the third day.
- ²² Then Peter took him aside and rebuked him, saying, "May this be far from you, Lord! May this never happen to you!"
- ²³ But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you do not think about the things of God, but about the things of people." ²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what does it profit a person if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life? What can a person give in exchange for his life? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels. Then he will reward every person according to his deeds. ²⁸ Truly I say to you, there are some of you standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."
-

Matthew 16

16:1-12

Why did the Pharisees and Sadducees want a sign from heaven?

[16:1]

The Pharisees wanted Jesus to give them a sign from the sky. That is, a sign from heaven. They wanted Jesus to prove to them that God gave Jesus permission to do these miracles. They thought that Satan gave Jesus permission to do these things (see: 9:34; Mark 3:22)

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Sign](#); [Heaven](#); [Miracle](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about the weather?

[16:2]

In ancient Israel, the Pharisees and Sadducees predicted the weather. It is very difficult to know what will happen with the weather. Jesus said they were able to see certain things and know what the weather would do. However, they saw the things Jesus did, but could not understand the things that were happening around them.

See: [Sadducees](#); [Sadducees](#)

What were the signs of the times?

[16:3]

Jesus spoke about the “signs of the times.” He was speaking about certain things that happened so that people would know that Jesus is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was an evil and adulterous generation?

[16:4]

When Jesus spoke about an “adulterous generation,” he used a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking directly to the Scribes and Pharisees, and told them they were an “adulterous generation”. That is, the Scribes and Pharisees did not truly obey and follow God completely.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Adultery](#); [Generation](#); [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#)

What was the sign of Jonah?

[16:4]

Jonah was a prophet in ancient Israel (see: Jonah 1-4). He was swallowed by a fish and was in the fish for three days. After three days, he was released. Something like this was going to happen to Jesus. He would die and after three days, he would come back to life.

See: [Prophet](#) ; [Son of Man](#); [Sign](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did Jesus talk about yeast?

[16:6]

Jesus used the metaphor of yeast. He did this to talk about the Pharisees teaching evil things. This would make other people want to do evil things.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Metaphor](#); [Pharisees](#)

Why did the disciples reason with each other?

[16:7]

The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant when he talked about the yeast. They thought he was concerned because they did not bring bread with them.

See: [Yeast \(Leaven\)](#)

What was little faith?

[16:8]

Jesus said that certain people had little faith. That is, these people did not trust in Jesus very much.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Jesus ask the disciples so many questions?

[16:8, 16:9, 16:10, 16:11]

Jesus asked many different questions because they did not understand what Jesus was saying about who he is and why he did these things. They knew Jesus had already fed more than 5000 people through a miracle, but they forgot he could do this and worried that the people would not eat. Therefore, Jesus rebuked them. That is, he spoke to them in a way that they would know they did something wrong.

16:13-20

Where was Caesarea Philippi?

[16:13]

See Map: Caesarea Philippi

Who is the Son of Man?

[16:13]

Many years before Jesus lived, Daniel prophesied about the “son of man” (see: Daniel 7:13). Jesus asked who people thought fulfilled this prophecy. People did not agree about who fulfilled Daniel’s prophecy. Jesus is the Son of man.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Who did Peter believe that Jesus was?

[16:16]

See: [Son of God](#), [Son of God](#)

How did Peter know that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God?

[16:17]

Peter knew that Jesus was the messiah and the Son of God because God helped him to know this. He needed God to help him know this.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#), [Son of God](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

On what rock will Jesus build his church?

[16:18]

Some scholars think when Jesus spoke about the rock upon which he would build his church, he used a metaphor. They think he was speaking about what Peter said. That is, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. A “rock” is solid and a large rock cannot be changed. Jesus is the messiah and this can never be changed. Fewer scholars think Jesus was speaking about making his church with the things done by Peter and the apostles.

See: Ephesians 2:20

See: [Apostle](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Apostle](#)

What are the gates of hades?

[16:18]

Jesus spoke about the gates of Hades. Hades is another name for hell. Some scholars think Jesus wanted to say that Satan is not able to stop Jesus from doing the things Jesus wanted to do. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. People who believe in Jesus will not live forever in hell after they die.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

What are the keys to the kingdom of heaven?

[16:19]

Jesus said that he will give Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He gave Peter permission to do something. Scholars think Jesus gave Peter and the other apostles permission to teach people how to live in a way that honored God. They would help people understand Jesus and the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Apostle](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did it mean for Peter to bind and loose things on earth?

[16:19]

Jesus gave Peter permission to bind and loose certain things on the earth. Some scholars think Jesus gave Peter, and the apostles, permission to rule over Christians. That is, they could allow Christians to do some things and they could make Christians stop doing other things. Some scholars think Peter will be able to do this when Jesus rules on the earth. Other scholars think God was going to teach people, through the apostles, how to live in a way that honored God after Jesus died. He would do this by revealing himself to the apostles and prophets.

See: [Prophet](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did Jesus not want the disciples to tell people that he is the messiah?

[16:20]

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

16:21-28

Who were the elders, chief priests, and scribes?

[16:21]

When Matthew spoke about the elders, he was speaking about older men in Israel who lead the people in some way. Together these three groups helped to lead Israel to worship and obey God.

See: [Scribe](#); [Scribe](#)

How would Jesus raised back to life on the third day?

[16:21]

When Jesus said that he would be raised back to life after three days, he was talking about his resurrection.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Peter rebuke Jesus?

[16:23]

Peter rebuked Jesus, that is. Peter said that Jesus must not be speaking correctly. Peter thought that the messiah would not suffer and die in the way Jesus said. However, Jesus rebuked Peter. He said Peter did something wrong. The things he said were the things that Satan wanted Peter to say. He wanted the messiah to be the way he wanted the messiah to be, and not to do the things God wanted the messiah to do.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was Peter a stumbling block to Jesus?

[16:23]

Jesus said that Peter was a stumbling block. This was a metaphor. Even though he did not know it, Peter was tempting Jesus. He was trying to get Jesus to do what Satan wanted, not what God wanted.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

How could a person “take up his cross”?

[16:24]

Jesus died on a cross. He obeyed God even though he suffered for obeying God. He wanted people to do the same thing. He wanted them to obey God, even if they suffered because they obeyed God.

See: [Cross](#)

How does someone save their life?

[16:25]

Jesus talked about “life” in two ways in this passage. He spoke about the life a person has before they die and the life they have after they die. He wanted people to obey God before they die if they wanted to live with God in heaven forever. Those who die on Earth because they obeyed God will live with God in heaven after they die.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How will the Son of Man come to the earth?

[16:27]

Jesus said that the Son of Man will come to the earth with great glory (see: Daniel 7:13-14).

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How will Jesus reward people?

[16:27]

See: [Reward](#)

How will people not die before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom?

[16:28]

Jesus said that some of the people with him will not die before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about revealing himself to the disciples after his resurrection. Other scholars think Matthew will write about this in Matthew 17.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Chapter 17

¹ Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up a high mountain by themselves. ² He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his garments became as brilliant as the light. ³ Behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him. ⁴ Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you desire, I will make here three shelters—one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, there was a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him."

⁶ When the disciples heard it, they fell facedown and were very afraid. ⁷ Then Jesus came and touched them and said, "Get up and do not be afraid." ⁸ Then they looked up but saw no one except Jesus only.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Report this vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."

¹⁰ His disciples asked him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

¹¹ Jesus answered and said, "Elijah will indeed come and restore all things. ¹² But I tell you, Elijah has already come, but they did not recognize him. Instead, they did whatever they wanted to him. In the same way, the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands." ¹³ Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

¹⁴ When they had come to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, and said, ¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic and suffers severely. For he often falls into the fire or the water. ¹⁶ I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him."

¹⁷ Jesus answered and said, "Unbelieving and perverse generation, how long will I have to stay with you? How long must I bear with you? Bring him here to me." ¹⁸ Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed from that hour.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

²⁰ Jesus said to them, "Because of your small faith. For I truly say to you, if you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you." ²¹^[1]

²² While they stayed in Galilee, Jesus said to his disciples, "The Son of Man will be given over into the hands of people, ²³ and they will kill him, and the third day he will be raised up." The disciples were deeply grieved.

²⁴ When they had come to Capernaum, the men who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, "Does not your teacher pay the two-drachma tax?"

²⁵ He said, "Yes."

When Peter came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first and said, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tolls or taxes? From their sons or from others?"

²⁶ "From others," Peter answered.

"Then the sons are free," Jesus said. ²⁷ But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to stumble, go to the sea, throw in a hook, and draw in the fish that comes up first. When you have opened its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take it and give it to the tax collectors for me and you."

Footnotes

17:21 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have v. 21,

Matthew 17

17:1-13

How was Jesus transfigured?

[17:2]

When Matthew said that Jesus was transfigured, he wanted to say that Jesus was changed in some way. The disciples did not see Jesus' body as it had been. They saw him as he will be when he returns to the earth in glory.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Peter, James, and John see Elijah and Moses?

[17:3]

Peter, James, and John saw Elijah and Moses. Elijah and Moses were in heaven. Scholars think this was a symbol. Elijah represented the prophets, and Moses represented the Law of Moses. They symbolized that both the Law and the prophets prophesied about Jesus the messiah.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did Peter want to make three shelters?

[17:4]

Peter wanted to make three shelters. He wanted to make one for Jesus, one for Elijah, and one for Moses. He did not realize that Jesus was greater than Elijah and Moses. Scholars disagree about why he wanted to do this.

1. Some scholars think Peter wanted to build three tents of meeting. This is because he wanted to build a place where God could talk to men once again. He did not know that God was already talking to people through Jesus. They did not need to meet in a tent to learn what God said to them.
2. Some scholars think Peter wanted to build three shelters (see: Leviticus 23). Perhaps he thought this was for the Feast of Shelters when the messiah came to reign over the world (see: Zechariah 14:16)

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Festival of Shelters](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who spoke from the cloud?

[17:5]

God the Father was the one who was speaking from the cloud. In the Bible, heaven is often spoken about as if it is in the clouds.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why were the disciples afraid?

[17:6]

The disciples were afraid because they thought the time was coming for God to judge the world. Perhaps the disciples was partly afraid, but partly worshipping God.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Jesus tell them not to say anything?

[17:9]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “until the Son of Man has risen from the dead”?

[17:9]

Jesus spoke about the Son of Man rising from the dead. He was speaking about himself. He would be resurrected. At this time, the disciples did not understand that Jesus would be resurrected. Certain Jewish teachers even taught that no one would rise from the dead. This is why they discussed what Jesus said among themselves.

See: [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Disciple](#)

What did the Scribes teach about Elijah?

[17:10]

The Scribes taught that Elijah would return to the earth before the messiah came. He would tell Israel to repent and to be ready for the messiah. It is not known whether they taught that Elijah would come back to the earth or that there would be a prophet who was like Elijah.

See: [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Prophet](#)

Who was Jesus talking about when he said that Elijah has come?

[17:12, 17:13]

Jesus told them that the Scribes were right about Elijah. A prophet like Elijah did help Israel to be ready for the messiah and he wanted them to repent of the sins. When Jesus spoke about this Elijah, he was speaking about John the Baptist.

See: Malachi 3:1

See: [Sin](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#)

17:14-23

Why did this man kneel before Jesus?

[17:14]

A man knelt before Jesus. He did this to honor Jesus.

What was wrong with this man’s son?

[17:15]

This man had a son who was epileptic. The epilepsy was because he had a demon in him that caused him to shake violently. It also caused his son to fall into water and fire.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why could the disciples not cast out this demon?

[17:16]

Jesus said the disciples could not cast out this demon because they did not have enough faith. Scholars think the disciples had doubts about what Jesus had commanded they do earlier (see: 10:8).

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Demon](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Jesus rebuke the “unbelieving and corrupt generation”?

[17:17]

Jesus rebuked the “unbelieving and corrupt generation.” That is, he said that many people in Israel were evil for rejecting him. He was not speaking about everyone in Israel. Some people believed in him. Perhaps Jesus said this because he wanted the disciples to know that they acted in the same way the non-Christians acted.

See: [Generation](#); [Generation](#)

Why did Jesus say, “nothing will be impossible for you”?

[17:20]

When Jesus said, “nothing will be impossible for you,” he was not saying that people who believe in him can do anything. Instead, he was saying that when someone obeys God, they can do things they did not think they could do. God can make anything happen and he can use people to make anything happen that he wants to happen.

Jesus said that they did not trust him very much. He said their faith was like a mustard seed. This was a metaphor. The mustard seed was very small seed. It was about 1 millimeter in size. A mustard tree was very large. Jesus wanted to say that if they trusted him, he would help them to do very great things.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[17:22]

See map: Galilee

Who is the Son of Man?

[17:22]

Jesus is the Son of Man.

See: [Son of Man](#)

How will Jesus be raised up?

[17:23]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

17:24-27

What was the half-shekel tax?

[17:24]

Jesus spoke about a half-shekel tax. This was a tax the Jews paid to serve the temple in Jerusalem. A half-shekel was the amount of money a typical person earned in one day. Jews, from the age of twenty-one, were required to pay this tax once every year.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the tax that was paid to the temple?

[17:25]

Jesus spoke about the temple to his disciples. He said that the sons of kings do not pay taxes to the kings. Therefore, he did not need to pay taxes to the temple because he is the Son of God. However, Jesus did

not want the people collecting the taxes to reject him because they did not understand that he is the Son of God. He got the money from a fish. This was a miracle.

See: [Temple](#); [Son of God](#); [Miracle](#); [Temple](#)

How much was the shekel?

[17:27]

The shekel was the same amount of money as four drachma. Because of this, Jesus had enough money to pay the tax for him and Peter.

Chapter 18

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² Jesus called to himself a little child, set him among them, ³ and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like little children, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name receives me. ⁶ But whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to stumble, it would be better for him that a large millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should be sunk into the depths of the sea.

⁷ "Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! For it is necessary that those stumbling blocks come, but woe to the person through whom those stumbling blocks come! ⁸ If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to be thrown into the eternal fire having two hands or two feet. ⁹ If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than to be thrown into the fiery hell having both eyes. ¹⁰ See that you do not despise any of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹¹² What do you think? If anyone has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go off seeking the one that went astray? ¹³ If he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴ In the same way, it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you will have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen to you, take one or two others along with you so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be confirmed. ¹⁷ And if he refuses to listen to them, tell the matter to the church. If he also refuses to listen to the church, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector. ¹⁸ I tell you truly, whatever things you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I tell you truly, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst."

²¹ Then Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?"

²² Jesus said to him, "I do not tell you seven times, but until seventy times seven. ²³ Therefore the kingdom of heaven is similar to a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settling, one servant was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ But since he did not have the means to repay, his master commanded him to be sold, together with his wife and children and everything that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell down, bowed down before him, and said, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ So the master of that servant, since he was moved with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, who owed him one hundred denarii. He took hold of him, began to choke him, and said, 'Pay me what you owe.'

²⁹ "But his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you.' ³⁰ But the first servant refused. Instead, he went and threw him into prison until he should pay him what he owed. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved. They came and told their master everything that had happened.

³² "Then that servant's master called him and said to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant, even as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ His master was angry and handed him over to the torturers until he would pay all that was owed. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Footnotes

18:11 ^[1]The best ancient Greek copies do not have the sentence that some translations include,

Matthew 18

18:1-14

Why did Matthew write about who was the greatest in the kingdom of God?

[18:1]

Some scholars think Matthew wrote about who was the greatest in the kingdom of God because the disciples were thinking about who would have the most power. However, Jesus taught that greatness was about being humble and being a servant.

See: Mark 9:33-37

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus talk about little children?

[18:3]

Jesus helped the disciples to understand what he said by talking about a child. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about how a child is humble and needed a parent to live. They think this was also a metaphor. In the same way, the disciples needed to be humble, knowing they depended on God for everything.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

What was a stumbling block?

[18:6]

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

What was a woe?

[18:7]

See: [Woe](#)

Did Jesus want people to cut off their hands and feet?

[18:8]

Jesus said that people should cut off their hands or feet if it caused other people to sin. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think that Jesus was saying it was better to go to heaven without enjoying the sinning on earth, than to go on sinning in this world and then go to hell.

See: [Sin](#); [Hell](#); [Sin](#)

What is the eternal fire?

[18:8]

Jesus spoke about an eternal fire. He was speaking about hell, where people are punished with fire.

See: [Fire](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Fire](#)

Why did Jesus speak about angels?

[18:10]

In ancient Israel, the Jews taught that only certain angels were close to God and could see God. However, Jesus said that all the angels are always looking at God. He wanted to tell them that God cared very much for these "little children."

See: [Angel](#)

What did Matthew write in verse 11?

[18:11]

Some of the ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words, "for the Son of Man came to save that which was lost." Older and more ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not contain these words. Therefore, scholars think Matthew did not write these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What did Jesus teach about when he told people about the sheep?

[18:12]

Jesus told them a parable about sheep. Just as a shepherd rejoices when he finds the one lost sheep, so God rejoices when one sinner repents. Scholars think Jesus told this parable to teach that God's will is that no one would perish, that is, that no one would reject God.

See: [Will of God](#); [Shepherd](#); [Heaven](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Will of God](#)

18:15-20

Who are the brothers about which Jesus spoke?

[18:15]

When Jesus spoke about brothers, he was speaking about Christians.

See: [Family of God](#)

What was meant by the words, "gained your brother"?

[18:15]

Jesus said that a Christian who helps another Christian not to sin has gained his brother. That is, his brother has been restored to him in friendship and is at peace with him and with God.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

How was "every word confirmed"?

[18:16]

Sometimes a Christian who sins does not listen to another Christian who is trying to get him to stop sinning. Jesus said when this happens to take one or two other Christians to listen to the words of the Christian who sinned. This is so that every word will be confirmed. That is, there would be evidence to bring about forgiveness and reconciliation between these Christians.

See: [Sin](#)

What did it mean to treat a person "as a Gentile and a tax collector" if they did not repent of their sin?

[18:17]

When a Christian sinned and did not listen to correction from other Christians, Jesus said to treat them the same way they treated a tax collector or a Gentile. That is, they were to be separated from other Christians in some way. Jesus wanted the Christians to treat the sinning Christian in the same way they treat non-Christians who sin. That is, they are to tell them that they need to repent.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did the disciples bind and loose things on the earth?

[18:18]

Jesus gave the disciples permission to bind and loose certain things on the earth. Some scholars think Jesus gave the apostles permission to rule other Christians. That is, they could say that doing certain things were good and doing other things is evil. Some scholars think the apostles will be able to do this when Jesus rules on the earth. Other scholars think God was going to teach people, through the apostles, how to live in a way that honored God after Jesus died. He would do this by revealing himself to the apostles and prophets.

See: [Prophet](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Prophet](#)

What did Jesus teach the disciples about being in their midst?

[18:20]

Jesus taught the disciples about prayer. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that when two or three of them are gathered together to worship him, he would help them in some way. He also wanted them to know that God would still be with them after Jesus died.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

18:21-35

Why did Peter ask Jesus about forgiving other Christians seven times?

[18:21]

Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive another Christian. The Jews taught that someone needed to forgive 3 times. Scholars think Peter thought to forgive someone seven times would be the most anyone could forgive.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

How many is seventy times seven?

[18:22]

Seventy times seven is 490.

Why did Jesus tell Peter a parable about the king's servants?

[18:23]

Jesus told Peter a parable about a certain king's servants. He wanted Peter to know about the kingdom of heaven. He wanted the disciples to remember that Jesus forgave them. They could never have worked hard enough to earn God's favor and be at peace with God. Jesus forgave them freely. When they do not forgive another Christian freely, Jesus said they act in the same way this servant acted. They forgot they were forgiven more by God than this person needed to be forgiven by them. He treated this man worse than God treated him. Because of this, God will punish Christians when they do not forgive other Christians.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Serve](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How much money is 10,000 talents?

[18:24]

A talent was a very large amount of money. It would have normally taken someone about 20 years to earn one talent. This was an amount of money that no one would ever be able to pay back.

How much money is a denarii?

[18:28]

At this time, a person typically earned a denarii every day they worked.

See: [Denarius](#)

Chapter 19

¹ It came about that when Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea that is beyond the Jordan River. ² Great crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

³ Pharisees came to him, testing him, saying to him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?"

⁴ Jesus answered and said, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female? ⁵ He who made them also said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and join to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one tear apart."

⁷ They said to him, "Why then did Moses command us to give a certificate of divorce and then to send her away?"

⁸ He said to them, "For your hardness of heart, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not that way. ⁹ I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." ^[1]

¹⁰ The disciples said to Jesus, "If that is the case of a man with his wife, it is not good to marry."

¹¹ But Jesus said to them, "Not everyone can accept this saying, but only those to whom it is given. ¹² For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this teaching, let him accept it."

¹³ Then some little children were brought to him so that he would lay his hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But Jesus said, "Permit the little children, and do not forbid them to come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such ones." ¹⁵ He placed his hands on the children, and then he went away from there.

¹⁶ Behold, a man came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what good thing must I do that I may have eternal life?"

¹⁷ Jesus said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? Only one is good, but if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

¹⁸ The man said to him, "Which commandments?"

Jesus said, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, ¹⁹ honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbor as yourself."

²⁰ The young man said to him, "All these things I have obeyed. What do I still need?"

²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²² But when the young man heard what Jesus said, he went away sorrowful, for he had many possessions.

²³ Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

²⁴ Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

²⁵ When the disciples heard it, they were very astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁶ Jesus looked at them and said, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

²⁷ Then Peter answered and said to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?"

²⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, in the new age when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ Every one who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or land for my name's sake will receive one hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

Footnotes

19:9 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have

Matthew 19

19:1-12

Where were Galilee and Judea?

[19:1]

See Map: Galilee; Judea

Where was the area beyond the Jordan River?

[19:1]

Jesus left Capernaum to go to Judea. This was a place past the Jordan River. Judea was on the west side of the Jordan River. This was an area where Jews lived. Matthew wrote about the area east of the Jordan river when he wrote the words, beyond the Jordan River. This was a place where Gentiles lived.

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Capernaum; Jordan River; Judea

How did the Pharisees test Jesus?

[19:3]

Matthew wrote that the Pharisees tested Jesus. That is, they wanted to get him to say something that made people angry. It would make certain people angry if Jesus said people could not get divorced. It would make certain other people angry if Jesus said that people could get divorced.

See: [Divorce](#); [Divorce](#)

What did Moses teach about divorce?

[19:7, 19:8]

Moses taught about divorce in the Law of Moses. The Pharisees thought that Moses said a man could divorce his wife. However, they did not think that a woman could divorce her husband. Some Pharisees taught that a man could only divorce his wife if she committed adultery or did evil things. Other Pharisees taught that any man could divorce his wife if he wanted to, even if she did not do anything wrong.

When a man wrote his wife a "certificate of divorce," he sent her away with a certificate saying that she no longer belonged to the man as his wife. This would help her to marry another man.

See: Deuteronomy 24:1-4

See: [Adultery](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Adultery](#)

What did Jesus teach about divorce?

[19:9]

Jesus told the Pharisees what the Law of Moses actually said. Moses did not want people to get divorced because God did not want people to get divorced. Instead, Moses knew that some people had hard hearts. That is, they did not want to listen to God's will about divorce. Moses allowed people to be divorced because of this. However, a certificate of divorce must be written.

Jesus told them about the marriage between Adam and Eve (see: Genesis 1:27; 2:24). A husband and wife became one flesh. That is, it was never God's desire or intention for a married couple to divorce. Jesus only allowed for divorce when there was sexual immorality.

See: [Will of God](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#); [Will of God](#)

What was sexual immorality?

[19:9]

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did the disciples say to Jesus, "it is not good to marry"?

[19:10]

Jesus said that it was not good to marry. Some scholars think the disciples were asking Jesus about not marrying again after being divorced. Other scholars think the disciples wanted to know from Jesus if it was good to marry at all, because they served Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, "not everyone can accept this teaching"?

[19:11]

Jesus said, "not everyone can accept this teaching." Some scholars think Jesus was talking about his teaching in verses four through nine. Other scholars think he wanted to say that only certain people will understand the things he taught in this verse.

What was a eunuch?

[19:12]

A eunuch was a man who was incapable of producing children. However, Jesus spoke about different types of eunuchs. Some men are born with a damaged penis and they are not able to have sex. Other men were made eunuchs. In ancient times, a king may have cut off a man's penis if he put this man in charge of caring for his many wives. Other people made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of God. This was a metaphor. They chose not to marry so they could better serve Jesus.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

19:13-15

Why did people want their children to have Jesus touch them?

[19:13]

The people brought their children to have Jesus touch them. They thought that if they did this, Jesus would bless the children. He did this by putting his hands on them and saying a blessing.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why did the disciples rebuke the people for bringing their children to have Jesus touch them?

[19:13]

The disciples rebuked the people for bringing their children to have Jesus touch them. Scholars think the disciples thought Jesus needed to be doing other things. Perhaps they thought that Jesus should be teaching adults instead.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus teach the disciples about the kingdom of God?

[19:14]

Jesus told the disciples they were wrong for rebuking these people. Jesus wanted the little children to come to him. This was because many adults rejected Jesus. They thought they knew more about the Messiah than they did. However, the children were willing to learn and did not reject Jesus.

After this, Jesus taught the disciples about the kingdom of God. If people wanted to have the kingdom of God, they needed to believe in Jesus the same way children believed in Jesus. Children often trusted someone completely, but adults often only trusted someone who had earned it.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

19:16-30

What was having eternal life?

[19:16]

See: [Eternal Life](#)

How was someone good?

[19:17]

When Jesus spoke about someone who was good, he was speaking about someone who is always does the right thing. Only God is good in this way. Scholars think Jesus said that he is God. The man did not understand what it meant to be "good" and to obey God perfectly.

See: [Jesus is God](#)

What were these commandments about which Jesus spoke?

[19:17]

Jesus talked about some of the ten commandments in the Law of Moses.

See: Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What was adultery?

[19:18]

See: [Adultery](#)

What was bearing false witness?

[19:18]

Someone who bore false witness lied about someone. They said someone did something they did not do or did not do something that they did. It also meant to give a false report in a court of law.

See: [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#)

Why did Jesus want this man to sell everything he had?

[19:21]

Jesus knew that the man loved money more than anything else. He did not truly trust in God or that Jesus was the messiah. He trusted in the things he had. Because of this, Jesus wanted him to sell all he had in order to follow him.

All people do not need to sell everything they have to be Christians. This was not a command for all people in order for them to follow Jesus. Jesus knew the man's money kept him from completely trusting in him.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was treasure in heaven?

[19:21]

Jesus spoke about some rewards people will get after they die when he spoke about treasure in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why was it hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God?

[19:23]

Some scholars think it was hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God because the people who were rich held onto their money and valuable things too tightly. That is, they trusted in their possession more than they trusted God. Jesus used the metaphor of a camel. A camel would never fit through the eye of a needle, which is less than one millimeter. However, Jesus wanted the disciples to know that though things might seem impossible to men, all things are possible for God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#)

Advice to translators: Someone who has a lot of money is considered rich. They have riches.

What did Jesus want to teach the disciples?

[19:26]

Jesus wanted to teach his disciples that there was only one way to have peace with God and to enter into his kingdom. People need to trust in Jesus. People should not trust in anything or anyone else.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

When will the Son of Man sit on his glorious throne?

[19:28]

Jesus spoke about a time when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne. Jesus was speaking about himself ruling his kingdom.

See: [Throne](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Throne](#)

How will the disciples judge Israel?

[19:28]

Jesus said that the disciples will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. They will judge Israel in some way. However, he did not say when or how they would do this.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How will people be given “a hundred times” as much as they left behind?

[19:29]

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the many homes that would be opened for the servants of God. The brothers and sisters were those who believed in Jesus and became brothers and sisters in Christ. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about spiritual blessings that replaced the homes and families that were left behind. The blessings might be considered “a hundred times” better than what they left behind.

See: [Reward](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Reward](#)

Chapter 20

¹ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After he had agreed with the laborers for one denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ He went out again about the third hour and saw other laborers standing idle in the marketplace. ⁴ To them he said, 'You also, go into the vineyard, and I will give you what is right.' So they went to work. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth hour and again the ninth hour, and did the same. ⁶ Once more about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle. He said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all the day long?'

⁷ "They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.'

"He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning from the last to the first.'

⁹ "When the laborers who had been hired at the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ When the first laborers came, they thought that they would receive more, but they also received one denarius each. ¹¹ When they received their wages, they complained about the landowner. ¹² They said, 'These last laborers have spent only one hour in work, but you have made them equal to us, we who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

¹³ "But the owner answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I do you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for one denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go your way. I choose to give to these last hired laborers just the same as to you. ¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me to do as I want with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am good?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last." [\[1\]](#)

¹⁷ As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸ "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and scribes. They will condemn him to death ¹⁹ and will deliver him to the Gentiles for them to mock, to flog, and to crucify him. But on the third day he will be raised up."

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons. She bowed down before him and asked for something from him.

²¹ Jesus said to her, "What do you wish?"

She said to him, "Command that these my two sons may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left hand, in your kingdom."

²² But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?"

They said to him, "We are able."

²³ He said to them, "My cup you will indeed drink. But to sit at my right hand and at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." ²⁴ When the other ten disciples heard this, they were very angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their important men exercise authority over them. ²⁶ But it must not be this way among you. Instead, whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your servant, ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

²⁹ As they went out from Jericho, a great crowd followed him. ³⁰ There were two blind men sitting by the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us."

³¹ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be quiet, but they cried out even more loudly, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us."

³² Then Jesus stood still and called to them and said, "What do you wish me to do for you?"

³³ They said to him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." ³⁴ Then Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

Footnotes

20:16 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have

Matthew 20

20:1-16

Why did Jesus speak a parable about a landowner?

[20:1]

Jesus told the disciples a parable about a landowner. The landowner gave each man a denarius,. This was the amount of money he would get for working one day. He gave each man the same amount of money, even though they worked for different lengths of time. He wanted to teach them about how God rewarded people. He did this in a way that was just. He does not reward people who do more things or greater things. He rewards people on how much they obey God.

See: [Reward](#); [Disciple](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Reward](#)

When did the landowner hire these men?

[20:1]

He hired some men early in the morning, perhaps at 6am. The third hour was at 9am. The sixth hour was at 12pm. The ninth hour was 3pm. The eleventh hour was at 5pm. They worked to about 6pm.

How will the first be last?

[20:16]

Jesus said that the first will be last and the last will be first. This was a metaphor. He wanted people to know that people who are not honored while they live on earth will be rewarded and honored in Jesus' kingdom. However, the people who want to be honored while they live on earth will not be honored in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus wanted Christians to serve other people.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Reward](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What did Matthew write in verse 16?

[20:16]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words "many are called, but few are chosen." More and older copies of the Greek New Testament do not contain these words. Scholars think that Matthew did not write these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

20:17-28

What did Jesus tell the disciples would soon happen?

[20:18]

Jesus told the disciples that he was going to die and would be made alive again. That is, he will be resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Who is the Son of Man?

[20:18]

See: [Son of Man](#)

Why did the chief priests and scribes give Jesus over to the Gentiles?

[20:19]

At this time, the Jews were not able to kill a criminal. Only their Roman leaders could do this. They were Gentiles. Jesus wanted to say that the Jewish leaders would get the Gentile leaders to kill Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Scribe](#); [Gentile](#)

What did it mean to be flogged?

[20:19]

Jesus said that he was going to be flogged. That is, he would be beaten with a whip.

Who will sit at Jesus' right and left side in heaven?

[20:21, 20:23]

Jesus will sit at God the Father's right hand in heaven. Therefore, God is at Jesus' left hand side in heaven. However, God the Father is the one who decides who will sit at the right hand of Jesus (see: Matthew 20:23). The mother wanted her sons to be honored in heaven more than the other disciples.

See: [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#)

What was the cup Jesus was about to drink?

[20:22]

Jesus said that he was about to drink from a cup. This was a metaphor. He was about to suffer and die. When they said they could drink from this cup, Jesus prophesied that they would suffer and die.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why were the disciples angry with James and John?

[20:24]

Some scholars think the other disciples were angry with James and John because they asked Jesus to honor them in a special way. Other scholars think the other disciples were jealous or afraid James and John might be honored over them.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus speak about the Gentiles?

[20:25]

Jesus spoke about the Gentiles. The Gentiles ruled over the Jews and were very harsh to them. However, Jesus did not want certain Christians to rule over other Christians in this way. He wanted Christian leaders to serve other Christians. How did Jesus give his life as a ransom for many?

Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many. That is, he died so that people would be at peace with God. Matthew spoke about Jesus dying as a price to be paid for their sin. Jesus was punished for the sins of those who believe in him. By dying, Jesus set them free from being slaves to always wanting to sin.

See: [Son of Man](#); [Sin](#); [Son of Man](#)

Who will be honored in heaven?

[20:26]

Jesus taught the disciples that certain people will be honored in heaven. Just as Jesus came to serve, so Christians who serve other people will be honored in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

20:29-34

Where was Jericho?

[20:29]

See Map: Jericho

Why did the crowd rebuke these men?

[20:31]

Matthew wrote that the crowd of people rebuked the two blind men. Some scholars think they wanted the blind men to be quiet to respect Jesus. Perhaps they were being very loud. Or perhaps they were rebuked for saying that Jesus is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was Jesus the Son of David?

[20:31]

The blind man called Jesus the “Son of David.” David was one of Jesus’ ancestors. He called him this because the messiah was prophesied to be one of David’s descendants. He was to fulfill the covenant God made with David.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Covenant with David](#) ; [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Chapter 21

¹ As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the next village, and you will immediately find a donkey tied up there, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you about that, you will say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and that person will immediately send them with you."

⁴ Now all this happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,
 'See, your King is coming to you,
Humble and riding on a donkey—
 on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

⁶ Then the disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat upon the cloaks. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches off the trees and spread them in the road. ⁹ Then the crowds that went before Jesus and those that followed him were shouting,

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

¹⁰ When Jesus had come into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred and said, "Who is this?"

¹¹ The crowds answered, "This is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

¹² Then Jesus entered the temple. He cast out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and turned over the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³ He said to them, "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

¹⁴ Then the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the marvelous things that he did, and when they heard the children shouting in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became very angry.

¹⁶ They said to him, "Do you hear what they are saying?"

Jesus said to them, "Yes! But have you never read,

'Out of the mouths of little children and nursing infants
you have prepared praise?'"

¹⁷ Then Jesus left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

¹⁸ Now in the morning as he returned to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ Seeing a fig tree along the roadside, he went to it and found nothing on it except leaves. He said to it, "May there be no fruit from you ever again," and immediately the fig tree withered.

²⁰ When the disciples saw it, they marveled and said, "How did the fig tree immediately wither away?"

²¹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to this fig tree, but you will even say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and it will be done. ²² Whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you will receive."

²³ When Jesus had come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority do you do these things, and who gave you this authority?"

²⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question. If you tell me, I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John—from where did it come? From heaven or from men?"

They discussed among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the crowd, because they all view John as a prophet." ²⁷ Then they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."

He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁸ But what do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go labor today in the vineyard.'

²⁹ "The son answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went.

³⁰ "Then the man went to the second son and said the same thing. He answered and said, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two sons did his father's will?"

They said, "The first one."

Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God before you do. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. But you, even when you saw this, you did not repent afterward and believe him.

³³ "Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner. He planted a vineyard, set a hedge about it, dug a winepress in it, built a watchtower, and rented it out to vine growers. Then he went into another country. ³⁴ When the time of the fruit harvest approached, he sent some servants to the vine growers to collect his fruit. ³⁵ But the vine growers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned still another. ³⁶ Again, the owner sent other servants, more than the first, but the vine growers treated them in the same way. ³⁷ After that, the owner sent his own son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

³⁸ "But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and take over the inheritance.' ³⁹ So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine growers?"

⁴¹ They said to him, "He will violently destroy those wicked people, and he will then rent out the vineyard to other vine growers, men who will give him his share of crops at the harvest time."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the scriptures,

'The stone which the builders rejected
has been made the cornerstone.
This was from the Lord,
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?

⁴³ Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴ Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces. But anyone on whom it falls will be crushed." ⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they understood he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ Seeking to arrest him, they were afraid of the crowd, because the people regarded him as a prophet.

Matthew 21

21:1-11

Where were Bethpage, and the Mount of Olives?

[21:1]

See Map: Bethpage; Mount of Olives

How did Jesus enter into Jerusalem?

[21:2]

Jesus entered Jerusalem in the same way a king returned home after a great victory in a war. Often, they rode on horses or in a chariot. Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt because he told people that he was the messiah and the king of the Jews (see: Zechariah 9:9). He also had a great victory. He lived the perfect life and was about to die so that people could have peace with God.

See: 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

See: [Chariot](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Chariot](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

What was a colt?

[21:2]

A colt was a young donkey. This colt was with its mother, a donkey (see: Matthew 21:2). No one had ever ridden this colt.

Why did Jesus say, “the Lord has need of them”?

[21:3]

Some scholars think that Jesus said, “the Lord has need of them” to say that God needed them for God’s purpose. Other scholars think Jesus said this because he was calling himself Lord. That is, he was calling himself God. Still other scholars think the owner of the colt was traveling with Jesus, and Jesus said the owner had need of the colt.

See: [Jesus is God](#)

What prophet said these things?

[21:4]

When Jesus did these things, he fulfilled the prophecy Zechariah made (see: Zechariah 9:9). Jesus was the king about whom Zechariah wrote.

Why did the disciples put their cloaks on the colt?

[21:7]

The disciples put their cloaks on the colt to make it easier for Jesus to ride on it. A cloak was a thick coat people wore outside of their clothes.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did the people put things on the road?

The road on which Jesus rode the colt was dirty. The people showed the highest honor to Jesus by putting things on the road so that he would not get dirty. In ancient times, people did this to welcome a new king (see: 2 Kings 9:13).

Why did the people shout “hosanna”?

[21:9]

The people shouted “Hosanna” because they wanted God to save them. They said that Jesus came “in the name of the Lord.” That is, God gave Jesus power and permission to reveal God’s will. They believed Jesus was the messiah who came to begin the kingdom promised to David.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Will of God](#); [Covenant with David](#) ; [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did the people think about Jesus?

[21:11]

The people thought Jesus was a prophet. However, they did not believe he was the messiah. They did not know that he was their king.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Nazareth; Galilee

21:12-22

Why did Jesus make people leave the temple?

[21:11, 21:12]

Jesus made people leave the temple. These were people who sold things. He did not want people to try to make money in the temple. He only wanted people to go to the temple to worship God. People from every nation were to go to the temple to pray (see: Isaiah 56:7). However, the Jews did not want other people to go to the temple to worship God. Instead, they used the area made for the Gentiles to worship God as a market to make money.

Jesus said the temple was made into a “den of robbers.” That is, a place where people who robbed other people lived (see: Jeremiah 7:11). Scholars think Jesus said the same thing Jeremiah wrote so everyone would know that the people did not honor God in the temple.

Earlier, Jesus also made people leave the temple (see: John 2:13-22).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Worship](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why were the chief priests and scribes angry at Jesus?

[21:15]

The chief priests and scribes wanted to kill Jesus because of what he did. Some scholars think the chief priests and the scribes made money from the things sold in the temple. Jesus stopped them from making money in the temple. Other scholars think they were angry because the children said that Jesus was the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Chief Priest](#); [Scribe](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Where did the Jewish leaders read this?

[21:16]

The Jewish leaders read the things Jesus said in Psalms (see: Psalms 8:2).

Where was Bethany?

[21:17]

See Map: Bethany

Why did Jesus curse the fig tree?

[21:19]

Jesus saw a fig tree. It did not have fruit. He cursed it. He did not do this because he was hungry or angry. It was a metaphor. In the same way a fig tree produced figs, so God wanted Israel to produce fruit. That

is, he wanted Israel to serve and obey him. However, they did not do this. Therefore, they made themselves useless to God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus speak about a mountain?

[21:21]

Jesus spoke about a mountain to teach his disciples. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say they could do great things if they trusted in God, that is, Jesus wanted the disciples to pray with faith. They were not actually going to move a mountain. This was hyperbole. However, God did many miracles through these disciples after Jesus was made alive again.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Miracle](#); [Hyperbole](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

21:23-32

Who were the elders?

[21:23]

The elders were the Jewish leaders who were older men.

See: [Chief Priest](#); [Chief Priest](#)

Why did the leaders want to know who gave Jesus permission to do the things he did?

[21:23]

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did. They did not think God gave him permission to do the things he did. They thought Satan gave him permission to do these things. Some scholars think the leaders really wanted to have Jesus say that God sent him. They thought that the Law of Moses said they could kill him if he did this. However, God sent Jesus.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus ask the leaders about the baptism of John?

[21:25]

Jesus asked the leaders about who gave John the Baptist permission to do the things he did. The people in Israel loved John the Baptist. They thought God sent him. John the Baptist said that Jesus was the messiah. The leaders were afraid of saying that God sent John because they would also have to say that God sent Jesus. However, the people would be angry with these leaders and reject them if they said that God did not send John.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about two sons?

[21:28]

Jesus spoke about two sons. One son said no, but obeyed his father. The second son said yes to his father but did not obey him. This was a parable. He wanted the Jewish leaders to know that the people who sinned, but came to believe in him were like the first son. The Jewish leaders who said nice things to Jesus but did not believe in him were like the second son. The Jewish leaders rejected Jesus and rejected God who sent Jesus. The tax collectors and prostitutes believed in Jesus, therefore they obeyed God.

See: [Sin](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#) ; [Prostitute \(Prostitution\)](#) ; [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Will of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Sin](#)

21:33-46

Why did Jesus talk about a vineyard?

[21:33]

Jesus used a parable about a vineyard. He did this to talk about Israel. In the same way a farmer makes and protects a vineyard, so God made and protects the nation of Israel. God gave certain leaders permission to care for Israel. He sent prophets to Israel to help the Israelites obey God. However, they did not do what these prophets said to do. Finally, God sent Jesus. That is, he sent his son. Then the Jewish leaders had him killed.

See: [Son of God](#); [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Son of God](#)

Why did the owner of the vineyard send servants?

[21:34]

The owner of the vineyard sent his servants to get what they promised to the owner for using his land. They promised him a certain part of what they grew.

Why did the men beat the servants?

[21:35]

These men did not want to give the servant what they promised to give to the owner of the land. Therefore, they beat the servants. They wanted the owner to know they were not going to give him anything and that he should not send any more servants.

What was an inheritance?

[21:38]

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

From what scripture did Jesus quote?

[21:42]

See: Psalm 118:22-23

How would the kingdom of God be taken away from the Jewish leaders?

[21:43]

Jesus said the kingdom of God would be taken away from the Jewish leaders. He was rejecting them because they rejected him. They would not be a part of his kingdom. Jesus also said he would give it to another nation that produced fruit. That is, people who obey him and honor him will inherit the kingdom of God. This included Gentile people who obeyed and honored Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders want to arrest Jesus?

[21:46]

The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus after they heard what he said. That is, they wanted to catch him so they could kill him. This is because they knew he was speaking about them. Jesus knew the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him.

Why were the Jewish leaders afraid of the crowd?

[21:46]

Matthew wrote that the Jewish leaders feared all the people there. Many people thought Jesus was a great man. However, Matthew wanted people to know that the Jewish leaders feared the people more than they feared God. They thought they were obeying God by killing Jesus. However, they were not obeying God.

Chapter 22

¹ Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, ² "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who prepared a marriage feast for his son. ³ He sent out his servants to call those who had been invited to come to the marriage feast, but they would not come. ⁴ Again the king sent other servants, saying, 'Tell them who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and fattened cattle have been killed, and all things are ready. Come to the marriage feast."' ⁵ But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. ⁶ The others seized the king's servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷ The king was angry, and he sent his soldiers and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ Therefore go to the highway crossings and invite as many people to the marriage feast as you can find.' ¹⁰ The servants went out to the highways and gathered together all the people they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹² The king said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' But the man was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind this man hand and foot, and throw him out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and the grinding of teeth.' ¹⁴ For many people are called, but few are chosen."

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and planned how they might entrap Jesus in his own talk. ¹⁶ Then they sent to him their disciples, together with the Herodians. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful, and that you teach God's way in truth. You care for no one's opinion, and you do not show partiality between people. ¹⁷ So tell us, what do you think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

¹⁸ But Jesus understood their wickedness and said, "Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin for the tax." Then they brought a denarius to him. ²⁰ Jesus said to them, "Whose image and name are these?"

²¹ They said to him, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard it, they marveled. Then they left him and went away.

²³ On that day some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him. They asked him, ²⁴ saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies, having no children, his brother must marry his wife and raise children for his brother.' ²⁵ There were seven brothers. The first married and then died. Having left no children, he left his wife to his brother. ²⁶ Then the second brother did the same thing, then the third, all the way to the seventh brother. ²⁷ After them all, the woman died. ²⁸ Now in the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven brothers? For they all had married her."

²⁹ But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage. Instead, they are like angels in heaven. ³¹ But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ³² 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." ³³ When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question, testing him— ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?"

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second commandment is like it—'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets."

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were still gathered together, Jesus asked them a question. ⁴² He said, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?"

They said to him, "The son of David."

⁴³ Jesus said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴ 'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool"?'"

⁴⁵ If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?" ⁴⁶ No one was able to answer him a word, and no man dared ask him any more questions from that day on.

Matthew 22

22:1-14

What was a parable?

[22:1]

See: [Parable](#)

Why did Jesus want this man to invite certain types of people to a dinner or a banquet?

[22:3]

Jesus wanted this man to invite certain types of people to a feast because Jesus wanted God to reward them in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus sent his servants to call those who had been invited to this feast. He was talking about the Jews. He wanted the Jews to believe in him, but they rejected him. When he spoke about the king, Jesus was speaking about himself. He also wanted to say that the Jews did evil things to the apostles. When he spoke about those who were not invited, he was speaking about the Gentiles. The Gentiles believed in Jesus and would be rewarded. When Jesus spoke about the man not wearing wedding clothes, he was speaking about someone who wanted to be rewarded by God, but who rejected Jesus. Jesus will punish this man.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Reward](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Apostle](#); [Gentile](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What is the outer darkness?

[22:13]

Jesus spoke about the outer darkness. He was speaking about hell. This is a place where people will be punished for their sins.

See: [Sin](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Sin](#)

What did it mean that many people are called but few are chosen?

[22:14]

Jesus said that many people were called but few people were chosen. He wanted everyone to believe in him, but only a few people believed in him. Everyone could believe in him and be rewarded, but most people reject him.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Reward](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

22:15-22

What was a pharisee?

[22:15]

See: [Pharisees](#)

How did the Jewish leaders try to trap Jesus?

[22:15]

The Jewish leaders tried to trap Jesus. That is, they tried to get Jesus to say something that would cause someone to be angry with him. They wanted Jesus to speak against the leader of the Roman Empire. They did this by asking Jesus about paying taxes to the ruler of the Roman Empire. The Jewish leaders asked Jesus about paying taxes. The Romans made the Jews pay taxes to them every year. The Jews had to pay the Romans to rule them. The Jews did not like having to pay this tax. The Jews would have been angry if Jesus said that the Jews should pay this tax to the Romans. The Romans would be angry if Jesus said that the Jews should not pay this tax to the Romans.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

What was a Herodian?

[22:16]

A Herodian was someone who served King Herod. He was the leader of the Jews and served the Romans.

See: [King Herod](#)

What was a hypocrite?

[22:18]

A hypocrite was a person who said one thing, but they did not believe it. Or they said something and did not do it.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

What was a denarius?

[22:19]

See: [Denarius](#)

What were the things that belonged to Caesar?

[22:21]

The things that belonged to Caesar were all things that allowed him to govern Rome. This included taxes that must be paid to his government. The coins, at that time, had the face of Caesar imprinted on them.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

What were the things that belonged to God?

[22:21]

Scholars think Jesus was speaking about people's hearts when he spoke about the things that belonged to God. That is, a person should live according to faith. They should love, worship, and obey God. God is the creator of everything. He rules everything. Therefore, all things belong to God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

22:23-33

What did the Sadducees think happened when people died?

[22:23]

The Sadducees did not think that people would be resurrected. That is, they did not think people would go to heaven or hell when they died. They did not believe in many things taught in the Bible.

See: [Hell](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Heaven](#); [Hell](#)

Why did the Sadducees ask Jesus this question?

[22:28]

The Sadducees tried to trap Jesus by asking this question. They wanted Jesus to say something that would make people angry. They thought their question proved that no one would be resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say to the Sadducees, “you do not know the scriptures or the power of God”?

[22:29]

When Jesus told the Sadducees they did not “know the scriptures or the power of God” he meant they had not understood the scriptures correctly. That is, they did not understand what the Bible taught about resurrection. They also did not understand God’s power to raise a person from the dead and give them a new body.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Worship](#); [Angel](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

[22:32]

See: Exodus 3:6

22:34-46

What was meant by the words, “on these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets”?

[22:40]

Jesus told the lawyer that the two greatest commandments were to love God and to love other people. That is, if a person loved God and people the way the Bible told them to, then they obeyed all of the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What are the Law and the prophets?

[22:40]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “how then does David in the spirit call him Lord”?

[22:43]

Scholars think that Jesus wanted his listeners to know that the Holy Spirit told David what to say when he wrote Psalm 110:1.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

What did David mean with the words, “the Lord said to my Lord”?

[22:44]

Scholars think that when David said, “the Lord said to my Lord” he was speaking about the messiah whom God sent. In other words, David said, “God (Yahweh) said to my Lord (Messiah).” David said that Jesus is God. God will also make the messiah’s enemies his footstool. That is, one day God will defeat all of the messiah’s enemies.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Trinity](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did people stop asking Jesus questions?

[22:46]

Matthew wrote that people stopped asking Jesus questions. This was because they knew they could not trap Jesus by asking him questions because of the way Jesus answered them.

Chapter 23

¹ Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples. ² He said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³ Therefore whatever they command you to do, do these things and observe them. But do not imitate their deeds, for they say things but then do not do them. ⁴ Yes, they bind heavy burdens that are difficult to carry, and then they put them on people's shoulders. But they themselves will not move a finger to carry them. ⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by people. For they make their phylacteries wide, and they enlarge the edges of their garments. ⁶ They love the places of honor at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷ and special greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi' by people. ⁸ But you must not be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are brothers. ⁹ And call no man on earth your father, for you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Neither must you be called 'teacher,' for you have only one teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ But he who is greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

¹³ But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven against people. For you do not enter it yourselves, and neither do you allow those about to enter to do so. ¹⁴^[1]¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you go over sea and land to make one convert, and when he has become one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you.

¹⁶ "Woe to you, you blind guides, you who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing. But whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound to his oath.' ¹⁷ You blind fools! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy? ¹⁸ And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing. But whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is bound to his oath.' ¹⁹ You blind people! Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy? ²⁰ Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. ²¹ The one who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who lives in it. ²² And the one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits on it.

²³ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, but you have left undone the weightier matters of the law—justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you ought to have done and not to have left the other undone. ²⁴ You blind guides, you who strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

²⁵ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! Clean first the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may become clean also.

²⁷ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. ²⁸ In the same way, you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the tombs of the righteous. ³⁰ You say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' ³¹ Therefore you testify against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² You also fill up the measure of your fathers. ³³ You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of hell? ³⁴ Therefore, see, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some you will whip in your synagogues and chase from city to city. ³⁵ The result is that upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. ³⁶ Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

³⁷ "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I say to you, You will not see me from now on until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Footnotes

23:14 ^[1] The best ancient copies do not have verse 14 (some copies add the verse after verse 12).

Matthew 23

23:1-12

How did the scribes and pharisees sit in Moses's seat?

[23:2]

Jesus said that the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say they thought God gave them permission to do the things that Moses did. When Moses told people to do something in the Law of Moses, it was as if God told them to do it. The Scribes and Pharisees thought this was true when they taught people.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Pharisees](#); [Metaphor](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why should people not imitate the deeds of the Scribes and Pharisees?

[23:3]

Jesus said that the people should not imitate the deeds of the Scribes and Pharisees. That is, they should not do the same types of things the Scribes and Pharisees did. This is because the Scribes and Pharisees did not do the things they taught. They taught good things, but they did not do these good things.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

What were phylacteries?

[23:5]

Phylacteries were leather bags or boxes in which pieces of parchment with portions of the Law of Moses written on them were placed. The Jewish leaders wore these on the forearms or fastened in some way onto their foreheads.

See: Deuteronomy 6:8, 11:18

Advice to translators: Parchment were pieces of leather and someone could write on them.

What did it mean for the Pharisees to "enlarge the edges of their garments"?

[23:5]

The Jews wore clothes with tassels on the edges or corners. These were to remind the people of the Law of Moses. The Pharisees purposefully wore the tassels on the edges of their garments extra long, so people would see them and want to honor them. They did not do this to honor God.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

See: Numbers 15:38-39

Why did Jesus not want people to be called "rabbi"?

[23:8]

Some scholars think Jesus did not want people to want to be called "rabbi" because people who did this thought they were greater than other people. Fewer scholars think Jesus was saying that there was truly only one "rabbi" or teacher God sent to men, and that was Jesus.

See: [Rabbi](#)

Why did Jesus not want people to be called “father”?

[23:9]

Jesus did not want people to call someone “father” in this way because there is only one who Jesus believed was the father, and that is God. God is the only father in this way and is the only one to be honored as father.

See: [God the Father](#)

What did Jesus want people to do?

[23:11, 23:12]

Jesus wanted people to serve one another. In the kingdom of God, those who are considered the greatest are those who serve others. They serve others because this honors God. If they do not do this, then God will humble them in some way.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

23:13-22

What was a woe?

[23:13]

See: [Woe](#)

What was a hypocrite?

[23:13]

A hypocrite was someone who said one thing and did something different.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

How do the scribes and Pharisees shut the kingdom of heaven?

[23:13]

Jesus said that the Scribes and Pharisees shut the kingdom of heaven. Some scholars think the Pharisees did this by teaching false things about God. They did not want people to enter into the kingdom of heaven. They could not help people to be at peace with God because they were not at peace with God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Pharisees](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What did Matthew write in verse 14?

[23:14]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament include a verse 14 which says, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, while you make a show of long prayers. You will therefore receive greater condemnation. ” Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament put these words after verse 12. More and older copies of Greek New Testament do not contain these words. Scholars do not think Matthew wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What did Jesus mean by telling the Pharisees, “you go over sea and land to make one convert”?

[23:15]

When Jesus said the Scribes and Pharisees went over sea and land to make one convert he was using a figure of speech. That is, they worked very hard to get someone to worship God in the way they thought

was right. However, when they do this, they taught them the wrong things. This made it harder for them to know the right things. People would not have peace with God even though the Pharisees promised them peace with God.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

What was a blind guide?

[23:16]

Jesus spoke about a blind guide. This was a metaphor. A guide was someone who helped people to know where to go or what to do. When he said they were blind, he wanted to say that they did not understand spiritual things.

See: [Blind \(Metaphor\)](#)

What did it mean for someone to “swear”?

[23:16]

he Pharisees were wrong with their teaching about swearing an oath. Jesus taught them that it was wrong to break any oath.

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about a cup and a plate?

[23:25, 23:26]

When Jesus taught about the cup and the plate, he used a metaphor. Just as a person cleaned the outside of a cup, so Jesus was telling the Jewish leaders that they were only concerned about how they looked on the outside. That is, they were concerned with what people thought of them. Jesus taught the Jewish leaders that they should be more concerned about the things they thought and wanted to do. If they did that, they would do the right things.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

How were the Jewish leaders like whitewashed tombs?

[23:27]

When Jesus said the Jewish leaders were like whitewashed tombs he used a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus was telling the Pharisees that they tried to make themselves look good on the outside, but on the inside was nothing but unclean thoughts and lives.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Metaphor](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

23:29-39

Why did Jesus talk about the prophets?

[23:29]

Jesus rebuked the Jewish leaders. These leaders thought they honored the prophets by decorating their tombs. They thought they would not have killed the prophets if they were alive when the prophets were alive. However, Jesus lived among the Pharisees and he was God's greatest prophet. The Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus. They would be punished and live forever in hell because they rejected Jesus.

See: [Hell](#); [Pharisees](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#)

Who did Jesus send?

[23:34]

Jesus talked about sending certain people. These were the prophets and apostles. He sent them to Israel to declare the truth about Jesus. He prophesied that the Jewish leaders would also reject the people Jesus sent. All people who followed the Jewish leaders will also be punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Synagogue](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Who were Abel and Zechariah?

[23:35]

Abel and Zechariah were people who were killed because they obeyed God. In the Old Testament, Abel was the first person murdered, and Zechariah was the last person murdered.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What did Jesus say to Jerusalem?

[23:37]

Jesus spoke to Jerusalem. He was speaking to the Jews. God sent prophets to the Jews so they would honor and obey God. However, they did not want to do these things. Because of this, God will punish the Jews. They will not see Jesus until he returns.

See: Psalm 118:26

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Chapter 24

¹ Jesus went out from the temple and was going on his way. His disciples came to him to point out to him the buildings of the temple. ² But he answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone will be left on another that will not be torn down."

³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray. ⁵ For many will come in my name. They will say, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray. ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled, for these things must happen; but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ But all these things are only the beginning of birth pains. ⁹ Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you. You will be hated by all the nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰ Then many will stumble, and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ Many false prophets will rise up and lead many astray. ¹² Because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ This good news of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations. Then the end will come.

¹⁵ "Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (let the reader understand), ¹⁶ "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, ¹⁷ let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house, ¹⁸ and let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! ²⁰ Pray that your flight will not occur in the winter or on a Sabbath. ²¹ For there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be again. ²² Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ²³ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There is the Christ!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you ahead of time. ²⁶ Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out to the wilderness. Or, 'See, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷ For as the lightning shines out from the east and flashes all the way to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ Wherever a dead animal is, there the vultures will gather.

²⁹ "But immediately after the tribulation of those days

the sun will be darkened,
the moon will not give its light,
the stars will fall from the sky,

and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. ³¹ He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

³² "Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as the branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you should know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all of these things will have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and the earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. ³⁶ But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away—so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in a field—one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a mill—one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴² Therefore be on your guard, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known in

what time of night the thief was coming, he would have been on guard and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you must also be ready, for the Son of Man will come at an hour that you do not expect.

⁴⁵ "So who is the faithful and wise servant whom his master has set over his household in order to give them their food at the right time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find doing that when he comes. ⁴⁷ Truly I say to you that the master will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if an evil servant says in his heart, 'My master has been delayed,' ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with drunkards, ⁵⁰ then the master of that servant will come on a day that the servant does not expect and at an hour that he does not know. ⁵¹ His master will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

Matthew 24

24:1-14

What did Jesus say about the temple buildings?

[24:1]

The disciples were amazed by the buildings that made the temple in Jerusalem. However, Jesus prophesied that the temple would be destroyed. The destruction of the temple happened about 40 years after Jesus returned to heaven. However, it was not completely destroyed at that time. There is one wall that still remains from the temple in Jerusalem.

See: [Heaven](#); [Temple](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Heaven](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Mount of Olives

What was a sign?

[24:3]

See: [Sign](#)

What was meant by the words, "the end of the age"?

[24:3]

Scholars have different ideas about the end of the age. 1. The end of the age took place about 40 years after Jesus died when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. 1. The destruction of Jerusalem began the end of the age and it will end in the future. 1. Jesus spoke about actual events that will occur.

See: [Last Days](#)

What did Jesus teach about the signs of the "end of the age"?

[24:4}

Jesus told his disciples about things that would happen at the end of the age. However, the disciples did not know when all these things were going to happen. Jesus did talk about certain things that must happen before he returns to the earth.

1. There will be many false Christs. That is, people who say they are messiah, but are false teachers.
2. There will be wars and rumors of wars. That is, people will worry about wars and there will be many wars.
3. There will be many earthquakes and famines. Jesus said these are "birth pains." This was a metaphor to say that difficult things that will happen are just the beginning of the difficult things to come.
4. People who worship Jesus will be persecuted.
5. Some people will make it so that certain Christians they know will be persecuted.

6. There will be many false prophets. They will teach people the wrong things and people will obey them.
7. People will do many evil things and because of this people will stop loving one another.

See: [Worship](#); [Disciple](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Gospel](#); [False Prophet](#); [Worship](#)

How are these things like the pain of having a child?

[24:8]

Jesus said that these things are like the pains of having a child. This was a metaphor. When a mother brings a child into the world, it hurts. However, something new is made. Jesus was warning the disciples that there would be difficult and painful things in the future. Those things would happen before Jesus returns.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “for my name’s sake”?

[24:9]

When Jesus said, “for my name’s sake” he meant that people were going to persecute the disciples and even kill them because they were loyal to him, and honored him as the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How will the person who “endures to the end” be saved?

[24:13]

Jesus said that the person who endures to the end when persecuted will be saved. Scholars think Jesus was talking about different things when he said these words.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about a person who remains faithful, even when there is persecution. That is, Jesus will ultimately save them from persecution on earth by taking them to heaven.
2. Other scholars think there will be people who say they are Christians, but reject Jesus when persecution comes. They prove that they were never truly Christians.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#) ; [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Gospel](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

24:15-28

What is the abomination of desolation?

[24:15]

Jesus talked about an “abomination of desolation.” This was when someone who rejected God did something that greatly dishonored God. Daniel also wrote about this (see: Daniel 7:27; 11:31; 12:11). Some scholars think Daniel wrote about a Gentile leader who sacrificed an unclean animal on the altar in the temple. Some scholars think Jesus talked about a time when the antichrist would sacrifice something in the temple or claim to be God in the temple. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a time when people would no longer go to the temple. Other scholars think it is some type of idolatry.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about a time 40 years after he returned to heaven. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a time near to his return to the earth (see: Revelation 4-19).

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Altar](#); [Temple](#); [Antichrist](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What did Jesus want people to do when they saw the abomination of desolation?

[24:16]

Jesus wanted people to flee and go away from Jerusalem when people saw the abomination of desolation. He wanted them to know that he will judge people at this time. He warned people by telling them that there would be great dangers at this time.

See: Daniel 9:27

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Tribulation](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How did Jesus want the people to pray?

[24:20]

When Jesus told the people to pray, he meant that they should pray continually. This is because it would be very difficult to live during these times. Winter weather made travel much more difficult. The Jewish Christians still followed the Sabbath according to the Law of Moses, so traveling on a Sabbath would also be difficult for them. He wanted them to pray that they would not have more difficult things in their life when they had to live through these difficult times.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What is the great tribulation?

[24:21]

See: [Tribulation](#)

What was meant by the words, “unless those days are shortened”?

[24:22]

Jesus said that if God did not make this period of time short, then no flesh would be saved. That is, no one would live through it. Jesus warned people about a time of great tribulation. Scholars think that God’s judgment will be so complete that all people would die. However, God will shorten the time of his judgment on earth so that his elect will be saved.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Tribulation](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why should people not believe that Jesus returned?

[24:23]

Jesus warned about a time when many people would say they are the messiah or that they are Jesus who returned to earth. However, everyone will know that Jesus has returned to earth when he returns (see: Matthew 24:23-27). Therefore, people should not believe other people who say this even if they do miracles and signs. However, many Christians will believe these false messiahs and false prophets.

See: [Son of Man](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [False Prophet](#); [Sign](#); [Miracle](#); [Son of Man](#)

Why did Jesus speak about vultures?

[24:28]

Jesus spoke about vultures. They are birds that eat dead animals. They can see these dead animals from far away. When people saw vultures in the sky, they knew that there was a dead animal. This was a metaphor. He was speaking about how everyone will know when Jesus returns to the earth.

See: [Metaphor](#)

24:29-44

When are the days of tribulation?

[24:29]

Jesus spoke about certain days of tribulation or trouble. Some scholars think he spoke about the difficult times that happened soon after he returned to earth. Other scholars think he spoke about the time near his return to the earth.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about things that happen in the sky?

[24:29]

Jesus spoke about certain things people could see in the sky. Some scholars think these things will actually happen just before Jesus returns to the earth. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. Just as the stars will fall from the sky, so the rulers of the world will be destroyed. Jesus said these things to warn people.

See: Joel 2:10; 3:15; Ezekiel 32:7-8

See: [Metaphor](#)

What will people see?

[24:30]

The people will see sign of the Son of Man. That is, the sign itself will be Jesus coming to earth with glory. Scholars think Jesus will return to earth and everyone will know that he is God.

See: [Heaven](#); [Son of Man](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Heaven](#)

What will Jesus do when he returns to the earth?

[24:30, 24:31]

When Jesus returns to the earth, he will bring angels who serve him. He will gather all Christians from all over the world and bring them to himself.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Angel](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about a fig tree?

[24:32]

Jesus talked about a fig tree to help people understand the things he said. This was a metaphor. When a fig tree does certain things, people know that the seasons are changing. He wanted people to know that he was going to return to the earth soon when the things he spoke about happened.

See: [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#)

When will all these things happen?

[24:34]

Some scholars think that these things happened 40 years after Jesus prophesied these things. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people in the future who lived when they saw the things he spoke about in this passage.

Jesus said that heaven and earth will end, but his words will not change. The apostle spoke about heaven and earth ending (see: Revelation 21). However, the things about which Jesus spoke must first happen.

Jesus said that he did not know when these things would happen. Only God the Father knew these things will happen.

See: [Apostle](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Jesus speak about Noah?

[24:37]

When Noah lived, God punished the whole world with a flood. God warned people that he was going to punish them, but they did not listen to Noah, or repent. When the flood came, the people were not prepared and they could not escape the waters of the flood. This is also how it will be when Jesus returns. People will not believe the things Jesus said. They will be unprepared, that is, they will not repent of their sin. God will punish them and it will be too late for them to repent.

See: [Sin](#); [Son of Man](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Sin](#)

How will one person be taken and the other left behind?

[24:40]

Jesus warned that two people will be together. One of them will be taken and the other will be left behind. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the rapture. At this time, Christians will be taken from the earth and non-Christians will be left behind to endure the tribulation. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about non-Christians being taken away to judgment and death.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)Kingdom of God](#); [Tribulation](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

24:45-51

Why did Jesus talk about a master and a servant?

[24:45]

Jesus talked about a master and a servant. He wanted the Christians to encourage other Christians because they served him. He will reward the Christians who obey him. However, there are some people who do not obey Jesus and Jesus will reject them. Scholars think these are people who say they are Christians but who reject Jesus and do not serve him. Because of this, Jesus will send them to be punished forever in hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

What was a hypocrite?

[24:51]

A hypocrite was someone who said one thing and did something else.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

What is weeping and grinding of teeth?

[24:51]

Jesus spoke about weeping and grinding teeth. This is what people would do when they were suffering. Scholars think people who are in great pain will grind their teeth and cry loudly. In the Bible, these words are used to talk about the things people do when they are being punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Chapter 25

¹ "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish and five were wise. ³ For when the foolish virgins took their lamps, they did not take any oil with them. ⁴ But the wise virgins took containers of oil along with their lamps. ⁵ Now while the bridegroom was delayed, they all got sleepy and slept. ⁶ But at midnight there was a cry, 'Look, the bridegroom! Go out and meet him.'

⁷ Then all those virgins rose up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.'

⁹ "But the wise answered and said, 'Since there will not be enough for us and you, go instead to those who sell and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰ While they went away to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

¹¹ "Afterward the other virgins also came and said, 'Master, master, open for us.'

¹² "But he answered and said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³ Watch therefore, for you do not know the day or the hour.

¹⁴ "For it is like when a man was about to go into another country. He called his own servants and entrusted his possessions to them. ¹⁵ To one of them he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to yet another he gave one talent. Each one received an amount according to his own ability, and that man went on his journey. ¹⁶ The one who received the five talents went at once and worked with them and gained another five talents. ¹⁷ In the same way, the one who had received two talents gained another two. ¹⁸ But the servant who had received one talent went away, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The servant who had received the five talents came and brought another five talents. He said, 'Master, you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five talents more.'

²¹ "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things. I will put you in charge over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.'

²² "The servant who had received two talents came and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have gained two more talents.'

²³ "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things. I will put you in charge over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.'

²⁴ "Then the servant who had received one talent came and said, 'Master, I know that you are a hard man. You reap where you did not sow, and you harvest where you did not scatter. ²⁵ I was afraid, so I went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have here what belongs to you.'

²⁶ "But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sowed and harvest where I have not scattered. ²⁷ Therefore you should have given my money to the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take away the talent from him and give it to the servant who has ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who possesses more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from anyone who does not possess anything, even what he does have will be taken away. ³⁰ Throw the worthless servant out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.'

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate the people one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you cared for me; I was in prison and you came to me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you a drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and take you in? Or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and come to you?'

⁴⁰ "Then the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, what you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.' ⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels, ⁴² because I was hungry, but you did not give me food; I was thirsty, but you did not give me a drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger, but you did not take me in; naked, but you did not clothe me; sick and in prison, but you did not care for me.'

⁴⁴ "Then they will also answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not serve you?'

⁴⁵ "Then he will answer them and say, 'Truly I say to you, what you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' ⁴⁶ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 25

25:1-13

Why did Jesus talk about ten virgins?

[25:1]

Jesus spoke about ten virgins and the kingdom of heaven. This was a parable. In ancient Israel, a groom would go to the house of his bride's parents to get married. Then he would bring her to his house at night. There would be a feast at his house.

Jesus wanted people to be ready for him to return, even if it took longer for Jesus to return than they expected. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jews who lived during the tribulation. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Christians.

The virgins who were not prepared for the groom to come were not allowed to be part of the wedding feast. Some scholars think this is because they rejected Jesus. They will be punished and live forever in hell. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Christians who would not be rewarded because they did not obey Jesus.

Advice to translators: A virgin was someone who has never had sex. A groom or bridegroom was what people called a man who was getting married. A bride was what people called a woman who was getting married.

See: [Reward](#); [Parable](#); [Bride of Christ](#); [Wedding](#); [Tribulation](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Reward](#)

25:14-30

Why did Jesus talk about the parable of the five talents?

[25:15]

Jesus told these people a parable about servants. Jesus is the master. He gave each of his servants talents. A talent was a very large sum of money. It would normally take a person 20 years to earn this much money. He wanted to say that Jesus gave people different abilities and trusted them to serve him in different ways. Two of the servants used their money. He wanted people to know that it pleased God when people used their abilities to serve God. The other man did not use the abilities God gave him. Overall, he wanted people to know that God would reward people who served and obeyed him. He would also entrust more to people who had been faithful to him.

When Jesus spoke about the evil servant, some scholars think he was speaking about the Jews. God had trusted them and told them about the messiah. However, they rejected the messiah and would be

punished for it. Other scholars think that the evil servants were people who said they served God, but who were not at peace with God. They would be punished and sent to hell.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Reward](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is the outer darkness?

[25:30]

When Jesus spoke about the outer darkness, he was speaking about hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

What is weeping and grinding of teeth?

[25:30]

Jesus spoke about weeping and grinding teeth. This is what people would do when they were suffering. Scholars think people who are in great pain will grind their teeth and cry loudly. In the Bible, these words are used to talk about the things people do when they are being punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

25:31-46

What will Jesus do when he returns to the earth?

[25:31]

When Jesus, the Son of man, returns to the earth, he will bring angels who serve him. He will gather all Christians from all over the world and bring them to himself. He will sit on his glorious throne. That is, he will rule the world.

Jesus will also separate the sheep from the goats. This is a metaphor. He will separate Christians from non-Christians. Christians will inherit the kingdom of God. This is something that God prepared for them when he created the world. He rewards them because they served other people and when they served other people, they served God. He will punish those who did believe and obey God. They will be sent to hell to be punished.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Angel](#); [Throne](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Reward](#); [Hell](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Chapter 26

¹ It came about that when Jesus had finished all these words, he said to his disciples, ² "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified."

³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the palace of the high priest, who was named Caiaphas. ⁴ They plotted together to arrest Jesus stealthily and kill him. ⁵ For they were saying, "Not during the festival, so that a riot does not arise among the people."

⁶ Now while Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ as he was reclining at table, a woman came to him having an alabaster jar of very expensive ointment, and she poured it upon his head. ⁸ But when his disciples saw it, they became angry and said, "What is the reason for this waste? ⁹ This could have been sold for a large amount and given to the poor."

¹⁰ But Jesus, knowing this, said to them, "Why are you causing trouble for this woman? For she has done a beautiful thing for me. ¹¹ You always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. ¹² For when she poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. ¹³ Truly I say to you, wherever this good news is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, who was named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me to turn him over to you?" They weighed out thirty pieces of silver for him. ¹⁶ From that moment he sought an opportunity to turn him over to them.

¹⁷ Now on the first day of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?"

¹⁸ He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."'" ¹⁹ The disciples did as Jesus directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

²⁰ When evening came, he sat down to eat with the twelve disciples. ²¹ As they were eating, he said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray me."

²² They were very sorrowful, and each one began to ask him, "Surely not I, Lord?"

²³ He answered, "The one who dips his hand with me in the dish is the one who will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man will go, just as it is written about him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born."

²⁵ Judas, who would betray him said, "Is it I, Rabbi?"

He said to him, "You have said it yourself."

²⁶ As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke it. He gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat. This is my body." ²⁷ He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them and said, "Drink it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is my blood of the covenant that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

³⁰ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ³¹ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will fall away tonight because of me, for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

³² But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

³³ But Peter said to him, "Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."

³⁴ Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times."

³⁵ Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you." All the other disciples said the same thing.

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane and said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him and began to become sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is deeply sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch with me." ³⁹ He went a little farther, fell on his face, and prayed. He said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will." ⁴⁰ He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "What, could you not watch with me for one hour? ⁴¹ Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² He went away a second time and prayed. He said, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³ He came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So leaving them again, he went away and prayed a third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then Jesus came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Look, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Arise, let us go. Look, the one who is betraying me is near."

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came. A large crowd came with him from the chief priests and elders of the people. They came with swords and clubs. ⁴⁸ Now the man who was going to betray Jesus had given them a signal, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him." ⁴⁹ Immediately he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and he kissed him.

⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come to do." Then they came, laid hands on Jesus, and seized him. ⁵¹ Behold, one of those who was with Jesus stretched out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place, for all those who take up the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think that I could not call upon my Father, and he would send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, that this must happen?" ⁵⁵ At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to seize me like a robber? Every day I sat teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples abandoned him and fled.

⁵⁷ Those who had seized Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered together. ⁵⁸ But Peter followed him from a distance to the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death. ⁶⁰ They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later two came forward ⁶¹ and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

⁶² The high priest stood up and said to him, "Do you have no answer? What is it that they are testifying against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus was silent. The high priest said to him, "I command you by the living God, tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God."

⁶⁴ Jesus replied to him, "You have said it yourself. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we still need witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What do you think?"

They answered and said, "He is deserving of death." ⁶⁷ Then they spit in his face and beat him with their fists, while some slapped him ⁶⁸ and said, "Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him and said, "You were also with Jesus of Galilee."

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

⁷¹ When he went out to the gateway, another servant girl saw him and said to those there, "This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth."

⁷² He again denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!"

⁷³ After a little while those who were standing by came and said to Peter, "Surely you are also one of them, for the way you speak gives you away."

⁷⁴ Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man," and immediately a rooster crowed.

⁷⁵ Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said, "Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times." Then he went outside and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26

26:1-5

What was Passover?

[26:2]

See: [Passover](#)

How will the Son of Man be crucified?

[26:2]

Jesus prophesied that the Son of Man will be crucified. He told people that he was about to die by crucifixion. Jesus told his disciples that someone would help others to arrest Jesus. He was thinking about Judas helping the Jewish leaders to arrest and crucify Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#) ; [Son of Man](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Who were the chief priests and elders?

[26:3]

When Jesus spoke about elders, he was speaking about certain Jewish leaders who were older men.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

What was the palace of the high priest?

[26:3]

The palace of the high priest was the place where the high priest lived. He also worked in this place.

See: [High Priest](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders plot to kill Jesus?

[26:4]

The Jewish leaders plotted to kill Jesus. That is, they made plans to arrest and kill Jesus. They believed that he broke the Law of Moses and should be killed. However, he did not break the Law of Moses. They had to plan to do this in secret, because many people loved Jesus and thought he was a prophet. They did not want people to see them arrest Jesus. They feared what people would be angry if they arrested Jesus.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

26:6-16

Where was Bethany?

[26:6]

See Map: Bethany

What was a leper?

[26:6]

See: [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#)

Why was Jesus reclining at the table?

[26:7]

In ancient Israel, people ate by reclining at a table. Jesus reclined at a table because he had just eaten.

What did this woman have?

[26:7]

The woman had a jar with certain oil that smelled very good. Some people call this perfume. She opened this jar and poured it on Jesus head and feet to honor him. Jesus also said when she did this it was an anointing that prepared his body to be buried. In ancient Israel, people poured various ointments or oils on a dead person before they buried them.

See: John 12:3-7

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Why did the disciples not want this woman to do this?

[26:8, 26:9]

The disciples did not want this woman to pour this expensive oil on Jesus. This is because it would only smell good for a short time. However, if it was sold, it was worth about the same amount of money as someone would make in one year. This could be used to help many poor people. Jesus said they were wrong. This is because what she did was a symbol. She helped Jesus prepare to die so people could be at peace with God. This was greater than helping poor people.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

What is the good news?

[26:13]

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Why did Judas go to the chief priests?

[26:14]

Judas went to the chief priests to help them arrest Jesus. Scholars do not agree why he did this. The priests gave Judas a large amount of money to help them.

See: Zechariah 11:12-13

See: [Chief Priest](#)

26:17-35

What was the first day of unleavened bread?

[26:17]

The first of unleavened bread was the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This was the day they sacrificed a lamb for the passover.

See: Exodus 12:14-20

See: [Passover](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Passover](#)

What did it mean that the disciples needed to prepare for the passover meal?

[26:17]

The disciples needed to prepare for the passover meal. That is, they needed to become clean so they could eat this meal. They also needed to get certain foods ready to eat for this meal.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Passover](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus say “my time is at hand”?

[26:18]

When Jesus said “my time is at hand,” he used a metaphor. He was saying that it was about time for him to die.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How did Jesus know that one of his disciples was going to betray him?

[26:21]

After travelling with these twelve disciples for three years, Jesus had one last meal with them. During this meal, he told them that one of the disciples would betray him. Scholars think that the Holy Spirit helped Jesus to know which disciple was going to betray him.

This man would be punished for what he did. He would live forever in hell and be punished there forever. This is why it would be better for him to have not been born than to be punished forever in hell.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Hell](#); [Son of Man](#); [Woe](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did Jesus say the things he did to the disciples?

[26:23, 26:24]

During this last meal, Jesus told the disciples certain things. Christians now celebrate the Lord's Supper to remember Jesus (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-25). Scholars disagree about why Jesus wanted Christians to do this.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [New Covenant](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What was a hymn?

[26:30]

A hymn was a song that was sung to worship God.

See: [Worship](#)

Where was the Mount of Olives?

[26:30]

See Map: Mount of Olives

Why did Jesus say that “all of you will fall away”?

[26:31]

Jesus said that the disciples would fall away. He said this would fulfill what Zechariah prophesied (see: Zechariah 13:7). This was a metaphor. Jesus was the shepherd and the disciples were the sheep. When Jesus died, the disciples would not want people to know they followed Jesus. However, this did not last for very long.

Peter said that he would never deny Jesus, that is, fall away. However, Peter denied Jesus three times that night.

See: [Shepherd](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Shepherd](#)

Where were these things written?

[26:31]

See: Zechariah 13:7

Where was Galilee?

[26:32]

See Map: Galilee

How will Peter deny Jesus?

[26:34]

Jesus said that Peter would deny him. That is, Peter would say that he did not know Jesus. Peter would deny knowing Jesus and being one of Jesus's disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

26:36-46

Where was Gethsemane?

[26:36]

See Map: Gethsemane

What is a soul?

[26:38]

See: [Soul](#)

Why was Jesus sorrowful?

[26:38]

Jesus was sorrowful when he prayed. He knew he was about to die. He was not afraid to die because he knew why he had to die. However, he was overwhelmed because he knew that he was about to be separated from God the Father in some way. He was also punished by God for the sins of all people.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Sin](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did Jesus want the cup to pass?

[26:39]

Jesus asked God the Father if it was possible for the cup to pass. That is, he asked God the Father if he really had to die. This is a metaphor. He wanted to not have to be punished for all people. However, he was willing to die to obey God.

See: [Will of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Will of God](#)

Why did Jesus want Peter to pray not to enter into temptation?

[26:41]

Jesus wanted Peter to pray. However, Peter could not pray for one hour without falling asleep. Jesus told Peter to pray and ask not to enter into temptation. That is, that he would not be tempted. Peter was about to be tempted to deny Jesus and he, in fact, did deny Jesus (see: 26:69-75).

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak?

[26:41]

Jesus said that the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. People are weak, that is, they give up easily when they are suffering. They cannot do things that honor God without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wanted to help Peter. He just needed to ask for help.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Flesh](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How has the hour at hand?

[26:45]

Jesus said the hour is at hand. That is, the things he talked about were about to happen.

Who were the sinners?

[26:45]

Jesus said that he was betrayed to sinners. These sinners were the Jewish leaders. They were supposed to help people worship God. Instead, they did evil. He knew Judas was coming to help them arrest Jesus, even before he could see or hear Judas. Jesus did not wait for Judas but went out to meet him.

See: [Worship](#); [Sin](#); [Worship](#)

26:47-56

Who were the chief priests and elders?

[26:47]

When Matthew wrote about the elders, he was speaking about certain Jewish leaders who were older men.

See: [Elder](#); [Scribe](#); [Elder](#)

How did Judas kiss Jesus?

[26:48, 26:49]

Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek. In ancient Israel, people often greeted each other in this way. What was a rabbi?

See: [Rabbi](#)

Why did someone cut off this man's ear?

[26:51]

Someone who was with Jesus fought trying to defend Jesus. He did not want the Jewish leaders to arrest Jesus. When he did this, he cut off someone's ear in his fighting.

See: [High Priest](#)

How many angels were twelve legions?

[26:53]

Twelve legions of angels were 60,000 angels.

See: [Angel](#)

What scriptures does this fulfill?

[26:54]

Jesus said that when the Jewish leaders arrested him, this fulfilled certain prophecies. These were prophecies said by Isaiah (see: Isaiah 53) and Zechariah (see: Zechariah 13:7). The disciples forsook Jesus. That is, they rejected him in some way and ran away.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

26:57-68

What was the courtyard of the high priest?

[26:58]

The courtyard was an open space around the palace of the high priest. The Jewish leaders took Jesus to the courtyard of the high priest. This was where Peter went and sat down and watched the trial of Jesus.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Scribe](#); [Elder](#); [Chief Priest](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

What was testimony against Jesus?

[26:59]

The Jewish leaders wanted testimony against Jesus. That is, they wanted people to speak against Jesus. They wanted them to say that he broke the Law of Moses in a way that meant he needed to be put to death. However, Jesus never broke the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What was meant by the words, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days"?

[26:61]

Jesus' accusers claimed that he made the statement, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days"? This was a false accusation. When Jesus spoke about the destroying of a temple, this was a metaphor. He was speaking about the temple of his own body, which was to be put to death, and then raised to life in three days (see: John 2:18-22).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did the high priest ask Jesus if he was the Messiah, the Son of God?

[26:63]

The high priest asked Jesus if he was the Messiah, the Son of the blessed one because he wanted to accuse Jesus of blasphemy. When he asked Jesus this, he wanted to see if Jesus would plainly say that he is the Messiah and God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Son of God](#); [High Priest](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

How did Jesus answer the high priest?

[26:64]

Jesus answered in a way that said he was equal to God. The high priest will see Jesus again when he is next to God in heaven in a place of honor and power and when he comes to judge the world. He will also return to the earth on clouds and will rule the world (see: Daniel 7:13-14).

The high priest tore his clothes because he thought Jesus blasphemed God. This is what the high priest did when someone blasphemed. According to the Law of Moses, blasphemy was punished by killing the person who blasphemed. However, Jesus did not blaspheme God because he is God.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Right Hand](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Heaven](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did the people ask Jesus to prophesy?

[26:68]

Many people beat Jesus at the same time. Scholars think his eyes were covered and he could not see. They mocked Jesus by asking him to prophesy and tell them which of the people hit him.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

26:69-75

Why did Peter deny Jesus?

[26:70, 26:72]

When Jesus was arrested, Peter followed near to Jesus. However, he stayed far away so people would not know he was one of the people who followed Jesus. He feared getting arrested. Therefore, he did not want anyone to know that he was one of the disciples. This is why he denied knowing Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

See: Map: Galilee; Nazareth

Why did the people talk about the way Peter spoke?

[26:73]

The people in Jerusalem spoke in a different way than the people in Galilee. Because of this, the girl knew Peter was from Galilee, the same place where Jesus and his disciples lived.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Galilee

Why did Peter begin to curse and swear?

[26:74]

Peter wanted this girl to think he was not a disciple of Jesus. After he told her that he was not a disciple, he put himself under curses and swore. That is, he said if he was lying, God should curse him. He swore to her in the same way someone would speak in front of a judge.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Swear \(Oath\)](#); [Curse](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Chapter 27

¹ Now when morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put him to death. ² They bound him, led him away, and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

³ Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he repented and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."

But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself." ⁵ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went out and hanged himself. ⁶ The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put this into the treasury because it is the price of blood." ⁷ They discussed the matter together, and they bought with the money the potter's field in which to bury strangers. ⁸ For this reason that field has been called, "The Field of Blood" to this day. ⁹ Then that which had been spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ and they gave it for the potter's field, as the Lord had directed me."

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "You say so."

¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they accuse you of?" ¹⁴ But he did not answer even one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. ¹⁵ Now at the festival it was the custom of the governor to set free one prisoner chosen by the crowd. ¹⁶ At that time they had a notorious prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Who do you want me to set free for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸ He knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him and said, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man. For I have suffered much today because of a dream I had about him."

²⁰ Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to set free for you?"

They said, "Barabbas."

²² Pilate said to them, "What should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all answered, "Crucify him."

²³ Then he said, "Why, what evil has he done?"

But they cried out even louder, "Crucify him."

²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but instead a riot was starting, he took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this man. You see to it."

²⁵ All the people said, "May his blood be on us and our children." ²⁶ Then he set Barabbas free for them, but he scourged Jesus and handed him over to be crucified.

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the government headquarters and they gathered the whole company of soldiers. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. ²⁹ They made a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and placed a staff in his right hand. They knelt down before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰ They spat on him, and they took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. ³¹ When they had mocked him, they took the robe off him and put his own garments on him, and led him away to crucify him.

³² As they came out, they found a man from Cyrene named Simon, whom they forced to go with them so that he might carry his cross. ³³ They came to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of a

Skull." ³⁴ They gave him wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he tasted it, he would not drink. ³⁵ When they had crucified him, they divided up his garments by casting lots, ³⁶ and they sat and kept guard over him. ³⁷ Above his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews." ³⁸ Two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right of him and one on the left. ³⁹ Those who passed by insulted him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!"

⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests were mocking him, along with the scribes and elders, and said, ⁴² "He saved others, but he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel. Let him come down off the cross, and then we will believe in him." ⁴³ He trusts in God, let God rescue him now, if God consents to release him. For he even said, 'I am the Son of God.'" ⁴⁴ In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also insulted him.

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ About the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice and said, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

⁴⁷ When some of those who were standing there heard it, they said, "He is calling for Elijah."

⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a reed staff, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest of them said, "Leave him alone. Let us see whether Elijah comes to save him." ⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit.

⁵¹ Behold, the curtain of the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom, and the earth shook, and the rocks split apart. ⁵² The tombs were opened, and the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs after his resurrection, entered the holy city, and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ Now when the centurion and those who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they became very afraid and said, "Truly this was the Son of God." ⁵⁵ Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee to attend to his needs were there watching from a distance. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut into the rock. Then he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶² The next day, which was the day after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together with Pilate. ⁶³ They said, "Sir, we remember that when that deceiver was alive, he said, 'After three days will I rise again.' ⁶⁴ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, otherwise his disciples may come and steal him and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "Take a guard. Go and make it as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and placing the guard.

Footnotes

27:16 ^[1] Many ancient copies do not have

Matthew 27

27:1-10

Why did the Jewish leaders plot to kill Jesus?

[27:1]

The Jewish leaders plotted to kill Jesus because they believed that he broke the Law of Moses and should be killed. However, he did not break the Law of Moses.

See: [Elder](#); [Chief Priest](#); [Elder](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders take Jesus to Pilate?

[27:2]

Pilate was the Roman governor in charge of the Jews. The Jews took Jesus to Pilate because they could not kill anyone without the Pilate giving them permission to do it. The Jews who were there wanted to kill Jesus.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How was someone condemned?

[27:3]

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

Why did Judas repent?

[27:3, 27:4]

Judas saw that the Jewish leaders were trying to kill Jesus. Because of this, he repented of what he did. That is, he wished that he had not helped the Jewish leaders to capture Jesus. He tried to give them the money back that these leaders gave to him. He knew that he did something wrong and that Jesus would be killed even though Jesus did not do anything wrong.

See: [Blood](#); [Blood](#)

Why did the chief priest buy the field with the money?

[27:7]

The chief priests did not want the money back they gave to Judas. This is because the money had been used to help to kill Jesus. This was irony. That was because they had used the money, which was considered blood money that was given to Judas, to purchase a field that was known as the "field of blood."

See: Jeremiah 19:1-11; Zechariah 11:12-13

See: [Chief Priest](#); [Chief Priest](#)

Advice to translators: Blood money is money that someone made for killing someone else or helping to kill another person.

27:11-31

What was meant by Jesus' answer to Pilate, "You say so"?

[27:11]

Jesus said, "You say so." Some scholars think this was a way of saying, "what you are saying is true." Other scholars think Jesus was saying that Pilate was correct in what he said, but that he did not truly

understand the meaning of what he said. Why did Jesus not say anything to Pilate about the charges against him?

Jesus did not say anything to Pilate because Jesus did not do anything wrong. Jesus also knew that Jesus needed to die for people's sins. This also fulfilled a prophecy of Isaiah (see: Isaiah 53:7). This made Pilate think that Jesus was not guilty of the things the Jewish leaders accused him.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Atonement \(Atonement\)](#); [Fulfillment \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What was the feast about which Matthew spoke?

[27:15]

Matthew spoke about a feast known as the feast of the Passover.

See: [Passover](#)

Who did Pilate want the people to release from prison?

Pilate did not think Jesus was guilty. However, he did not want to anger the Jewish leaders. Therefore, he tried to get the people to set Jesus free. However, they did not want Jesus to live. Instead, they wanted Pilate to release a murderer. They told Pilate to kill Jesus.

What was the name of the prisoner?

[27:16]

In some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament, Matthew said the prisoner was named "Jesus Barabbas." In other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament, Matthew said the prisoner was named "Barabbas." Scholars think Matthew wrote "Jesus Barabbas."

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Why were the Jewish leaders envious of Jesus?

Some scholars think the Jewish leaders were envious of Jesus because they wanted to be honored and loved by the people the way the people loved Jesus. Or perhaps they wanted to know as much about the Law of Moses as Jesus knew.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why was Jesus called the Christ?

[27:17]

Jesus was called the Christ because he was the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was a judgment seat?

[27:19]

Pilate's judgment seat was a seat on a raised platform from which he decided certain things. He could punish people or set them free.

See: [Punishment \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did Pilate release a prisoner?

[27:22, 27:23]

In ancient Israel, the Roman leader would release a prisoner during the Jewish passover festival. This helped there to be peace between the Romans and the Jews.

See: [Passover](#)

How was someone crucified?

[27:23]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Pilate wash his hands?

[27:24]

Pilate washed his hands. This was a symbol. He wanted them to know that they were the reason that Jesus was going to die. He wanted to tell them that he was not guilty of Jesus' death. The people were willing to be punished if they were wrong about Jesus because they wanted to see Jesus killed.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Blood](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How many soldiers were in a company?

[27:27]

In a company, there were 600 soldiers.

Why did the soldiers dress Jesus the way they did?

[27:28]

The soldiers put a scarlet robe on Jesus. This is what a king would have worn. They put a crown on him. A king wore a crown. However, this crown was made of branches with thorns. It would have been painful to wear. Kings also had a staff. The soldiers did not think Jesus was a king. Instead, they insulted him and pretended that he was a king. They removed these pieces of clothes before they took him to be crucified.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

27:32-45

Where was Cyrene?

[27:32]

See Map: Cyrene

Why did Simon carry Jesus' cross?

[27:32]

The soldiers made a man named Simon carry Jesus' cross. This is because Jesus was not strong enough to carry it after he was beaten.

See: [Cross](#)

Where was Golgotha?

[27:33]

Golgotha was a place outside of the wall of the city of Jerusalem. In English, this place is often called "calvary." It was a mound that looked like a person's skull.

Why did the soldiers offer Jesus wine mixed with myrrh?

[27:34]

The soldiers offered Jesus something to drink. People thought that this would stop pain. However, he did not want to do this.

What was casting lots?

[27:35]

See: [Cast Lots](#)

Why did the soldiers make a sign?

[27:37]

The soldiers made a sign. This sign told people that he was killed for saying that he was the king of the Jews. When they did this, they mocked Jesus. However, they did not know that Jesus was the king of the Jews.

How did the people mock Jesus?

[29:39, 29:40]

People saw Jesus on the cross and they mocked him. Jesus prophesied that he would rebuild the temple in three days. They thought he was speaking about the temple in Jerusalem. This was a metaphor. He was speaking about dying and being resurrected. They told him to save himself. This was irony. He was dying to save them.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Prophecy \(Prophesy\)](#) ; [Temple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Irony](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did the Jewish leaders mock Jesus?

[27:41, 27:42]

The Jewish leaders mocked Jesus in the same way the people did. They wanted Jesus to do something to prove he was the Messiah. However, he did not do this. Perhaps this is because they would not have believed in Jesus even if he did this. This was also an irony. They say he saved others, but he could not save himself. Jesus did save other people by dying for them. He saved those who believe in him by dying for their sins. They said God would save him if God sent him, but they did not know that God sent him to die. Jesus died obeying God.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Irony](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

27:45-56

When was the sixth hour?

[27:45]

The sixth hour was about noon.

When was the ninth hour?

[27:46]

The ninth hour was about 3pm.

Why did Jesus say the things he did?

[27:46]

As Jesus died, people's sins were put on him in some way. He was separated from God for the first time. This is why he said that God forsook him.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did people think Jesus was calling for Elijah?

[27:47]

When Jesus said, "Eli," the people thought they heard Jesus calling to Elijah.

Why did someone try to give Jesus sour wine?

[27:48]

One soldier tried to give Jesus sour wine. Perhaps he thought this would help to Jesus not be in as much pain. He tried to help Jesus. However, the other soldiers wanted to make Jesus live longer so they could see if Elijah came to help him. He did this to mock Jesus.

How did Jesus give up his spirit?

[27:50]

When Matthew said Jesus gave up his spirit, he was saying that Jesus died.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Why was the curtain in the temple split into two pieces?

[27:52]

In the temple, there was a curtain that separated the holiest place from everything else. It was the place where the high priest went once a year offer a sacrifice to God. God was in this place in a certain way. The curtain was so big and thick that it could not be torn. When Jesus died, it tore. This was a metaphor. When the curtain tore, it showed there was no longer anything that separated people from God.

See: [Presence of God](#); [High Priest](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Metaphor](#); [Temple](#); [Presence of God](#)

How were people resurrected?

[27:52]

Matthew wrote that there was an earthquake in Jerusalem. At this time, many dead people were resurrected. These were Jews who believed in God and were at peace with God. Some scholars think this happened to show that the death of Jesus broke the power of death itself.

See: [Holy Ones](#) ; [Holy Ones](#)

Why did the Roman soldier think that Jesus was the Son of God?

[27:54]

From the events that happened at Jesus' death, the Roman soldier believed Jesus was the Son of God. Some scholars think that the soldier declaring Jesus to be the Son of God showed Jesus' innocence and the guilt of the people. Other scholars think that he said that Jesus was a very great man whom God blessed. Matthew wanted people to think about how the Roman soldier believed the truth about Jesus and the Jewish leaders did not.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[27:55]

See Map: Galilee

Who were the sons of Zebedee?

[27:56]

See: Matthew 4:21

27:57-66

Where was Arimathea?

[27:57]

See Map: Arimathea

How was Joseph a disciple of Jesus?

[27:57]

Joseph was a pharisee and also a disciple of Jesus. That is, he believed in Jesus.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

Why did Joseph of Arimathea ask for Jesus' body?

[27:58]

Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus' body. He was a Jew. According to the Law of Moses, a dead body needed to be buried before the sun set, especially if the Sabbath was the next day.

See: Deuteronomy 21:23

See: [Sabbath](#); [Sabbath](#)

Why did Joseph wrap the body in clean linen cloth?

[27:59]

Joseph wrapped Jesus' body in clean linen cloth. He did this to prepare Jesus' body to be buried.

Why did Joseph put the body of Jesus in a new tomb?

[27:60]

Joseph put the body of Jesus in a new tomb because it honored Jesus. There was no odor of death or decay. Usually a tomb held several bodies. After a year, the bones were placed in a box.

See: [Tomb](#)

Who was the other Mary?

[27:61]

See: Matthew 27:56

What was the Day of Preparation?

[27:62]

The Day of Preparation was the time to prepare for the Sabbath. It was the day before the Sabbath. It began on Thursday evening and lasted until Friday evening. People cleaned houses, bought supplies, and cooked food so that they did no work on the Sabbath.

See: [Sabbath](#)

Who were the chief priests and pharisees?

[27:63]

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

Who was the deceiver?

[27:63]

The Jewish leaders spoke about a deceiver. They were speaking about Jesus. They thought that Jesus deceived people. That is, he lied to people. The Jewish leaders thought the disciples would also try to steal Jesus' body so they could deceive people.

How was someone raised from the dead?

[27:64]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Chapter 28

¹ Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² Behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came and rolled away the stone, and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ The guards shook with fear and became like dead men. ⁵ The angel addressed the women and said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus, who has been crucified. ⁶ He is not here, but is risen, just as he said. Come see the place where the Lord was lying. ⁷ Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. See, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.' See, I have told you."

⁸ The women quickly left the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" The women came, took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee. There they will see me."

¹¹ Now while the women were going, behold, some of the guards went into the city and told the chief priests all the things that had happened. ¹² When the priests had met with the elders and discussed the matter with them, they gave a large amount of money to the soldiers ¹³ and told them, "Say to others, 'The disciples of Jesus came by night and stole his body while we were sleeping.' ¹⁴ If this report reaches the governor, we will persuade him and take any worries away from you." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they had been instructed. This report spread widely among the Jews and continues even today.

¹⁶ But the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ Jesus came to them and spoke to them and said, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach them to obey all the things that I have commanded you. See, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28

28:1-10

What was the Sabbath?

[28:1]

See: [Sabbath](#)

What day was the first day of the week?

[28:1]

The Sabbath began on Friday at sunset and ended Saturday at sunset. The day after the Sabbath was the first day of the week. This day began on Saturday at sunset and ended on Sunday at sunset.

See: [Sabbath](#)

Why did the angel roll away the stone?

[28:2]

The angel rolled away the stone because it was very large.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did the angel look the way he did?

[28:3]

The angel looked the way he did because he was holy. White was a symbol of someone or something being holy.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

How was Jesus crucified?

[28:5]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How was Jesus resurrected?

[28:5, 28:6]

The man in the tomb said that Jesus was risen. That is, Jesus was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[28:7]

See Map: Galilee

What was worship?

[28:9]

See: [Worship](#)

28:11-20

Who were the chief priests and elders?

[28:11]

The chief priests and elders were Jewish leaders.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders give money to the Roman soldiers?

[28:12]

The Jewish leaders gave money to the Roman soldiers to lie about what happened. They did not want people to know about what happened at the tomb.

Who were the eleven disciples?

[28:16]

Normally, there were twelve disciples. At this time, Judas was not a disciple anymore.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did God give to Jesus?

[28:18]

Jesus said that God gave him permission to do something. He gave him power to do things in heaven and on earth.

See: [Heaven](#)

How were the disciples to make disciples?

[28:19]

Jesus wanted the disciples to make other disciples. That is, he wanted them to tell people about Jesus and help them to believe in Jesus and to do things that honored God. They did this by going to different places, baptizing people who believed in Jesus, and teaching them how to live in a way that honored God.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How was Jesus with the disciples until the end of the age?

[28:20]

Jesus said that he would be with the disciples until the end of the age. Some scholars think Jesus would remain with them for a time on the earth after he was resurrected. He will help them to do the things he wanted them to do. Other scholars think Jesus wanted to say that he would be with every generation of Christians to help them do the things he wanted them to do.

See: [Generation](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Generation](#)

Book: Mark

Introduction to the Gospel of Mark

Overview

Mark wrote about what Jesus did during his last three years on earth. Mark called Jesus “God’s servant” (see: Mark 10:45). In this book, Jesus always served God and other people. According to Mark, Jesus travelled to different places, taught people, and did many miracles. Jesus did these miracles to prove that he taught true things from God. Mark wrote about the miracles of Jesus more than any other gospel writer.

Mark wrote that Jesus was both God and man. The things Jesus said and did allowed people to know how to do things and say things that honor God.

See: [Miracle](#); [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Who wrote this letter?

In the gospel, the author does not write who the author was. Also, the author did not say that he saw everything that he wrote about.

Two of the first Christian leaders, wrote letters writing the author was Mark. These letters are not in the Bible.

In the Bible, Mark was also called John (see: Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37). His mother was a woman named Mary and she lived in Jerusalem (see: Acts 12:12). Mark’s cousin was Barnabas (see: Colossians 4:10).

Mark traveled with Barnabas and Paul on the first missionary trip (see: Acts 13:5).

Mark was a friend to the apostle Peter, (see: 1 Peter 5:13). Mark learned most of the things he wrote about from Peter.

See: [Gospel](#); [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#); [Apostle](#)

To whom did Mark write?

In the gospel, the author did not speak about the people to whom he wrote. Mark wrote in the Greek language. He explained Aramaic words. So it is thought the readers did not know Aramaic (see: Mark 3:17, 5:41, 7:11, 7:34, 10:46, 14:36, 15:22, and 15:34).

Mark did not explain the different names for Jesus such as Messiah, Son of God, Son of David, Lord, and the “Son of Man.” He also did not explain the words gospel, King Herod, Pilate, and many of the towns in his book. Because he did not explain these words, the audience probably knew these words and believed in Jesus.

Mark wrote fourteen Latin words that were spoken by the people in Rome. One example was when he explained the value of the two coins the widow gave (see: Mark 12:42). He wrote the Latin name for the coin. Because of these Latin words, scholars think Mark wrote to people in Rome.

See: [Gospel](#); [Languages in the New Testament](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Son of Man](#)

See Map: Rome

What did Mark write about in this letter?

Messianic secret

In the first part of Mark’s gospel Jesus did not tell people that he was the messiah. In the second part of Mark’s gospel, he told his disciples that he was the messiah. However, Jesus told them not to tell anybody.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Messianic Secret](#); [Disciple](#)

Suffering servant

The “suffering servant” was a certain person who serves God and suffers for doing it. Isaiah prophesied about this person (see: Isaiah 53). This person is Jesus. Mark said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (see: Mark 10:45)

Jesus not only came to serve God and man, he commanded Christians to do the same.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Son of Man](#)

Son of Man

Jesus often called himself the “Son of Man.” He did this because he was a man who served God and would die.

However, the “Son of Man” had a different meaning in the book of Daniel (see: Daniel 7:13-14). In those verses, the Son of Man was a specific person who would have all power and judge all people. When Jesus called himself the Son of Man, he wanted to say that he was not just a man who served God. He would also rule the world and judge everyone.

See: Ezekiel 2:1

See: [Son of Man](#)

Son of God

Jesus is sometimes called the “Son of God.” In Mark, other people often call Jesus the “Son of God.”

See: [Son of God](#)

Kingdom of God

Mark often wrote about the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did Mark write this letter?

Mark wanted to tell people about the gospel of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God (see: Mark 1:1). Jesus was both the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man.” He was a humble man who served other people. He rescued people and got them to worship God. Jesus tells everyone to trust him and to follow him.

See: [Gospel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Son of Man](#)

Outline of the Gospel of Mark

1. Jesus, the Son of God (1:1-13)
2. The baptism and teaching of John (1:1-8)
3. The baptism of Jesus (1:9-11)
4. The temptation of Jesus (1:12-13)
5. Jesus at work in Galilee (1:14-9:50)
6. He begins his work (1:14-45)
7. He teaches about his kingdom (2:1-5:43)
8. He meets people who want to stop him (6:1-8:26)
9. He prepares his disciples for the end (8:27-9:50)
10. Jesus prepares for death (10:1-14:31)
11. He goes to Jerusalem (10:1-11:11)
12. He stays in Jerusalem and vicinity (11:12-14:31)
13. Jesus suffers and dies at the hands of men (14:32-15:47)
14. His suffering in Gethsemane (14:32-42)
15. His arrest (14:43-52)
16. His trial before Jewish leaders and Peter denies knowing him (14:53-72)
17. His trial before Pilate (15:1-15)
18. His crucifixion (15:16-41)
19. His burial (15:42-47)
20. Jesus triumphs over death (16:1-20)
21. His resurrection (16:1-8)
22. His appearances on earth (16:9-18)

23. His ascension into heaven (16:19-20)

Mark

Chapter 1

¹ This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

"Look, I am sending my messenger before your face,
the one who will prepare your way.

³ The voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"

⁴ John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶ John wore a coat of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷ He was preaching, saying, "One will come after me who is more powerful than I; the strap of his sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹ It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and he was baptized by John in the Jordan River. ¹⁰ As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens split open and the Spirit coming down on him like a dove. ¹¹ A voice came out of the heavens, "You are my beloved Son. I am very pleased with you."

¹² Then the Spirit compelled him to go out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels served him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God. ¹⁵ He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the gospel."

¹⁶ When he was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ¹⁸ Then immediately they left the nets and followed him. ¹⁹ As Jesus was walking on a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and John his brother; they were in the boat mending the nets. ²⁰ He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and they followed him.

²¹ Then they came into Capernaum, and on the Sabbath, Jesus went into the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as someone who has authority and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who had an unclean spirit cried out, ²⁴ saying, "What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the Holy One of God!"

²⁵ Jesus rebuked the demon and said, "Be quiet and come out of him!" ²⁶ The unclean spirit threw him down and went out from him while crying out with a loud voice. ²⁷ All the people were amazed, so they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him!" ²⁸ The news about him went out everywhere into the whole region of Galilee.

²⁹ After coming out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, along with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. ³¹ So he came, took her by the hand, and raised her up; the fever left her, and she started serving them.

³² That evening after the sun had set, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed by demons. ³³ The whole city gathered together at the door. ³⁴ He healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, but he did not allow the demons to speak because they knew him.

³⁵ He got up very early, while it was still dark; he left and went out into a solitary place and there he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and those who were with him searched for him. ³⁷ They found him and they said to him, "Everyone is looking for you."

³⁸ He said, "Let us go elsewhere, out into the surrounding towns, so that I may preach there also. That is why I came out here." ³⁹ He went throughout all of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

⁴⁰ A leper came to him. He was begging him; he knelt down and said to him, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

⁴¹ Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying to him, "I am willing. Be clean." ⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ Jesus strictly warned him and sent him away. ⁴⁴ He said to him, "Be sure to say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to declare it freely and spread the word, so much so that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but he stayed out in remote places. Yet people were still coming to him from everywhere.

Mark 1 Commentary

1:1-8

What is the gospel?

[1:1]

See: [Gospel](#)

How is Jesus the "son of God"?

[1:1]

See: [Son of God](#)

Who was John the Baptist?

[1:4]

Mark wrote about John the Baptist fulfilling a prophecy from the Old Testament. Three different prophets spoke about this prophecy (see: Exodus 23:20; Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1). Mark wanted people to know that God promised to do something, and it happened. God promised that a prophet would come before the messiah to tell people that the messiah was coming. John the Baptist was this promised prophet.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How did John the Baptist serve God?

[1:4, 1:5]

John the Baptist served God by telling people that they needed to repent. They needed to worship and obey God. They were unclean because they disobeyed God. They needed to be made clean. John also served God by baptizing people who believed in God and repented of their sins.

See: [Confess \(Confession\)](#); [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Confess \(Confession\)](#)

Why was John's baptism different from all other baptisms?

[1:4, 1:5]

John's baptism was not like other baptisms. John's baptism helped people get ready for the messiah. People wanted to follow the messiah, so they confessed their sins. They were at peace with God for a time. This helped them to know the messiah when they heard him speak. In ancient Israel, other leaders might have baptized and preached repentance. However, only John prepared the people in Judea and in Jerusalem for Jesus.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Judea

Where is Judea and Jerusalem?

[1:5]

See Map: Judea; Jerusalem

Why did Mark write about the clothes John the Baptist wore and the things he ate?

[1:6]

The Jews thought the prophet Elijah would come back to earth before the messiah (see: Malachi 4:5). Elijah was a prophet who wore a coat made of hair and a leather belt around his waist (see: 2 Kings 1:8). John dressed in the same way as Elijah.

Both Elijah and John lived in the wilderness. People who lived in the wilderness ate locusts and honey.

Mark wrote these things so everyone would know that John was the prophet who God promised to send before the messiah came. John told people that the messiah would be there soon.

See: [Wilderness](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Locust](#); [Wilderness](#)

Why did John not want to untie Jesus' sandal?

[1:7]

In ancient Israel, people thought that feet were very dirty. Because of this, only servants or slaves would touch someone's feet. It dishonored someone to touch dirty feet. However, John thought that even touching Jesus' feet was a greater honor than John deserved.

Advice to translators: A sandal is a certain type of shoe. It does not cover the entire foot.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

How was Jesus' baptism different from John's baptism?

[1:8]

John's baptism was a way for people to show other people that they wanted to obey and honor God. They wanted to stop sinning. Jesus baptizes people with the Holy Spirit. That is, he did not just wash their body with water. They were baptized because they believed in Jesus.

See: Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:3-16; John 1:19-34; Acts 2

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

1:9-11

How were the heavens split open?

[1:10]

Mark wrote that the heavens were “split open” or tore and opened when Jesus came out of the water. Mark wrote the same word to write about God tearing the curtain of the temple from top to bottom when Jesus died on the cross (see: Mark 15:38). This was at the beginning and the end of Mark’s gospel. Mark wanted people to know that Jesus is the Son of God. Mark wrote about the heavens opening because he wanted to say that God was allowing people to know more about God.

See: [Heaven](#); [Cross](#); [Gospel](#); [Son of God](#); [God](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did the voice say “You are my beloved Son. I am very pleased with you”?

[1:11]

The voice saying “You are my beloved Son” was saying that the messiah had come to earth. After this, Jesus began to do certain things to serve God and tell people that he was the messiah. God sent the Holy Spirit as a dove so people would know that God had anointed Jesus for ministry.

The words spoken by God the father made the readers think about Isaiah 42:1.

See: Psalms 2:7; Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-23

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Minister \(Ministry\)](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

1:12-13

Why did Jesus go to the wilderness after he was baptized?

[1:12]

Jesus went to the wilderness because the Holy Spirit wanted him to go there. Jesus completely obeyed the Holy Spirit and went to the wilderness.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Why did God send Jesus into the wilderness?

[1:13]

God sent Jesus into the wilderness. This is because Satan was going to tempt him. Jesus was given choices to follow God or not. Jesus obeyed God because he trusted God. Jesus did not sin when he was tempted. He did not follow Satan. After the temptations, angels served Jesus because his body was weak.

See: Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13

See: [Angel](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Angel](#)

1:14-15

Why was John put into prison?

[1:14]

John was put in prison because he told Herod that he could not marry his brother’s wife, Herodias. John said that Herod broke the law by marrying Herodias.

Where is Galilee?

[1:14]

See Map: Galilee

Why did Jesus say that the “kingdom of God” is near?

[1:15]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God was near. Some scholars think Jesus' kingdom was on the earth. He was the king of the earthly kingdom.

Other scholars think Jesus wanted to say the "kingdom of God" has started so that people did not have to sin any more. God rules the things someone thinks and the things they do when they believe in Jesus and do the things he said to do. Before, people could only do evil before Jesus came to earth. Now people can return to God and do the things that honor him.

Other scholars think Jesus was coming to offer to his kingdom to Israel. His kingdom was going to begin if they believed in him. Because they rejected him, his kingdom did not begin.

See: Matthew 4:12-17; Luke

See: [Proclaim \(Proclamation\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Proclaim \(Proclamation\)](#)

1:16-20

Why did Jesus say they would be "fishers of men"?

[1:17]

Jesus used a metaphor when he said they would be "fishers of men." Peter, Andrew, John and James were all fishermen. They fished to earn money. Jesus said this to say that they were no longer going to catch fish for money. Instead, they would bring men to God by telling them about the gospel. Jesus wanted to tell them they would serve God in a different way.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Peter and Andrew follow Jesus immediately?

[1:18]

Andrew heard what John the Baptist said about Jesus (see: John 1:40). Andrew was ready to follow Jesus because of John. Andrew found his brother Peter. Peter was also ready to follow Jesus (see: John 1:41-42).

Why did Mark write about the hired men?

[1:20]

The disciples left their family, their work, and their homes to follow Jesus. They left everything that they had. Mark wrote that they did not leave their father to fish without help. He had hired men who would help him. They honored their father by making sure he was not alone.

See: Matthew 4:18-22; John 1:40-42

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

1:21-28

Where was Capernaum?

[1:21]

See Map: Capernaum

What was the Sabbath?

[1:21]

See: [Sabbath](#)

What was a synagogue?

[1:21]

See: [Synagogue](#)

How were the things Jesus taught different from other teachers?

[1:22]

In ancient Israel, teachers said what other teachers that came before them said. Jesus' teaching was different. He taught what God commanded. Jesus did not follow the things that other people taught because other people taught it. He only taught about what God said and the people were amazed.

Why did the unclean spirits cry out?

[1:23]

The unclean spirits cried out. That is, they were afraid. They knew that Jesus is God and will one day judge them and punish them.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

Where was Nazareth?

[1:24]

See Map: Nazareth

Who is the "holy one" of God?

[1:24]

Jesus is the holy one of God. That is, he is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the demon to be quiet?

[1:25]

Jesus made others know that he had power over the demons when he told them to be quiet. They needed Jesus' permission to speak.

See: [Demon](#)

Why were the people amazed?

[1:27]

The people were amazed because even the demons did what Jesus told them to do. He had power that they had never seen before.

See: Luke 4:31-37

1:29-31

Why did Mark write that the woman served Jesus after she was healed?

[1:31]

Mark wrote that Peter's mother-in-law served Jesus so everyone would know that Jesus had completely healed her.

See: Matthew 8:14-15; Luke 4:38-39

1:32-39

How was someone possessed by a demon?

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did Mark write that the people came to Jesus after sunset?

[1:32]

Mark wrote that people came to Jesus after sunset. The people wanted to follow the Law of Moses and not do any work on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders taught that carrying a person who could not walk was work. Therefore, it was against the Law of Moses. The people waited until after the Sabbath was over at sunset to come to Jesus for healing.

See: [Sabbath](#); [Sabbath](#)

Why did Mark write Jesus woke up early and prayed in a quiet place alone?

[1:35]

Mark wrote about Jesus getting up early in the morning and praying. For Jesus, prayer was the most significant part of his day. He was able to talk and listen to God the father. God the father told Jesus what he needed to do while he prayed. This is the beginning of Jesus' preaching and healing in Galilee.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

1:40-45

What is leprosy?

[1:40]

See: [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#)

Why did Jesus touch the leper?

[1:41]

A person became unclean if they touched a leper. This is what is written in the Law of Moses. Mark wanted people to know that Jesus touched the leper. Jesus did not worry about being unclean because he leper was made clean and was healed of his leprosy when Jesus touched him.

See: [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#)

Why did Jesus warn the leper not to speak about being healed?

[1:44]

The Law of Moses required a leper to show himself to the priest. The priest would pronounce that he was clean. In this way, Jesus was following the Law of Moses. Mark wrote that Jesus healed three different people. He told each of them not to tell anyone (see: 1:44; 5:43; and 7:36). The leper who was cured did not obey Jesus. He told everyone. Crowds then came to be healed by Jesus instead of coming to hear Jesus teach. Because of the crowds, Jesus could no longer teach in the synagogues. He began to teach outside of the towns where no one lived.

See: Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 5:12-16

See: [Synagogue](#); [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Synagogue](#)

Chapter 2

¹ When Jesus came back to Capernaum after a few days, it was heard that he was at home. ² So many gathered there that there was no more space, not even at the door, and he spoke the word to them. ³ Then some men came to him who were bringing a paralyzed man; four people were carrying him. ⁴ When they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof that was above Jesus, and after they made an opening, they lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. ⁵ Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, and they reasoned in their hearts, ⁷ "How can this man speak this way? He blasphemes! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit what they were thinking within themselves. He said to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take up your mat and walk'? ¹⁰ But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I say to you, get up, take up your mat, and go to your house."

¹² He got up and immediately took up the mat, and went out of the house in front of everyone, so that they were all amazed and they gave glory to God, and they said, "We never saw anything like this."

¹³ He went out again by the lake, and all the crowd came to him, and he taught them. ¹⁴ As he passed by, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's tent and he said to him, "Follow me." He got up and followed him.

¹⁵ Jesus was having a meal in Levi's house and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with him and his disciples, for there were many and they followed him. ¹⁶ When the scribes, who were Pharisees, saw that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹⁷ When Jesus heard this he said to them, "People who are strong in body do not need a physician; only people who are sick need one. I did not come to call righteous people, but sinners."

¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding attendants fast while the bridegroom is still with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and in those days, they will fast. ²¹ No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment. Otherwise the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and there is a worse tear. ²² No one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the wine will burst the skins and both the wine and the wineskins are lost. Instead, new wine is put into fresh wineskins."

²³ On the Sabbath day Jesus went through some grainfields, and his disciples began picking heads of grain as they made their way. ²⁴ The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful on the Sabbath day?"

²⁵ He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry—he and the men who were with him— ²⁶ how he went into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the presence, which is unlawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he even gave some to those who were with him?" ²⁷ Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for mankind, not mankind for the Sabbath. ²⁸ Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath."

Mark 2

2:1-12

Whose home did Jesus go to?

[2:1]

Mark wrote that Jesus was “at home.” He did not return to the place where his family lived. He went to Capernaum. Jesus left and returned there many times. Scholars think this was Simon and Andrew’s home (see: Mark 1:29).

See Map: Capernaum

How did Jesus speak the word?

[2:2]

Mark wrote that Jesus “spoke the word.” This was a metaphor. He wanted to write that Jesus taught things about God. People needed to do the things he taught because they were the things God wanted them to do.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What did Mark want to write about the people who opened the roof?

[2:4]

Mark wanted people to know that these people were going to get their sick friend to Jesus no matter how hard it might be. In ancient Israel, homes usually had an outside stairway or ladder that went up to a flat roof. The roofs were made of slabs of burnt or dried clay. This was placed on supporting beams that stretched from one wall to another wall. The friends removed some of these slabs to make a hole in the roof. They then lowered the sick man into the room with Jesus.

Advice to translators: A slab is something that is large and flat. It may be 1 to 3 meters long and wide, but only a few centimeters thick. A beam is a long piece of wood that is very strong.

Whose trust in God did Jesus see and reward?

Jesus saw these four friends trusted Jesus to heal the paralyzed man. These men worked very hard to bring the paralyzed man to Jesus so Jesus could heal him. Because they trusted Jesus, he rewarded them by healing the man and forgiving his sins.

Advice to translators: Someone who is paralyzed cannot walk.

See: [Sin](#)

Why were the teachers of the law angry that Jesus said: “your sins are forgiven”?

[2:5]

The teachers of the Law of Moses thought Jesus had insulted God when he said, “your sins are forgiven.” This is because only God can forgive sins. They believed God alone could forgive sins.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What did Jesus say to the teachers of the law?

[2:8, 2:9]

Jesus knew what the teachers of the Law of Moses were thinking. He gave them something new to think about. Jesus asked them a question. He did not want them to answer. Anyone could say that a person’s sins were forgiven. This is because people would not know if this happened. However, if someone told someone to get up and walk but they did not get up and walk, then everyone could see this. People would

know the person lied if he could not to heal the other person. However, Jesus healed this man by telling him to "Get up and walk." People saw that the man got up and walked. Therefore, Jesus healed him. So when Jesus said that, "Your sins are forgiven," he showed them that he had the power to forgive sins by healing the man.

See: Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Who is the "son of man"?

[2:10]

See: [Son of Man](#)

2:13-17

What was the lake about which Mark wrote?

[2:13]

Mark wrote about the Sea of Galilee

See Map: Sea of Galilee

How did Mark talk about Levi?

[2:14]

Mark called the tax collector Levi, son of Alphaeus. In the gospel of Matthew, Levi was named Matthew (see: Matthew 9:9-11).

Matthew was a tax collector. People in Israel hated the tax collectors. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. They paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

Who were the people who followed Jesus?

[2:15]

The twelve disciples were certain people who believed in Jesus and followed him. In 2:15, Mark wrote about other people who followed Jesus. Some of them believed in Jesus and followed him. Others did not believe in Jesus, but they still followed him. They wanted to see the great miracles he did. However, they did not believe Jesus was the messiah.

See: [Disciple](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did the Pharisees ask Jesus' followers "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

[2:16]

Pharisees wanted to follow the Law of Moses. They thought that eating with unclean people would make them unclean. This is not what the Law of Moses said. It is what the Pharisees taught. Because of this, they did not know why Jesus wanted to be near people who sinned. They were saying that Jesus had broken the Law of Moses. However, he was not breaking the Law of Moses.

See: [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#)

What did Jesus say to the Pharisees?

[2:17]

Jesus told the Pharisees that he was a type of doctor. This was a metaphor. Doctors needed to be near sick people so that they could help them. Certain people knew they sinned and were not at peace with God. They knew they needed God to forgive them.

Jesus called the Pharisees “righteous.” This is because they were the teachers of the Law of Moses. They thought they did not sin and were at peace with God. They did not think they needed God to forgive them. However, everyone needs to be forgiven by God because everyone has sinned.

See: Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32

See: [Sin](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Sin](#)

2:18-22**Why were people arguing about fasting?**

[2:18]

The people argued because they did not see the disciples of Jesus fasting. In ancient Israel, people fasted often. They fasted when bad things happened (see: Ezra 8:23). They fasted when people died (see: 1 Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:12). They fasted when people were sick (see: 2 Samuel 1:16). They fasted when they repented (see: 1 Kings 21:27). Many Jews fasted two days every week when Jesus was on the earth (see: Luke 18:9-14).

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Fasting](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did Jesus answer the question of fasting?

[2:19]

The Pharisees asked Jesus a question about fasting. Jesus answered the question by asking a question. He asked if people needed to fast when good things happened. Jesus said that people did not fast when good things happened. People should have been very happy while Jesus was on earth. Therefore, they should not fast. Jesus prophesied that he would be killed. When this happens, people will be very sad. Then they will fast.

Jesus also used two metaphors. One metaphor was about clothes and the other was about wineskins. He wanted to say that people do things differently after something new happens. The disciples did something different because they were with Jesus, the messiah.

Advice to translators: A wineskin is a bag that holds wine. It was made of leather, that is, the skin of an animal.

See: Matthew 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Fasting](#); [Wedding](#); [Marriage](#); [Bride of Christ](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Wine \(Winepress\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

2:23-28**Why did the Pharisees say Jesus' followers broke the rules about the Sabbath?**

[2:24]

According to the Law of Moses, one could work on the Sabbath. However, it does not say what people needed to stop doing. The Pharisees made many rules about what someone could and could not do on the Sabbath. However, this was not in the Law of Moses. The disciples picked small pieces of grain and rubbed them together so they could eat them. In the Law of Moses, people were allowed to do this when they went from one place to another place (see: Deuteronomy 23:25). However, the Pharisees taught that this was wrong. Jesus knew it was not wrong to break the Pharisees' rule.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did Jesus answer the Pharisees?

[2:25, 2:26, 2:27, 2:28]

Jesus told the Pharisees that eating was not breaking the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses had certain rules about the Sabbath. Jesus told them a story about David (see: 1 Samuel 21:2-6). David broke the Law of Moses. However, this was not evil. It was not evil to help people or to eat if you needed to eat. Jesus created the Sabbath. Therefore, if Jesus said they were not doing something evil, then they were not doing something evil.

Jesus wanted people to know that God cared more about people than the rules about the Sabbath. God made the Sabbath for people and it was a gift he gave to people.

See: Matthew 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5

See: [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Again Jesus walked into the synagogue, and there was a man with a withered hand. ² Some people watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath so that they could accuse him. ³ Jesus said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and stand here in the middle of everyone." ⁴ Then he said to the people, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day or to do harm; to save a life or to kill?" But they were silent. ⁵ He looked around at them with anger, and he was grieved by their hardness of heart, and he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately began to plot with the Herodians as to how they might put him to death.

⁷ Then Jesus, with his disciples, went to the sea, and a great crowd of people followed from Galilee and from Judea ⁸ and from Jerusalem and from Idumea and beyond the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. When they heard about the things he was doing, a great crowd came to him. ⁹ He told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not press against him. ¹⁰ For he healed many, so that everyone who had afflictions eagerly approached him in order to touch him. ¹¹ Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, and they said, "You are the Son of God." ¹² He strictly ordered them not to make him known.

¹³ He went up on the mountain, and he called for those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ He appointed the twelve (whom he named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them to proclaim the message, ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out demons. ¹⁶ He appointed the twelve: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ James son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder; ¹⁸ and Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who would betray him.

²⁰ Then he went home, and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat bread. ²¹ When his family heard about it, they went out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

²² The scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul" and "By the ruler of the demons he drives out demons."

²³ Jesus called them to himself and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he is not able to stand, but has come to an end. ²⁷ But no one can enter into the house of a strong man and steal his belongings without tying up the strong man first, and then he will plunder his house. ²⁸ Truly I say to you, all sins of the sons of men will be forgiven, even all the blasphemies which they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

³⁰ Jesus said this because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

³¹ Then his mother and his brothers came and stood outside. They sent for him, summoning him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside, and they are looking for you."

³³ He answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" ³⁴ He looked around at those who were sitting in a circle around him and said, "See, here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, that person is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Mark 3

3:1-6

To which Synagogue did Jesus return?

[3:1]

Jesus returned to a synagogue. Scholars think Jesus returned to the synagogue in Capernaum. (see: Mark 1:21).

See: [Synagogue](#)

See Map: Capernaum

What caused the man's hand to be withered?

[3:1]

Mark wrote about a man with a withered hand. That is, his hand was damaged or deformed. However, he was born with a normal hand. Scholars think the man got sick and the sickness damaged his hand.

Why did people watch to see if Jesus would heal this man on the Sabbath?

[3:2]

The Pharisees taught that it was wrong to heal someone on the Sabbath unless the person could die. If they were not going to die, then the Pharisees said you must wait to heal them. They thought that healing was a kind of work. The Law of Moses taught that people are not to work on the Sabbath. Certain people wanted to say Jesus did something evil by healing this man. However, it was not wrong for Jesus to heal this man. It was wrong for them to want to say Jesus did something evil. This was why Jesus was angry.

See: Mark 2:24

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Who were the Herodians?

[3:6]

The Herodians were Jewish teachers. They liked King Herod and the people that would rule after he did. The Roman government gave these men permission to rule Israel. They liked things and ideas that were from Greece and Rome. They did not think there was going to be a Jewish messiah and they did not like Jesus' teaching. The Pharisees needed help from these leaders so they could kill Jesus.

See: Matthew 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Greece; Rome

3:7-12

Where is Galilee?

[3:7]

See Map: Galilee

Where is Idumea, Jordan, Tyre and Sidon?

[3:8]

Idumea was an area south of Israel. It was also called Edom. Tyre and Sidon were Gentile cities north of Israel.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Edom; Jordan; Tyre; Sidon; Israel

What was an unclean spirit?

[3:11]

See: [Demon](#)

Why did Jesus tell the unclean spirits to be silent?

[3:12]

The unclean spirits knew Jesus. They fell down to worship him. However, Jesus did not want them to tell people that he was the Son of God. Scholars think Jesus wanted people to tell other people that He was the Son of God and not the demons.

See: Mark 1:24-25, 34; Acts 16:17-18

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

3:13-19

What were apostles?

[3:14]

See: Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 6:13-16

See: [Apostle](#)

What was the message they told others?

[3:14]

The apostles were going to tell other people a message. That message was the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

3:20-30

Why did Jesus' family think Jesus was "out of his mind"?

[3:21]

Mark wrote that Jesus' family thought Jesus was "out of his mind." That is, they thought he was no longer able to think in a right way. Some scholars think that because Jesus was too busy to even eat, his family thought he was no longer thinking rightly. Other scholars think Mark wrote that the crowd thought Jesus was "out of his mind."

Who was Beelzebul?

[3:22]

Beelzebul was a name for Satan.

See: Matthew 12:24-32; Luke 11:17-23

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How did the scribes think Jesus was able to remove demons from people?

[3:22]

The scribes said that Satan gave Jesus permission to remove demons from people.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was a parable?

[3:23]

See: [Parable](#)

What did Jesus say to the scribes?

[3:23, 3:24]

Jesus spoke against what the Scribes said. Jesus said that he fought against Satan by casting out demons. If Jesus wanted to help Satan, then he would not fight against Satan. Jesus also fought against the things Satan ruled on earth. God allowed Satan to rule these things for a period of time. Jesus proved that he was stronger than Satan and could defeat Satan by casting out demons.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?

[3:29]

Jesus said that every sin could be forgiven except one. That was blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Scholars disagree about how someone blasphemes the Holy Spirit.

1. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about rejecting him. If someone does not believe in Jesus, then they will not be forgiven of their sins.
2. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about someone seeing Jesus do miracles and saying that Satan gave him the power to do this. Therefore, people today cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
3. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people who said that the Holy Spirit did not do the things that he did.

See: [Miracle](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Miracle](#)

What was an unclean spirit?

[3:30]

An unclean spirit was a demon.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

3:31-34

Who were Jesus' family?

[3:32]

Mary was Jesus' mother. The names of four of Jesus' brothers were James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. Although Jesus had sisters, their names are not in the Bible.

See: Matthew 12:46-50; 13:55-56; Mark 6:3; Luke 8:19-21

See: [Family of Jesus](#)

Who else is Jesus' family?

[3:35]

Jesus talked about his family. But this was not his mother and brothers. He spoke about how Christians are children of God. Because of this, they are part of Jesus' family.

See: [Children of God](#)

What was the will of God?

[3:35]

See: [Will of God](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Again he began to teach beside the sea, and a large crowd gathered around him. He stepped into a boat that was on the sea, and he sat down in it. The whole crowd was on the shore beside the sea. ² He taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching, this is what he said to them. ³ "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he sowed, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Other seed fell on the rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. Immediately it sprang up, because it did not have deep soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, the plants were scorched, and because they had no root, they dried up. ⁷ Other seed fell among the thorn plants. The thorn plants grew up and choked it, and it did not produce a crop. ⁸ Other seed fell into good soil and it produced a crop growing up and increasing and yielding thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times." ⁹ Then he said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!"

¹⁰ When Jesus was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ He said to them, "To you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God. But to those outside everything is in parables,

¹² so that when they look,
yes they look,
but do not see,
and so that when they hear,
yes they hear,
but do not understand,
or else they would turn
and God would forgive them."

¹³ He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones beside the road, where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the seed sown on the rocky ground; who, when they hear the word immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But they do not have root in themselves, but they endure for a while. Afterward when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, they immediately fall away. ¹⁸ Still others are the ones sown among the thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹ but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, and it is unproductive. ²⁰ Those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word, accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much.

²¹ Jesus said to them, "Do you bring a lamp inside the house to put it under a basket or under the bed? You bring it in and you put it on a lampstand. ²² For nothing is hidden that will not be known, and nothing is secret that will not come out into the open. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" ²⁴ He said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear, for the measure you use will be measured to you, and more will be added to you. ²⁵ Because whoever has, to him will be given more, and whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken."

²⁶ He also said, "The kingdom of God is like a man who sows his seed on the ground. ²⁷ He sleeps at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ The earth bears grain by itself: First the blade, then the ear, then the mature grain in the ear. ²⁹ When the crop is ripe, he immediately sends in the sickle because the harvest has come."

³⁰ Again he said, "To what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use to explain it?"

³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth. ³² Yet, when it is sown, it grows and becomes greater than all the garden plants, and it forms large branches, so that the birds of heaven can make their nests in its shade."

³³ With many parables like this he spoke the word to them, as much as they were able to understand, ³⁴ and he did not speak to them without a parable. But when he was alone, he explained everything to his own disciples.

³⁵ On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." ³⁶ So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There were other boats going along with

him. ³⁷ Just then a violent windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was almost full of water. ³⁸ But Jesus himself was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him up, saying, "Teacher, do you not care that we are about to die?"

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still not have faith?"

⁴¹ They were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, because even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Mark 4

4:1-9

Why did Jesus get into the boat?

[4:1]

Jesus got into the boat near the shore. By doing this, people could not get too close to him. Therefore, everyone could see him and could hear him.

What was a parable?

[4:2]

See: [Parable](#)

Why did Mark write about sowing seeds?

[4:3]

In this passage, Mark wrote about sowing seeds. This was a long metaphor. He wrote about the different types of people. However, scholars do not agree on who were the people about which Mark wrote.

See: Matthew 13:3-9; Luke 8:5-8

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was a thorny plant?

[3:7]

A thorny plant was a type of weed. Weeds are bad plants. They harm the good plants. These plants grew in places where people did not want them to grow. Farmers wanted to stop these plants from growing because they harmed the good plants that they wanted to grow.

Why did Jesus say, "he who has ears to hear, let him hear"?

[4:9]

When someone said "he who has ears to hear, let him hear," they wanted someone to really listen to what they said because they needed to hear it.

4:10-12

Who were the twelve?

[4:10]

Mark wrote about the twelve disciples when he wrote about the twelve.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was the mystery?

[4:11]

See: [Mystery](#)

Who was given the mystery of the kingdom of God?

[4:11]

Those who believed in Jesus were given the mystery of the kingdom of God. Anyone who rejected Jesus would not understand the things he taught. In 4:12, Jesus said that if they understood the things he taught, then they would have believed in him.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

4:13-20

What was the word?

[4:14]

Jesus explained the metaphor about sowing seeds. He said the sower sowed the word. That is, the things about which Jesus taught. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the gospel. Fewer scholars think Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Word of God](#); [Gospel](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Who were the people who were like seeds sown beside the road?

[4:15]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to people when they heard the gospel. Jesus talked about certain people who were like seeds sown beside the road. This was a place where seeds could not grow. Those seeds died because the dirt was too hard. Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about Christians. These people say they were Christians, but they did not do things that honored God. Therefore, they were not at peace with God.

Other scholars think that Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. These people did not believe in the things Jesus taught. They did not believe in Jesus.

See: ; [Metaphor](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

What people were like the seeds sown on rocky ground?

[4:16]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to people when they heard the gospel. Jesus talked about certain people who were like seeds sown on rocky ground. On the rocky ground, the seed could begin to grow. But there was not enough dirt for it to grow very much, so it died.

Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about Christians. These people believed in Jesus, but they rejected Jesus when they were persecuted. Therefore, they are not at peace with God.

Other scholars think that Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. These people said they were Christians, but rejected Jesus when they were persecuted. Therefore, they were not Christians.

See: [Gospel](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#)

What people were like seeds sown with the thorns?

[4:18]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to people when they heard the gospel. Jesus talked about certain people who were like seeds sown with the thorns. Thorn plants were bad plants. The thorn plants killed the good plants.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about Christians. These people believed in Jesus, but they made other things more significant than Jesus in their life. They did not honor God as much as they should have honored him.

Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people who were not Christians. They said they were Christians, but they cared more for the things they owned than they cared for Jesus. They were not Christians.

Advice to translators: Here, “thorns” is a type of plant that grows among other plants and kills them. It is also not good to be used for anything.

See: [Gospel](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#)

What people were like seeds sown on good soil?

[4:20]

Jesus used a metaphor to talk about what happened to people when they heard the gospel. Jesus talked about certain people who were like seeds sown on good soil. These people obeyed God and did things that honored God. They made fruit when they did this. That is, they did not live in the way they used to live. They helped others to believe in Jesus and did the things that honored Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone bear fruit?

[4:20]

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

4:21-29

Why did Jesus use a metaphor about light?

[4:21]

A lamp lights the entire room. It allows everything to be seen. God is light, and the word of God is light (see: Psalm 119:105; 1 John 1:5). Light made things known that were not known before. Jesus used a metaphor about the light.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God. He wanted people to know they could now know about the kingdom of God.

Other scholars think Jesus spoke about himself. When people believe in Jesus, they should want to tell other people about him and the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Jesus say, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[4:23]

When someone said “he who has ears to hear, let him hear,” they wanted someone to listen to what they said. This is why Jesus said it.

Why did Jesus say, “for the measure you use will be measured to you, and more will be added”?

[4:24]

Jesus said, “for the measure you use will be measured to you, and more will be added.” He wanted to say that if the disciples listened to him and obeyed him, they would be rewarded. If they did not do this, they would be disciplined.

See: [Discipline \(To Disciple\)](#); [Reward](#); [Discipline \(To Disciple\)](#)

How is the kingdom of God like a man who sows his seed on the ground?

[4:26]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God is like a man who sowed his seed on the ground. This was a metaphor. The seeds were the gospel. Christians sowed the seeds. That is, they spread the gospel by telling it to other people. However, they did not make the seeds grow. God made the seed grow. Jesus wanted to say that Christians could not make other people believe in Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

4:30-34

How was the kingdom of God like a mustard seed?

[4:31]

Jesus said the kingdom of God was like a mustard seed. This was a metaphor. The mustard seed was very small seed. It was about 1 millimeter in size. A mustard tree was very large. Jesus wanted to say that the kingdom of God began very small, but became great.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What were the birds of heaven?

[4:32]

The birds of heaven were birds. Heaven was the sky.

See: [Heaven](#)

What was a parable?

[4:33]

See: [Parable](#)

4:35-41

Why did Jesus tell the wind to stop?

[4:39]

Jesus told the wind to stop. This allowed others to know that he controlled the weather. Only God could do this. In ancient times, people thought the sea could not be controlled. They were afraid of the seas.

Why were the disciples afraid?

[4:41]

The disciples believed in Jesus, but they did not understand who Jesus was. They knew he was the messiah, but they did not understand that he is God.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ They came to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gerasenes. ² When Jesus was getting out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit came up to him out of the tombs. ³ The man lived in the tombs. No one could restrain him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴ He had been bound many times with shackles and with chains. He tore the chains apart and his shackles were shattered. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Every night and day in the tombs and in the mountains, he cried out and cut himself with sharp stones. ⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran to him and bowed down before him. ⁷ He cried out with a loud voice, "What do I have to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you by God himself, do not torment me." ⁸ For he had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit."

⁹ He asked him, "What is your name?"

He answered him, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰ He begged him again and again not to send them out of the region. ¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was there feeding on the hill, ¹² and they begged him, saying, "Send us into the pigs; let us enter into them." ¹³ So he allowed them; the unclean spirits came out and entered into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep hill into the sea, and about two thousand pigs drowned in the sea. ¹⁴ Then those who were feeding the pigs ran away and reported what had happened in the city and in the countryside, and so people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵ Then they came to Jesus and they saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶ Those who had seen what happened to the demon-possessed man told them about it in detail, and they also told them about the pigs. ¹⁷ Then they started to beg him to leave their region.

¹⁸ When he was getting into the boat, the demon-possessed man begged him that he might be with him.

¹⁹ But Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go to your house and to your people and tell them what the Lord has done for you, and how he has shown you mercy." ²⁰ So he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis the great things that Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

²¹ Now when Jesus had crossed over again to the other side in the boat, a great crowd gathered around him, as he was beside the sea. ²² Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came, and when he saw him, fell at his feet. ²³ He begged again and again, saying, "My little daughter is near death. I beg you, come and lay your hands on her that she may be made well and live." ²⁴ So he went with him, and a great crowd followed him and pressed close around him.

²⁵ Now a woman was there who had a flow of blood for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered much from many doctors and had spent everything that she had, but instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she had heard the reports about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. ²⁸ For she said, "If I touch just his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ When she touched him, the bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed from her affliction.

³⁰ Jesus immediately realized in himself that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹ His disciples said to him, "You see this crowd pressed around you, and you say, 'Who touched me?'"

³² But Jesus looked around to see who had done it. ³³ The woman, knowing what had happened to her, feared and trembled. She came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed from your affliction."

³⁵ While he was speaking, some people came from the leader of the synagogue, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any longer?"

³⁶ But when Jesus overheard the message that was spoken, he said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid. Just believe." ³⁷ He did not permit anyone to accompany him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. ³⁸ They came to the house of the leader of the synagogue and he saw there people making a lot of noise; they were weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ When he entered the house, he said to them, "Why are you upset and why do you weep? The child is not dead but sleeps." ⁴⁰ They began to mock

him. But he put them all outside and took the father of the child and the mother and those who were with him, and he went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took the hand of the child and said to her, "Talitha, koum!" which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, get up." ⁴² Immediately the child got up and walked (for she was twelve years of age). They were immediately astonished with overwhelming amazement. ⁴³ He strictly ordered them that no one should know about this. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

Mark 5

5:1-8

Where was Gerasenes?

[5:1]

See Map: Gerasenes

How did someone come out of the tombs?

[5:2]

A tomb was a place where dead people were buried. These were caves at the bottom of mountains. At that time, people possessed with demons lived in those tombs. The tombs were unclean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What was an unclean spirit?

[5:2]

Mark wrote about an unclean spirit. Here, he wrote about many demons who were in this man.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why could no one restrain the man?

[5:4]

When someone was restrained, they could not go from one place to another place or doing other things. This man could not be restrained. This is because the unclean spirit was very strong in the man.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did the man cut himself?

[5:5]

The man was in so much pain that he cut himself. He did not want to live anymore. He would rather die than to live with this demon inside of him.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did the man bow down before Jesus?

[5:6]

The unclean spirit knew Jesus is God. He knew Jesus was greater than he was. In ancient times, someone kneeled before someone who was greater. Or perhaps the unclean spirit was worshiping Jesus.

See: [Son of God](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Son of God](#)

Why did the man ask Jesus not to torment him?

[5:7]

The man did not want Jesus to torment him. That is, he did not want Jesus to harm him in a severe way. He did not want Jesus to punish him and send him to hell to be punished forever. Some scholars think the man was talking here, not the demon living in the man. Other scholars think the demon was talking.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

5:9-20

What was this demon's name?

[5:9]

The demon said his name was Legion. A legion was a Roman military word. It was a group of 6000 soldiers. So the demon said his name was legion because there were many demons in the man. However, it was possible to speak of this as one demon because they were all in one man.

See: [Demon](#)

Why did the demon want to enter into the pigs?

[5:12]

The demons did not want Jesus to make them leave the area. They wanted Jesus to allow them to go into the group of pigs. Some scholars think they wanted to remain in the same area where they could hurt more people. Other scholars think that they did not want Jesus to punish them and send them to hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

Why did the pigs run down the cliffs and into the sea?

[5:13]

The pigs ran off the cliffs after the demons entered into them. Some scholars think the demons chose pigs because they were unclean according to the Law of Moses. Other scholars think they wanted to destroy the man, but when they were not able to do this, they wanted to destroy the pigs. Other scholars think the pigs were overwhelmed by the demons and the demons made the pigs run over the cliff and into the sea.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why were the people afraid of Jesus?

[5:15]

The people in that region were afraid after seeing the things Jesus did.

1. Some scholars think the people were afraid because Jesus controlled the demons.
2. Other scholars think the people were afraid because all of the pigs died. 2000 pigs were worth a lot of money. Perhaps they were afraid that they could lose a lot of money.
3. Other scholars think that Jesus greatly punished evil. They were afraid that they would be punished too.

See: [Demon](#)

Why did the man want to go with Jesus?

[5:18]

The man wanted to be with Jesus. Some scholars think the man wanted to become a disciple of Jesus. However, Jesus wanted him to stay with the man's own people. This is because the man was a Gentile and lived in a Gentile area. He wanted this man to tell the Gentiles in Decapolis about Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Decapolis

Why did Jesus call himself “the Lord”?

[5:19]

See: [Lord](#)

5:21-43

What was a leader of the synagogue?

[5:22]

The leader of the synagogue was someone who helped lead people in worshipping God in the synagogue. He was not necessarily a pharisee or sadducee.

See: [Sadducees](#); [Pharisees](#); [Sadducees](#)

Why did Jairus fall at Jesus’ feet?

5:22

Jairus fell at Jesus’ feet to ask him for help. He was begging. He was desperate for help. He was not worshipping Jesus.

Why did this man want Jesus to lay his hands on his daughter?

[5:23]

This man thought that Jesus could heal his daughter by touching her. He did not know that Jesus could heal her without touching her. He also did not know that he could heal her after she died.

What was a flow of blood?

[5:25]

Women bleed for a few days every month if they are not pregnant. However, this woman bled continuously for 12 years. This would have made her unclean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

How did this woman “suffer much from many doctors”?

[5:26]

Mark wrote that the woman “suffered much from many doctors” because many doctors had tried to help her. However, instead of helping her, they actually harmed her more.

Why were the disciples surprised that Jesus asked who touched him?

[5:31]

The disciples were surprised that Jesus asked who touched him. That was because many people were touching him. They did not think he could know when someone specific touched him.

Why was this woman healed?

[5:29]

This woman was healed because she believed in Jesus.

What did Jesus say to the woman?

[5:34]

Jesus told the woman to go in peace and be healed from her suffering. He wanted her to live in a way that honored God. He also wanted her to know that he completely healed her. She was now clean and did not need to be separated from other people.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why were the people at the house crying?

[5:38]

The people at the house were crying because the little girl died.

Why did the people laugh at Jesus?

[5:40]

The people laughed at Jesus. The people did not know that Jesus had the power to make someone alive again.

Why did Jesus not want them to tell anyone about this?

[5:43]

Jesus did not want this girl's family to tell other people about Jesus healing her. Her father was a Jewish leader and many Jewish leaders rejected Jesus as the messiah. It was not time for them to fight against Jesus. So he did not want them to know what he was doing. Some scholars also think Jesus did not want people to begin bringing dead people to him to be made alive again.

See: [Messianic Secret](#); [Messianic Secret](#)

Why did the girl need to eat?

[5:43]

The girl needed to eat because she was alive again in the same way she was alive before she died. She was not resurrected. When someone is resurrected, they do not need to eat.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Chapter 6

¹ He went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² When the Sabbath came, he taught in the synagogue. Many people heard him and they were amazed. They said, "Where did he get these teachings?" "What is this wisdom that has been given to him?" "What are these miracles that he does with his hands?" ³ "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Josés and Judas and Simon? Are his sisters not here with us?" They were offended by Jesus. ^[1]

⁴ Then Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household." ⁵ He could not do any mighty work, except to lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ He was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went around the villages teaching.

⁷ Then he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits, ⁸ and instructed them to take nothing for their journey, except a staff—no bread, no bag, and no money in their belts— ⁹ but to wear sandals, and not to wear two tunics. ¹⁰ He said to them, "Whenever you enter a house, remain until you go away from there. ¹¹ If any town will not receive you or listen to you, when you leave that place, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony to them." ¹² They went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³ They cast out many demons, and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

¹⁴ King Herod heard this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." ¹⁵ Some others said, "He is Elijah." Still others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets in ancient times."

¹⁶ But when Herod heard this he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

¹⁷ For Herod sent to have John arrested and he had him bound in prison on account of Herodias (his brother Philip's wife), because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John told Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ But Herodias held on to anger against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John; he knew that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. Listening to him made him greatly perplexed, yet he heard him gladly.

²¹ Then an opportunity came when Herod had his birthday and he made a dinner for his officials and for the commanders and leaders of Galilee. ²² The daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced for them, and she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you." ²³ He swore to her saying, "Whatever you ask of me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."

²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask him for?"

She said, "The head of John the Baptist."

²⁵ She immediately hurried back to the king, and she asked, saying, "I want you to give me, right now, the head of John the Baptist on a wooden platter." ²⁶ Though this deeply grieved the king, he could not refuse her request because of the oath he had made and because of his dinner guests. ²⁷ So the king sent a soldier from his guard and commanded him to bring him John's head. The guard went and beheaded him in the prison. ²⁸ He brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard of this, they came and took his body and placed it in a tomb.

³⁰ The apostles came together with Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ Then he said to them, "Come away by yourselves into a deserted place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. ³² So they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³ But they saw them leaving and many recognized them, and they ran there together on foot from all the towns, and they arrived there before them. ³⁴ When they came ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things.

³⁵ When the hour was late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place and the hour is already late. ³⁶ Send them away so that they may go into the nearby countryside and villages to buy something to eat for themselves."

³⁷ But he answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "Can we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?"

³⁸ He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five loaves and two fish." ³⁹ He commanded all the people to sit down in groups upon the green grass. ⁴⁰ They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate until they were satisfied. ⁴³ They took up broken pieces of bread, twelve baskets full, and also pieces of the fish. ⁴⁴ There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he sent the crowd away. ⁴⁶ After taking leave of them, he went up the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ Evening came, and the boat was now in the middle of the sea, and he was alone on land. ⁴⁸ He saw that they were straining against the oars, for the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea, and he wanted to pass by them. ⁴⁹ But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought he was a ghost and cried out, ⁵⁰ because they saw him and were troubled. Immediately he spoke to them and said to them, "Be courageous! It is I! Do not be afraid!" ⁵¹ He got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased blowing. They were completely amazed. ⁵² For they had not understood what the loaves meant. Instead, their hearts were hardened.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and anchored the boat. ⁵⁴ When they came out of the boat, the people recognized him immediately, ⁵⁵ and they ran throughout the whole region and began to bring the sick on their mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ Wherever he entered into villages, or cities, or into the country, they would put the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch the edge of his garment, and as many as touched him were healed.

Footnotes

6:3 ^[1]The man called Joses here is called

Mark 6

6:1-6

Where did Jesus live when he was a child?

[6:1]

Jesus' family lived in Nazareth.

See Map: Nazareth

What was the Sabbath?

[6:2]

See: [Sabbath](#)

Why did the people want to know who taught Jesus?

[6:2]

In ancient Israel, many teachers learned from other teachers. They taught the same things their teachers taught. This is why they wanted to know who taught Jesus. He did not teach the same things any other teacher taught.

Why did the people ask questions about how Jesus performed miracles?

[6:2]

The people asked Jesus who gave Jesus the power to do miracles. They did not think God gave Jesus the power to do these miracles. They thought Satan gave him this power (see: Mark 3:22).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Did Jesus have brothers and sisters?

[6:3]

Some scholars think that Mary and Joseph had other children after Jesus was born. These people were talking about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Fewer scholars think that Mary and Joseph did not have any more children after Jesus. They think these were Jesus' cousins.

See: [Family of Jesus](#)

Why did the people not like what Jesus said?

[6:3]

The people did not like what Jesus said because the people knew Jesus was Mary's son. They knew his brothers and sisters, they did not believe he was sent from God and was their messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, "a prophet is not without honor"?

[6:4]

When Jesus said that a prophet was "not without honor," he wanted to say that people respected or honored a prophet. The only place that a prophet is not honored is in the place where he lived when he was a child. Jesus was a prophet. Perhaps he was also thinking about how Israel would reject him as their messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why was Jesus unable to heal people?

[6:5]

Jesus was able to heal anyone in this place. Some scholars think Jesus was not free to heal people when the people did not believe in him. Jesus healed people so they would know that God sent him and that they will believe in him. The people in Nazareth did not believe in Jesus, even when they saw him heal people.

6:7-13

Who were the twelve?

[6:7]

The twelve were the twelve disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus send the disciples to do?

[6:7]

Jesus sent the twelve disciples to tell other people about Jesus and to heal people who have unclean spirits living in them.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did Jesus not want the disciples to take anything with them?

[6:8, 6:9]

Jesus did not want the disciples to take anything with them when they traveled. That was because they were to go quickly and to know that God would give them everything they needed. They took only a staff to help them walk.

They were also not to have two tunics. A tunic was the main piece of clothing they wore. They wore a second tunic at night when it was cold. They carried the other tunic during the day. However, God would make sure they were warm at night.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why were the disciples to remain in one house?

[6:10]

The disciples were told to remain in one house. At this time it was a great honor to have someone stay in your home. Jesus did not want his disciples to dishonor a host by leaving that house.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why were the disciples to shake the dust off their feet?

[6:11]

If the people in a town rejected the disciples, the disciples were told to shake the dust off their feet when they left the town. According to the Law of Moses, the Jews needed to welcome people who were travelling. If they did not welcome the disciples, they disobeyed God. At this time, certain Jews shook the dust off their feet when leaving a place where Gentiles lived. This is because they thought they were leaving an unclean area.

See: [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Gentile](#)

Why should people repent?

[6:12]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did someone get anointed with oil?

[6:13]

In ancient Israel, it was common to anoint someone with oil who was sick so that they might be healed. They poured oil on their head or where they were hurt. It was a way of asking God to help this person.

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

6:14-20

Who was King Herod?

[6:14]

See: [King Herod](#)

Why did people think John the Baptist was made alive again?

[6:14]

Scholars do not know why people thought Jesus was John the Baptist made alive again. These people did not know that these two men lived at the same time. Both Jesus and John were prophets who honored God.

See: [Prophet](#) ;[Prophet](#)

Why did people think Jesus was Elijah?

[6:15]

In ancient Israel, people thought Elijah would return to the earth. This is because he never died. Instead, he went straight to heaven. The prophet Malachi wrote about Elijah returning (see: Malachi 4:5).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What was a prophet?

[6:15]

See: [Prophet](#)

Why did Herod arrest John the Baptist?

[6:17]

John the Baptist spoke against King Herod. He said the things King Herod did were evil. He said it was wrong for Herod to marry Herodias because his brother Philip was still alive. This made Herod angry. Herod wanted to kill John. However, Herod worried about what people would do if he killed John. Therefore, he put him into prison.

See: Leviticus 20:21

Who was Herodias?

[6:17]

Herodias was the wife of King Herod. Before Herod married her, Herodias was married to Herod's brother Philip.

Why was it difficult for Herod to kill John the Baptist?

[6:20]

The people of Israel thought John the Baptist was a prophet. Therefore they thought it was very wrong to harm John. Herod feared what people would do if he killed a prophet. Some scholars also think he feared John because John was a man who honored God while Herod did not honor God.

See: [Prophet](#)

6:21-29

What day was this dinner?

[6:21]

In this passage, it was Herod's birthday. Many different leaders who served him went to the dinner feast he made for his birthday.

Advice to translators: A birthday is a celebration of the day someone was born. Every year on the same day someone was born people celebrate that person.

Who was the girl?

[6:22]

Herodias sent her daughter to dance for Herod. She danced in a way that made men have sexual thoughts about her. She was the daughter of Herodias and Philip. She was Herod's niece and step-daughter.

What was an oath?

[6:22]

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why did this make Herod sad?

[6:26]

Herod did not want to kill John the Baptist. He knew John was a man who honored God. However, he did not want people to see him break his oath. Therefore, he had John killed. This made Herod very sad.

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why did the disciples place John's body in a tomb?

[6:29]

According to the Law of Moses, a person needed to be buried before the end of the day. Therefore, the disciples buried John's body to obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

6:30-44

Who went away in the boat?

[6:32]

The apostles and Jesus went away in the boat.

See: [Apostle](#)

What happened in verse 33?

[6:33]

The people saw Jesus and the apostles leaving. Many of the people knew who were Jesus and the apostles. The people ran there together on foot from all the towns. Many of them arrived there before Jesus and the apostles did.

See: [Apostle](#)

How were the people like sheep without a shepherd?

[6:34]

Jesus said that the people were like sheep without a shepherd. This was a metaphor. This meant the people did not have a leader to follow.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What did Mark mean when he wrote the “hour was late”?

[6:35]

Mark wrote that it was late in the day and they needed to eat and find a place to sleep.

What was a loaf?

[6:38]

Bread is made in a loaf. In ancient times, a person needed at least one loaf a day to live. For a meal, five loaves and two fish fed 2 or 3 small families.

Why did Jesus “bless” the bread?

[6:41]

When Jesus blessed the bread, he thanked God for giving them the bread.

How many people ate the bread and fish?

[6:44]

Mark wrote that 5000 men ate the bread and fish. There were also women and children who ate of the bread and fish. Therefore, more than 5000 people ate.

6:45-56

Where was Bethsaida?

[6:45]

See Map: Bethsaida

How were the disciples “straining against the oars”?

[6:48]

Mark wrote that the disciples were “straining against the oars, for the wind was against them.” That is, they were working hard to row to keep their boat from sinking because of the bad weather.

See: [Disciple](#)

When was the fourth watch of the night?

[6:48]

The fourth watch of the night was a time after midnight.

What was a ghost?

[6:49]

A ghost is the spirit of a dead person trapped on earth. Ghosts are not real because people must either go to heaven or hell after they die. Spirits do not get trapped on earth when a person dies.

See: [Hell](#); [Heaven](#); [Hell](#)

What did the loaves mean?

[6:52]

Mark wrote about what the loaves meant. Mark wrote about Jesus walking on the water and feeding 5000 men. These were both miracles. He wanted people to know that Jesus could do miracles because he is God.

See: [Miracle](#)

Where was Gennesaret?

[6:53]

See Map: Gennesaret

Chapter 7

¹ The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him. ² They saw that some of his disciples ate bread with hands that were unclean, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands carefully, because they hold to the tradition of the elders. ⁴ When the Pharisees come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they bathe themselves, and they hold to many other things they have received, such as the washing of cups, pots, copper vessels, and the couches upon which they eat.) ⁵ The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with unclean hands?"

⁶ But he said to them, "Isaiah prophesied well about you hypocrites. As it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.

⁷ In vain they worship me,
teaching the commands of men as their doctrines.'

⁸ You abandon the commandment of God and hold on to the tradition of men." ⁹ He also said to them, "How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely be put to death.' ¹¹ But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever help you would have received from me is Corban"' (that is to say, 'a Gift'), ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother. ¹³ You are making the word of God void by your tradition which you have handed down. And many similar things you do." ¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside of a person that can defile him when it enters into him. It is what comes out of the person that defiles him." ¹⁶^[1]¹⁷ Now when Jesus left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not know that whatever enters into a person from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ because it cannot go into his heart, but it goes into his stomach and then passes out into the latrine?" With this statement Jesus declared all foods clean. ²⁰ He said, "It is that which comes out of the person that defiles him. ²¹ For from within a person, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³ All these evils come from within, and they are what defile a person."

²⁴ He got up from there and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. There he went into a house, and he wanted no one to know where he was, yet he could not be hidden. ²⁵ But immediately ^[2] a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and came and fell down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by descent. She begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, "Let the children first be fed. For it is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

²⁸ But she answered and said to him, "Yes, Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

²⁹ He said to her, "Because of what you have said, you are free to go. The demon has gone out of your daughter." ³⁰ She went back to her house and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

³¹ Then he went out again from the region of Tyre, and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee up into the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him someone who was deaf and had difficulty speaking, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ Then taking him aside away from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and then he spit and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then he looked up to heaven, sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is to say, "Open!" ³⁵ At once his ears were opened, the bond of his tongue was released, and he began to speak plainly.

³⁶ Jesus ordered them to tell no one. But the more he ordered them, the more abundantly they proclaimed it. ³⁷ They were extremely astonished, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Footnotes

7:16 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have verse 16.

7:25 ^[2]Some ancient copies do not have the words,

Mark 7**7:1-23****Why did the Pharisees and scribes come from the region of Galilee to Jerusalem?**

[7:1]

The Pharisees and scribes came from Jerusalem to see what Jesus and the disciples were doing. Scholars think the Pharisees and Scribes were searching for ways to accuse Jesus of not following the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Scribe](#); [Disciple](#); [Law of Moses](#)

See Map: Galilee

Why did people not eat without washing their hands?

[7:2]

In ancient Israel, the Jews did not eat unless they washed their hands in a certain way. The Jews washed their hands in the way the religious leaders taught. Mark called the rules made by the religious leaders the “traditions of the elders.” They taught that Jews needed to wash their hands after they went to the marketplace. They needed to wash because they were around Gentiles. Gentiles were unclean. These rules were not in the Law of Moses.

Advice to Translators: A marketplace is a place where people go to get food, clothing, and other things they need to live.

See: [Gentile](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did the Pharisees bathe themselves?

[7:4]

The Pharisees bathed themselves after they went to the marketplace. The religious teachers taught that people needed to wash their hands after they went to the marketplace. However, the Pharisees washed their whole body. They did this because they were near Gentiles and Gentiles were unclean. None of this was in the Law of Moses.

Advice to Translators: A marketplace is a place where people go to get food, clothing, and other things they need to live.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did the Pharisees wash everything?

[7:4]

The Law of Moses taught that certain things were unclean and needed to be washed. The religious teachers and the Pharisees thought that even more things needed to be washed than what the Law of Moses said to wash. Mark wanted to write that the Pharisees and other religious teachers taught certain things were sins. However, those things were not taught in the Law of Moses. These were rules made by men, not God.

See: [Sin](#); [Pharisees](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sin](#)

What did Jesus say to the Pharisees?

[7:6, 7:7]

Jesus said that the Pharisees were hypocrites. The Pharisees said they were honoring God. They did things so that other people would think they were honoring God. However, they really did not want to honor God. Instead, they only wanted people to think they honored God.

The Pharisees were like the people Isaiah prophesied about. They obeyed men and the rules made by men. However, they did not obey God and the rules he made.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

What did Mark say about honoring your father and mother?

[7:10, 7:11, 7:12]

In the Law of Moses, children were to honor their father and mother. However, the religious teachers in Israel taught something different. Children could promise something to God that normally would be given to their parents. If they did this, they did not need to give it to help their parents. Neither did they need to use it in a certain way or to give it to a priest. Jesus said this did not obey the Law of Moses about honoring your father and mother.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What defiled someone?

[7:15]

Jesus said that things going into a person did not make them unclean. Instead, it was things that came out of people that made them unclean. That is, the wrong things a person thought and did made them unclean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

Advice to translators: Something that is defiled has been made unclean.

Why do some translations not have verse 16?

[7:16]

Most of the ancient copies of the New Testament in Greek do not have the words in verse 16. Therefore, scholars think Mark did not write these words. However, the person who made separated the passages into verses did this with a copy of the New Testament in Greek that had those words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Which parable did the disciples ask Jesus about?

[7:17]

The disciples asked about a parable. The parable was about what Jesus said in verse 15.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

What did Jesus want to teach when he used this parable?

[7:18, 7:19, 7:20, 7:21, 7:22, 7:23]

The disciples did not understand what Jesus wanted to teach them when Jesus used this parable. He wanted them to know that God cared more about what people did than what people ate.

Some scholars think Jesus changed the Law of Moses. He could do this because he made the Law of Moses. Christians were now able to eat any food. Food was no longer clean or unclean. Other scholars do not think Jesus changed the Law of Moses. Instead, Jesus wanted people to know that the Law of Moses

was going to be fulfilled in Jesus. Believing in Jesus would now be how Christians could now follow the Law of Moses.

See: Matthew 5:21-48; Acts 10; Acts 15

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Parable](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#)

7:24-36

Where were Tyre and Sidon?

[7:24]

Tyre and Sidon were cities outside of Israel.

See Map: Tyre and Sidon

Why did Jesus not want people to know where he was?

[7:24]

Scholars think Jesus was searching for a place to rest. He wanted to have time alone with his disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was an unclean spirit?

[7:25]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did the woman fall down at Jesus' feet?

[7:25]

The women begged Jesus to do something when she fell down at his feet. She did not do this to worship him.

Where was Syrophenicia?

[7:26]

See Map: Syrophenicia

Why did Jesus talk about dogs?

[7:27]

Jesus talked about a dog who ate food that fell off the table. This was a metaphor.

Some scholars think he talked about the disciples when he talked about the children. He talked about the Gentiles when he talked about the dogs. He talked about something he gave them when he talked about the bread. He wanted to say that he needed to teach the disciples before he taught her.

Other scholars think that he talked about Israel when he talked about the children. He was talking about the Gentiles when he talked about the dogs. He talked about the gospel message and the blessings of Jesus' miracles when he talked about bread. He wanted to say that he taught the gospel to the Jews before he taught the gospel to the Gentiles.

See: [Miracle](#); [Disciple](#); [Gentile](#); [Gospel](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus heal this woman's daughter?

[7:29]

The woman made it known that she believed in Jesus by her reply to Jesus. Jesus healed her daughter because the woman believed in Jesus.

Where was the Sea of Galilee?

[7:31]

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Where was Decapolis?

[7:31]

See Map: Decapolis

What was the laying on of hands?

[7:32]

See: [Laying on of Hands](#)

Why did Jesus spit and touch the man's tongue?

[7:33]

Jesus spit and touched the man's tongue. This was a symbol. However, he did not say what was the meaning of the symbol.

Some scholars think Jesus spat onto the ground.

Other scholars think Jesus spat into his hand and then touched the man's tongue.

See: [Symbol](#)

What did Mark mean when he said the man's "tongue was released"?

[7:35]

Jesus healed a man that was not able to hear or speak. Mark said that the man's "tongue was released." That is, the man was now able to speak. The man was healed instantly.

Why did Jesus not want them to tell anyone?

[7:36]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

Chapter 8

¹ In those days, there was again a great crowd, and they had nothing to eat. Jesus called his disciples and said to them, ² "I have compassion on the crowd because they continue to be with me already for three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them away to their home without eating, they may faint on the way. Some of them have come a long way."

⁴ His disciples answered him, "Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy these people?"

⁵ He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

They said, "Seven." ⁶ He commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground. He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, and broke them. He gave them to his disciples to set before them, and they set them before the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few small fish, and after he gave thanks for them, he commanded the disciples to serve these as well. ⁸ They ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the remaining broken pieces, seven large baskets. ⁹ There were about four thousand people. Then he sent them away. ¹⁰ Immediately he got into the boat with his disciples, and they went into the region of Dalmanutha.

¹¹ Then the Pharisees came out and began to argue with him. They sought from him a sign from heaven, to test him. ¹² He sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ Then he left them, got into a boat again, and went away to the other side.

¹⁴ Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread with them. They had no more than one loaf of bread in the boat. ¹⁵ He instructed them, saying, "Keep watch and be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod."

¹⁶ The disciples were arguing with one another about having no bread.

¹⁷ When he understood this, he asked them, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Do you have hardened hearts? ¹⁸ You have eyes, do you not see? You have ears, do you not hear? Do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces of bread did you take up?"

They said to him, "Twelve."

²⁰ "When I broke the seven loaves among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces of bread did you take up?"

They said to him, "Seven."

²¹ He said, "Do you not yet understand?"

²² They came to Bethsaida. The people there brought to him a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.

²³ Jesus took hold of the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. When he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?"

²⁴ He looked up, and said, "I see men who look like walking trees."

²⁵ Then he again laid his hands upon his eyes, and the man opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw all things clearly. ²⁶ Jesus sent him away to his home and said, "Do not enter the village."

²⁷ Jesus went out with his disciples into the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do the people say that I am?"

²⁸ They answered him and said, "John the Baptist. Others say, 'Elijah,' and others, 'One of the prophets.'"

²⁹ He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter said to him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and would be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and would be killed, and after three days rise up. ³² He spoke that message openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But Jesus turned and looked at his disciples and then he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of people." ³⁴ Then he called the crowd and his disciples together, and he said to them, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and then forfeit his life? ³⁷ What can a person give in exchange for his life? ³⁸ Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8

8:1-21

What were "those days"?

[8:1]

Mark wrote about the time when Jesus was in Decapolis when he wrote about "those days."

See Map: Decapolis

Why did the people not have anything to eat?

[8:2]

Mark does not write why the people did not have anything to eat.

How were they in a deserted place?

[8:4]

The disciples spoke about being in a deserted place. That is they were in a place where they could not get any food. Perhaps they were in the wilderness or desert.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus give thanks?

[8:6]

Jesus gave thanks to God before they ate. He thanked God for giving them their food. This was common in ancient Israel.

Why did Mark write about how much fish and bread remained uneaten?

[8:8]

Mark wrote there were 7 large baskets of uneaten food after everyone ate. There was more food that remained than the food with which they started. This was a miracle.

See: [Miracle](#)

Where was Dalmanutha?

[8:10]

See Map: Dalmanutha

Why did the Pharisees want a sign from heaven?

[8:11]

The Pharisees wanted Jesus to give them a sign from heaven. They wanted Jesus to prove that God gave Jesus the power and permission to do these miracles. They thought that Satan gave Jesus the power and permission to do these things (see: Mark 3:22)

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Sign](#); [Heaven](#); [Miracle](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about yeast?

[8:15]

Jesus used the metaphor of yeast. He did this to talk about people doing evil things. In the same way a small amount of yeast goes through the whole lump of dough, so evil things would make other people want to do more evil things.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus ask the disciples many questions?

[8:17, 8:18, 8:19, 8:20, 8:21]

Jesus asked his disciples many different questions. They did not understand what Jesus was saying about who he is and why he did these things. They knew Jesus fed 5000 people through a miracle. They forgot he could do this. They worried that the people would not have food to eat (see: Mark 8:4).

Some scholars think Jesus rebuked them. That is, he spoke to them in a way that they would know they did something wrong.

Other scholars think Jesus was trying to help them understand (see: Matthew 16:11-12).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

8:22-38

Where was Bethsaida?

[8:22]

See Map: Bethsaida

Why did the people want Jesus to touch the blind man?

[8:22]

The people wanted Jesus to touch the blind man because they believed that this would heal the man.

Why did Jesus take the man outside of the village?

[8:23]

Jesus took the man outside of the village because he did not want other people to see what he was doing.

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

Why did Jesus spit on the man's eyes?

[8:23]

It was a symbol when Jesus spat on the man's eyes. However, Mark does not write about what was this symbol. Perhaps Jesus spat on the man's eyes because then the man could feel what Jesus was doing.

See: [Symbol](#)

Why did the man see men who looked like walking trees?

[8:24]

The man saw people and said they looked like walking trees. This is because his eyes were not yet completely healed. Jesus tried to teach the disciples something by not healing the man completely the first time. This was because seeing was a metaphor. People often spoke about understanding something as if they were seeing it. In the same way the man saw more clearly after Jesus touched his eyes again, so the disciples understood Jesus more clearly when he explained the things he taught.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus not want this man to enter into the village?

[8:26]

Jesus told this man not to enter into the village. He did this because he did not want the man to tell other people about what Jesus did.

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

Where was Caesarea Philippi?

[8:27]

See Map: Caesarea Philippi

Why did Jesus ask, "who do people say that I am"?

[8:27]

Jesus asked, "who do people say that I am." Scholars think Jesus wanted his disciples to be prepared for the next question he asked. That is, he asked them "but who do you say that I am"?

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus not want the disciples to tell people that he is the messiah?

[8:30]

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is the Son of Man?

[8:31]

Jesus spoke about himself when he spoke about the Son of Man. He prophesied about things that would happen to him.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Who were the elders, chief priests, and scribes?

[8:31]

Mark wrote about older men in Israel who lead the people in some way when he wrote about elders. Together the scribes, the chief priests, and the elders helped to lead Israel to worship and obey God.

See: [Scribe](#); [Scribe](#)

How would Jesus rise up after three days?

[8:31]

Jesus said he would rise up after three days. That is he would be made alive again through his resurrection.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Peter rebuke Jesus?

[8:32]

Peter rebuked Jesus. He said that what Jesus said must be wrong. Peter thought that the messiah would not suffer and die in the way Jesus said. However, Jesus rebuked Peter. He said Peter spoke wrongly. The things he said were the things that Satan wanted Peter to say. Peter did not yet understand the things Jesus was supposed to do on earth.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean for people to “take up their cross”?

[8:34]

The words “take up your cross” were a metaphor. Jesus died on a cross. He obeyed God even though he suffered for obeying God. He wanted people to do the same thing. He wanted them to obey God even if they suffered because they obeyed God.

See: [Cross](#); [Cross](#)

How does someone save their life?

[8:35]

Jesus talked about “life” in two ways in this passage. He spoke about the life a person has before they die and the life they have after they die. He said people needed to obey God before they die if they want to live with God forever. In the same way, people who die on Earth because they obeyed God will still live with God forever after they die.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How was this generation sinful and adulterous?

[8:38]

Jesus called the people living in Israel sinful and adulterous. This was a metaphor. Jesus meant the people were not faithful to God because they did not believe in Jesus.

[Adultery](#); [Adultery](#)

How will Jesus be ashamed of people when he comes with the glory of his father?

[8:38]

Jesus talked about people being ashamed of him. That is, he talked about the people who rejected him. They did not believe in him. Jesus will reject everyone who rejected him when he returns. They will live in hell forever.

See: Matthew 24:30; Mark 13:26

See: [Angel](#); [Hell](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Angel](#)

Chapter 9

¹ He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of you who are standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

² Six days later, Jesus took Peter and James and John with him up a high mountain, alone by themselves. Then he was transfigured before them. ³ His garments became radiantly brilliant, extremely white, whiter than any bleacher on earth could bleach them. ⁴ Then Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here, and so let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶ (For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.)

⁷ A cloud came and overshadowed them. Then a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." ⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them, but only Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, he commanded them to tell no one what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept the matter to themselves, but they discussed among themselves what "rising from the dead" could mean. ¹¹ They asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

¹² He said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be despised? ¹³ But I say to you that Elijah has come, and they did whatever they wanted to him, just as it is written about him."

¹⁴ When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes were arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as they saw Jesus, the whole crowd was amazed and as they ran up to him they greeted him. ¹⁶ He asked his disciples, "What are you arguing with them about?"

¹⁷ Someone in the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has a spirit that makes him unable to speak. ¹⁸ It seizes him and it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out of him, but they could not."

¹⁹ He answered them, "Unbelieving generation, how long will I have to stay with you? How long will I bear with you? Bring him to me." ²⁰ They brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw him into a convulsion. The boy fell on the ground and foamed at the mouth. ²¹ Jesus asked his father, "For how much time has he been like this?"

The father said, "Since childhood. ²² It has often thrown him into the fire or into the waters and tried to destroy him. If you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us."

²³ Jesus said to him, "'If you are able'? All things are possible for the one who believes."

²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe! Help my unbelief!"

²⁵ When Jesus saw the crowd running to them, he rebuked the unclean spirit and said, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter into him again."

²⁶ It cried out and convulsed the boy greatly and then came out. The boy looked like one who was dead, so that many said, "He is dead." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and the boy stood up.

²⁸ When Jesus came into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

²⁹ He said to them, "This kind cannot be cast out except by prayer."

³⁰ They went out from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ for he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man will be given over into the

hands of men, and they will put him to death. When he has been put to death, after three days he will rise again." ³² But they did not understand this statement, and they were afraid to ask him.

³³ Then they came to Capernaum. After he entered the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴ But they were silent. For they had been arguing with one with another on the way about who was the greatest. ³⁵ Sitting down, he called the twelve together and he said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶ He took a little child and placed him in their midst. He took him in his arms and said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives such a child in my name receives me; whoever receives me does not receive me but the one who sent me."

³⁸ John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we stopped him, because he does not follow us."

³⁹ But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for there is no one who will do a mighty work in my name and can soon afterwards say anything bad about me. ⁴⁰ Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in my name because you belong to Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward. ⁴² Whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than to have two hands and to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁴^[1]⁴⁵ If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life lame than to have your two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁶^[2]⁴⁷ If your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out. It is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out. ⁴⁹ For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Footnotes

9:44 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have this phrase, and verse 44 is not included in the ULB,

9:46 ^[2]The best ancient copies do not have this phrase, and verse 46 is not included in the ULB,

Mark 9

9:1-13

Did Jesus say that certain people would still be alive when the kingdom of God came?

[9:1]

Jesus said that certain people would not "taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power." That is, they will not die before they saw this. However, scholars disagree about what they would see.

1. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about what was about to happen. That is, Jesus would be transfigured. Perhaps Mark wanted to write that Jesus himself was the kingdom of God. Or perhaps the things the disciples saw were similar to how Jesus would appear when he begins to rule on the earth.
2. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about something the Holy Spirit would do. He would begin to live in Christians forever (see: Acts 2).
3. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about dying and being resurrected.

See: [Transfigure \(Transfiguration\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Transfigure \(Transfiguration\)](#)

How was Jesus transfigured?

[9:2]

Mark wrote that Jesus was transfigured. That is, Jesus was changed in some way. The disciples did not see Jesus as he was, they saw him as he will be when he returns to the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Disciple](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Peter, James, and John see Elijah and Moses?

[9:4]

Peter, James, and John saw Elijah and Moses. Elijah and Moses were in heaven. Scholars think this was a symbol. It symbolized that Jesus was the messiah for whom people were waiting.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Peter call Jesus “rabbi”?

[9:5]

Peter called Jesus “rabbi.” Rabbi was the Hebrew word for teacher. Peter did not understand what was happening. If he did, then he would have called Jesus the messiah, not simply a teacher.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Peter want to make three shelters?

[9:5]

Peter wanted to make three shelters. One for Jesus, one for Elijah, and one for Moses. Scholars disagree about why he did this.

1. Some scholars think Peter wanted to build three tents of meeting. That is, he wanted to build a place where God could talk to men once again. He did not know that God was already talking to people through Jesus. They did not need to meet in a tent to learn what God said to them.
2. Some scholars think Peter wanted to build three shelters (see: Leviticus 23:34-44). Perhaps he thought this was for the Feast of Shelters when the messiah came to rule over the world (see: Zechariah 14:16)

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Festival of Shelters](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why was Peter terrified?

[9:6]

Peter was terrified because he thought the time was coming for God to judge the world. He did not understand that this was not what was happening. Some scholars think Peter, James, and John did not have fear, but had great awe in seeing Jesus, Elijah, and Moses together on the mountain.

See: [Awe \(Awesome\)](#)

Who spoke from the cloud?

[9:7]

God the Father spoke from the cloud. In the Bible, heaven is often spoken about as if it is in the clouds.

See: [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to say anything until the Son of man had “risen from the dead”?

[9:9]

Jesus spoke about the Son of Man rising from the dead. He spoke about himself. He would be resurrected. However, the disciples did not understand that Jesus would be resurrected. Some scholars think Jesus

knew the disciples would understand after he was resurrected. Certain Jewish teachers even taught that no one would be made alive again after they died. This was why they talked about what Jesus said among themselves.

See: [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Disciple](#)

What did the scribes teach about Elijah?

[9:11]

The scribes taught that Elijah must return to the earth before the messiah came. He would tell Israel to repent and be ready for the messiah. It is not known whether they taught that Elijah would come back to the earth or that there would be a prophet who was like Elijah.

See: [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Prophet](#)

Who was Jesus talking about when he said that Elijah has come?

[9:13]

Jesus told them that the scribes were right about Elijah. A prophet like Elijah did help Israel to be ready for the messiah. Jesus spoke about John the Baptist when he spoke about Elijah.

See: Malachi 3:1; 4:5

See: [Sin](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#)

9:14-29

Why were the scribes arguing with the disciples?

[9:14]

The scribes were arguing with the disciples. However, Mark did not write what they were arguing about. Some scholars think the scribes were arguing with the disciples because the disciples could not make the demon leave the boy.

See: [Demon](#); [Disciple](#); [Demon](#)

Why were the disciples not able to make the demon leave the boy?

[9:18]

Scholars think the disciples were not able to make the demon leave the boy because they forgot to ask God for help. That is, they forgot to pray. They were not able to make the demon leave without God.

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that these demons could only come out through "prayer and fasting." However, scholars think Mark did not write "and fasting."

See: [Fasting](#); [Demon](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Fasting](#)

Why did Jesus rebuke the "unbelieving generation"?

[9:19]

Jesus rebuked the "unbelieving generation." That is, he said that the people of Israel were evil for not believing in him. He did not speak about everyone in Israel. Some people believed in him. Jesus spoke about the people of Israel in general. Perhaps Jesus said this because he wanted the disciples to know that they did the same things that people who did not believe in him did.

What did the spirit do when it saw Jesus?

[9:20]

The demon made the boy shake violently when it saw Jesus. Mark did not write why the demon did this.

See: [Demon](#)

Why did Jesus say, “all things are possible for the one who believes”?

[9:23]

Jesus said, “all things are possible for the one who believes.” He did not say that people who believe in him can do anything they wanted to do. Instead, he said that when someone obeys God, they can do things they did not think possible to do. God can make anything happen. He can use people to make anything happen that he wants to happen.

9:30-37

Where was Galilee?

[9:30]

See Map: Galilee

Why did Jesus not want people to know where they were?

[9:30]

Jesus did not want people to know where they were because he was teaching the disciples. He did not want people to interrupt them.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus teach the disciples about the Son of Man?

[9:31]

Jesus taught the disciples about what must happen to the Son of Man. The Son of Man must die and be resurrected. The disciples did not understand that Jesus is the Son of Man. They did not want other people to know they did not understand this, so they did not say anything.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Son of Man](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Where was Capernaum?

[9:33]

See Map: Capernaum

Why were the disciples silent when Jesus asked them a question?

[9:34]

The disciples were silent when Jesus asked them a question because they were ashamed of the things the spoke about to one another.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus teach his disciples?

[9:35, 9:36, 9:37]

Jesus said, “if anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and “servant of all.” He wanted to say that the person who was the greatest was the one who obeyed God. A person who obeyed God served other people in the same way Jesus served other people. This person also did not think he was greater than he was really. He knew God gave him everything that he had.

Jesus helped the disciples to understand what he said by talking about a child. At this time, people did not think they should spend their time teaching and helping children. He wanted the disciples to help people who wanted to believe in Jesus and follow Jesus, even if they did not think they were significant enough to teach. They served Jesus by serving these people. They also honored God, who sent Jesus to the Earth.

See: [Serve](#); [Serve](#)

9:38-50

Why did John call Jesus “teacher”?

[9:38]

In ancient Israel, people often followed someone who taught them. They called them “rabbi” or “teacher.” When he said this, it did not mean that John did not think Jesus was the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was someone driving out demons in Jesus name?

[9:38]

John said that someone was driving out demons in Jesus’ name. The disciples made this man stop because he was not one of Jesus’ followers. Some scholars think this man was not currently following Jesus, but they think he might have been one of the 70 people he sent out to preach the gospel (see: Luke:10:1). Jesus told the disciples that they did the wrong thing. This was because the man was honoring Jesus. Because Jesus knows everything, he also knew what the man was doing and gave him permission to do this. This man followed Jesus even though he was not with Jesus and the disciples.

See: Matthew 12:30

See: [Disciple](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Disciple](#)

Who will be rewarded?

[9:41]

Jesus said that anyone who does something to honor Jesus will be rewarded. However, anyone who does something that caused someone to sin will be punished. That is, if they cause someone to want to do something that dishonored God or stops them from doing something that honored God, then they will be punished. In ancient times, people were punished by having a very large stone tied around their necks. They were thrown into the water which caused them to drown. He wanted to say that it was better to be punished while on earth than to lose your reward in heaven or to go to hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Sin](#); [Heaven](#); [Hell](#)

Should people harm themselves?

[9:42, 9:43, 9:45]

Jesus said that it would be better for people to harm themselves than to go to hell. Jesus did not want people to harm themselves. However, he wanted them to know that it would be much better to suffer on the earth than to be punished forever in hell.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Fire](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Did Mark write the words in verse 44?

[9:44]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 44. However, more of the ancient Greek copies do not have the words from verse 44. Mark probably did not write the words that are in verse 44.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Did Mark write the words in verse 46?

[9:46]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 46. However, more of the ancient Greek copies do not have the words from verse 46. Mark probably did not write the words that are in verse 46.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How was someone salted with fire?

[9:49]

Scholars do not know why Jesus said that someone was “salted with fire.” Perhaps he wanted to say that some people will be punished by going to hell, being burned with fire forever. Other people would be made clean by fire. This is a metaphor. They will be made clean so they can be with God forever.

See: Leviticus 2:13

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Fire](#); [Metaphor](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus speak about salt?

[9:50]

Jesus spoke about salt as a metaphor. In the ancient world, salt was used to keep food from going bad. At this time, the salt could spoil or go bad. It was useless after this happened. Jesus wanted to say that the disciples needed to do things differently than other people. Then people would want to believe in Jesus and follow Jesus if they did this. However, if they do the same things that other people do, then people will not want to follow Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

Chapter 10

¹ Jesus left that place and went to the region of Judea and to the area beyond the Jordan River, and the crowds came to him again. He was teaching them again, as he was accustomed to do. ² Then Pharisees came to him to test him and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?"

³ He answered, "What did Moses command you?"

⁴ They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and then to send her away."

⁵ "It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law," Jesus said to them. ⁶ "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.'

⁷ 'For this reason
a man will leave his father and mother
and be united to his wife,

⁸ and the two will become one flesh.'

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no man tear apart."

¹⁰ When they were in the house, the disciples asked him again about this. ¹¹ He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹² If she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

¹³ Then they brought their little children to him so that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus noticed it, he was angry and said to them, "Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like them. ¹⁵ Truly I say to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will definitely not enter it." ¹⁶ Then he took the children into his arms and blessed them as he placed his hands on them.

¹⁷ When he began his journey, a man ran up to him and knelt before him and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁸ Jesus said, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not testify falsely, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

²⁰ The man said, "Teacher, all these things I have obeyed from the time I was a youth."

²¹ Jesus looked at him and loved him. He said to him, "One thing you lack. You must sell all that you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²² But because of this statement he looked very sad and he went away sorrowful, because he had many possessions.

²³ Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it is for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁴ The disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ They were greatly astonished and said to each other, "Then who can be saved?"

²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

²⁸ Peter began to speak to him, "Look, we have left everything and have followed you."

²⁹ Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the gospel ³⁰ who will not receive a hundred times as much now in this age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with

persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

³² They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going ahead of them. The disciples were amazed, and those who were following behind were afraid. Then Jesus took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what would soon happen to him. ³³ "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and give him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ They will mock him, spit on him, whip him, and put him to death. But after three days he will rise."

³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask you."

³⁶ He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?"

³⁷ They said, "Allow us to sit with you in your glory, one at your right hand and the other at your left."

³⁸ But Jesus replied to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I will drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I will be baptized?"

³⁹ They said to him, "We are able."

Jesus said to them, "The cup that I will drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you also will be baptized. ⁴⁰ But who is to sit at my right hand or at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." ⁴¹ When the other ten disciples heard about this, they began to be very angry with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them to himself and said, "You know those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it is not this way among you. Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be the slave of all. ⁴⁵ For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

⁴⁶ They came to Jericho. As he left Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, sat by the road. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to shout and to say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁸ Many rebuked the blind man, telling him to be quiet. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and commanded him to be called. They called the blind man, saying, "Be brave! Get up! He is calling for you." ⁵⁰ He threw aside his coat, sprang up, and came to Jesus.

⁵¹ Jesus answered him and said, "What do you want me to do for you?"

The blind man said, "Rabboni, I want to receive my sight."

⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Go. Your faith has healed you." Immediately he could see again, and he followed him on the road.

Mark 10

10:1-12

Where was the area beyond the Jordan River?

[10:1]

Jesus left Capernaum to go to Judea. This was a place past the Jordan River. Judea was on the west side of the Jordan River. This was an area where Jews lived. Mark wrote about the area east of the Jordan river when he wrote about beyond the Jordan River. This was a place where Gentiles lived.

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Capernaum; Jordan River; Judea

How did the Pharisees test Jesus?

[10:2]

Mark wrote that the Pharisees tested Jesus. That is, they wanted to get him to say something that made people angry. It would make certain people angry if he said people could not get divorced. It would make certain other people angry if he said that people could get divorced.

See: [Divorce](#); [Test](#); [Divorce](#)

What did Moses teach about divorce?

[10:3, 10:4]

Moses taught about divorce in the Law of Moses. The Pharisees thought that Moses said a man could divorce his wife. However, they did not think that a woman could divorce her husband. Some Pharisees taught that a man could only divorce his wife if she committed adultery or did evil things. Other Pharisees taught that any man could divorce his wife if he wanted to, even if she did not do anything wrong.

When a man wrote his wife a “certificate of divorce,” he divorced her and gave her something written that said she did not commit adultery. This would help her to marry another man.

See: Deuteronomy 24:1-4

See: [Adultery](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Adultery](#)

What did Jesus teach about divorce?

[10:5, 10:6, 10:7, 10:8, 10:9]

Jesus told the Pharisees what the Law of Moses actually said. Moses did not want people to get divorced because God did not want people to get divorced. Instead, Moses knew that some people had hard hearts. That is, they did not want to listen to God’s will about divorce. Moses allowed people to be divorced because of this. However, a certificate of divorce must be written.

Jesus told them about the marriage between Adam and Eve (see: Genesis 1:27; 2:24). A husband and wife became one flesh. That is, it was as if they shared one body. This could not be separated without hurting both the husband and the wife. Therefore, marriage was not simply a contract between two people. It was the joining together of two bodies.

Advice to translators: A contract is a written agreement between two people. They promised something to each other. If they did not do what they promised, they would promise to be punished in a certain way. When marriage is spoken about as a contract, it is written agreement they give to the government. They can easily end this agreement by giving the government another written agreement, that is, a divorce.

See: [Will of God](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#); [Will of God](#)

10:13-16

Why did people want their children to have Jesus touch them?

[10:13]

The people brought their children to have Jesus touch them. They thought that if they did this, Jesus would bless the children. He did this by putting his hands on them and saying a blessing.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why were the disciples angry with the people bringing their children to have Jesus touch them?

[10:13]

The disciples were angry with the people bringing their children to have Jesus touch them. Scholars think the disciples thought Jesus needed to be doing other things. Perhaps they thought that Jesus should be teaching adults instead.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus teach the disciples about the kingdom of God?

[10:14, 10:15]

Jesus told the disciples they were wrong for being angry with these people. Jesus wanted to have the little children come to him. This was because many adults rejected Jesus. They thought they knew more about the messiah than they did. However, the children were willing to learn and did not reject Jesus.

After this, Jesus taught the disciples about the kingdom of God. If people wanted to have the kingdom of God, they needed to believe in Jesus the same way children believed in Jesus. That was because children often trusted someone completely, but adults often only trusted someone who has earned it.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

10:17-31

What was inheriting eternal life?

[10:17]

This man spoke about having peace with God and living with him forever when he spoke about inheriting eternal life.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How was someone good?

[10:17, 10:18]

Jesus spoke about someone who always did the right thing when he talked about someone who was "good." Some scholars think because only God is good, that Jesus said that he is God also. The man did not understand what it meant to be "good" and to obey God perfectly.

What were these commandments?

[10:20]

Jesus talked about some of the 10 commandments in the Law of Moses.

See: Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus want this man to sell everything he had?

[10:21]

The man called Jesus teacher. He thought that Jesus was just a teacher. He did not believe that Jesus was the messiah or that he was God. Jesus knew that the man wanted money more than anything else. He did not trust in God. He trusted in the things he had. Because of this, he rejected Jesus.

All people do not need to sell everything they have to be Christians. This was not a command for all people to follow. Jesus knew the man's money kept him from believing in Jesus.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was treasure in heaven?

[10:21]

Jeus spoke about some rewards people will get after they die when he spoke about treasure in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Can the rich enter the kingdom of God?

[10:23]

In ancient Israel, people thought that God blessed people who obeyed him. Therefore, God also blessed rich people. This was not what Jesus said. When people put their trust in themselves and their money they will not be able to enter into God's kingdom. Jesus used the metaphor of a camel. A camel would never fit through the eye of a needle, which is less than one millimeter. This made other people know how difficult it was for people to trust in Jesus when they had great riches and trusted in those riches instead of God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#)

Advice to translators: Someone who has a lot of money is rich. They have riches.

What did Jesus want to teach the disciples?

[10:23, 10:24, 10:25, 10:27]

Here, Jesus wanted to teach his disciples that there was only one way to have peace with God and to enter into his kingdom. That was to trust in Jesus. People should not trust in anything or anyone else.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

How will people be given “a hundred times” as much as they left behind?

[10:30]

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the many homes that would be opened for the servants of God. The brothers and sisters were those who believed in Jesus and became brothers and sisters in Christ. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about spiritual blessings that replaced the homes and families that were left behind. The blessings might be considered “a hundred times” better than what they left behind.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Children of God](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

10:32-45

Why were the disciples amazed and the people afraid?

[10:32]

Jesus went to Jerusalem knowing that he would die in Jerusalem. He taught this to people. The people were afraid that what he said was true and that he would be killed in Jerusalem. So they were amazed that he still wanted to go to Jerusalem if he was going to die.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

What did Jesus tell the disciples would soon happen?

[10:33]

Jesus told the disciples that he was going to die and would be made alive again. That is, he will be resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Who is the Son of Man?

[10:33]

See: [Son of Man](#)

Why will the chief priests and scribes give Jesus over to the Gentiles?

[10:33]

At this time, the Jews were not able to kill a criminal. Only their Roman leaders could do this. They were Gentiles. Jesus wanted to say that the Jewish leaders would get the Gentile leaders to kill Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Scribe](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did James and John want to sit at Jesus' right and left hand?

[10:37]

James and John wanted to sit at Jesus' right and left hand. That is, they wanted to sit next to him in heaven. To be seated at the right and left hand of the throne were places of honor. They wanted to be honored.

See: [Throne](#); [Throne](#)

What will happen to Jesus?

[10:38]

Jesus spoke about drinking the cup he was about to drink and enduring the baptism he was about to endure. These were metaphors. He was asking them if they would suffer and die to obey him. If they did this, it would be a type of offering to God. Eventually, James would be killed for believing in Jesus (see: Acts 12:2).

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

Who will sit at Jesus' right and left side in heaven?

[10:40]

Jesus will sit at God the Father's right hand in heaven. Therefore, God is at Jesus' left hand side in heaven. However, God the Father is the one who decides who will sit at the right hand of Jesus (see: Matthew 20:23).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why were the disciples angry with James and John?

[10:41]

Some scholars think the other disciples were angry with James and John because they asked Jesus to honor them in a special way. Other scholars think the other disciples were jealous or afraid James and John might be honored over them.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who will be honored in heaven?

[10:43]

Jesus taught the disciples that certain people will be honored in heaven. Just as Jesus came to serve, so Christians who serve other people will be honored in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How did Jesus give his life as a ransom for many?

[10:45]

Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many. That is, he died so that people would be at peace with God. Mark spoke about Jesus dying as a price to be paid for their sin. By dying, Jesus set them free from being slaves to their own sinful desires.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

10:46-52

Where is Jericho?

[10:46]

See Map: Jericho

Who was Jesus the Nazarene?

[10:47]

Jesus was Jesus the Nazarene. He was Jesus from Nazareth.

See Map: Nazareth

How was Jesus the Son of David?

[10:47]

The blind man called Jesus the “Son of David.” David was one of Jesus’ ancestors. He called him this because the messiah was to be one of David’s descendants. He was to fulfill the covenant God made with David.

See: [Covenant with David](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Covenant with David](#)

Why did the people rebuke the blind man?

[10:48]

People told the blind man that he was wrong. Some scholars think the people wanted to get to Jerusalem quickly, so they did not want Jesus to stop when the blind man cried out. Other scholars think the people were not ready to hear that Jesus is the Son of David, that is, the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did the man call Jesus rabbi?

[10:51]

In ancient Israel, people called certain teachers “rabbi.” People followed the teacher, obeyed the things he taught, and called him rabbi. The Greek word can also be used to call someone “master.”

Why was this man healed?

[10:52]

Jesus healed this man because he believed in Jesus.

Chapter 11

¹ Now as they came to Jerusalem, they were close to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, and Jesus sent out two of his disciples ² and said to them, "Go into the village opposite us. As soon as you enter it, you will find a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. ³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' you should say, 'The Lord has need of it and will immediately send it back here.'"

⁴ They went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. ⁵ Some people were standing there and said to them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶ They spoke to them as Jesus told them, and the people let them go their way. ⁷ They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their garments on the road, and others spread branches they had cut from the fields. ⁹ Those who went before him and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna! Blessed is the one
who comes in the name of the Lord.

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!
Hosanna in the highest!"

¹¹ Then Jesus entered into Jerusalem and went into the temple and looked around at everything. Now the time being late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. ¹² The next day while they were going out from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ Seeing from far away a fig tree that had leaves, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it, and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He spoke to it, "No one will ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

¹⁵ They came to Jerusalem, and he entered the temple and began to cast out the sellers and the buyers in the temple. He turned over the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. ¹⁶ He did not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple that could be sold. ¹⁷ He taught them and said, "Is it not written,

'My house will be called
a house of prayer for all the nations'?

But you have made it a den of robbers."

¹⁸ The chief priests and the scribes heard what he had said, and they looked for a way to destroy him. For they feared him because the entire crowd was amazed at his teaching. ¹⁹ When evening came, they left the city.

²⁰ As they walked by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered away."

²² Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. ²³ Truly I say to you that if anyone says to this mountain, 'Get up and cast yourself into the sea,' and if he does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he said will happen, that is what God will do. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you: Everything you pray and ask for, believe that you received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ When you stand and pray, you must forgive whatever you have against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your trespasses." ²⁶^[1]

²⁷ They came to Jerusalem again. As Jesus was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him. ²⁸ They said to him, "By what authority do you do these things, and who gave you the authority to do them?"

²⁹ Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question. Tell me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰ The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me." ³¹ They discussed between themselves and argued and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ³² But if we say, 'From men,'" They were afraid of the people, for everyone was convinced that John was a prophet. ³³ Then they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."

Then Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Footnotes

11:26 ^[1]The best ancient copies of Mark do not have this sentence:

Mark 11

11:1-10

Where were Bethany, Bethpage, and the Mount of Olives?

[11:1]

See Map: Bethany; Bethpage; Mount of Olives

How did Jesus enter into Jerusalem?

[11:2]

Jesus entered Jerusalem in the same way a king returned home after a great victory in a war. Often, they rode on horses or in a chariot. Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt because he told people that he was the messiah and the king of the Jews (see: Zechariah 9:9). He also had a great victory. He lived the perfect life and was about to die so that people could have peace with God.

See: Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

See: [Chariot](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Chariot](#)

What was a colt?

[11:2]

A colt was a young donkey. This colt was with its mother, a donkey (see: Matthew 21:2). No one had ever ridden this colt. In the Old Testament, an animal that had never been used had special value for religious purposes (see: Numbers 19:2; Deuteronomy 21:3; 1 Samuel 6:7).

Why did Jesus say, “the Lord has need of it”?

[11:3]

Some scholars think that Jesus said, “the Lord has need of it” to say that God needed it for God’s purpose. Other scholars think Jesus said this because he was calling himself Lord. That is, he was calling himself God. Still other scholars think the owner of the colt was traveling with Jesus, and Jesus said the owner had need of the colt.

See: [Jesus is God](#)

Why did the disciples put their cloaks on the colt?

[11:7]

The disciples put their cloaks on the colt to make it easier for Jesus to ride on it. A cloak was a coat. It was a piece of clothing used to make someone warm. It was put on over other clothes. This coat covered the whole body with a single piece of thick cloth.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did the people put things on the road?

[11:8]

The road on which Jesus rode the colt was dirty. The people honored Jesus by putting things on the road so that he would not get dirty. In ancient times, people did this to welcome a new king (see: 2 Kings 9:13).

Why did the people shout “hosanna”?

[11:9]

The people shouted “Hosanna” because they wanted God to save them. They said that Jesus came “in the name of the Lord.” That is, God gave Jesus power and permission to serve him. They believed Jesus was the messiah who came to begin the kingdom promised to David.

See: [Covenant with David](#); [Heaven](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Covenant with David](#)

11:11-26

Why did Jesus look around the temple?

[11:11]

Jesus went to Jerusalem. He walked around the temple. Scholars think Jesus looked at the things happening in the temple. Many forbidden things were happening. They think Jesus planned what he would do the next day.

See: [Temple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

Why did Jesus curse the fig tree?

[11:13, 11:14]

Jesus saw a fig tree. It did not have fruit. He cursed it. He did not do this because he was hungry or angry. It was a metaphor. In the same way a fig tree produced figs, so God wanted Israel to produce fruit. That is, he wanted Israel to serve and obey him. However, they did not do this. Therefore, they made themselves useless to God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus make people leave the temple?

[11:15]

Jesus made certain people leave the temple. He made people who sold things in the temple leave. He made people who bought things in the temple leave. He did not want people there to make money. He only wanted people to go to the temple to worship God. People from every nation were to go to the temple to pray (see: Isaiah 56:7). However, the Jews did not want other people to go to the temple to worship God. Instead, they used the area God made for the Gentiles worship God as a market to make money.

Jesus said the temple was made into a “den of robbers.” That is, a place where people who robbed other people lived (see: Jeremiah 7:11). Some scholars think Jesus quoted Jeremiah so everyone would know that the people did not honor the temple.

Before, Jesus also made people leave the temple earlier (see: John 2:13-22).

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did the chief priests and scribes want to kill Jesus?

[11:18]

The chief priests and scribes wanted to kill Jesus because of what he did. Some scholars think the chief priests and the scribes made money from the things sold in the temple. Jesus stopped them from making money in the temple. Other scholars think Jesus made others know that he was greater than the high priest and he ruled the temple by doing the things he did there.

See: [Scribe](#); [High Priest](#); [Chief Priest](#); [Scribe](#)

Why did Peter call Jesus “rabbi”?

[11:21]

See: Mark 9:5

Why did Jesus speak about a mountain?

[11:23]

Jesus spoke about a mountain to teach his disciples. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say they could do great things if they trusted in God. They were not actually going to move a mountain. This was hyperbole. However, God did many miracles through these disciples after Jesus was made alive again. God would do things that no person could ever do if they asked God for something in prayer that God wanted to happen. Jesus wanted them to trust in God when they prayed.

Jesus also wanted the disciples to forgive other people. God forgave their sins. So they should forgive other people. Some scholars think Jesus told the disciples to forgive others because God heard their prayers. They think there is a kind of separation between God and the person praying when they do not forgive other people.

See: Disciple; [Sin](#); [Miracle](#); [Hyperbole](#); [Will of God](#); [Sin](#)

Did Mark write the words in 11:26?

[11:26]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words in 11:26. Fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in 11:26. Some English Bibles were translated from a copy of the Greek New Testament that had 11:26. However, scholars think Mark did not write these words.

11:27-33

Who were the elders?

[11:27]

The elders were the Jewish leaders who were older men. Why did the leaders want to know who gave Jesus permission to do the things he did?

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did. They did not think God gave him permission to do the things he did. They thought Satan gave him permission to do these things. Some scholars think the leaders really wanted to have Jesus say that God sent him. They thought that the Law of Moses said they could kill him if he did this. However, God sent Jesus.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus ask the leaders about the baptism of John?

[11:29, 11:30]

Jesus asked the leaders about who gave John the Baptist permission to do the things he did. The people in Israel loved John the Baptist. They thought God sent him. John the Baptist said that Jesus was the messiah. The leaders were afraid of saying that God sent John because they would also have to say that God sent Jesus. However, the people would be angry with these leaders and reject them if they said that God did not send John.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 12

¹ Then Jesus began to teach them in parables. He said, "A man planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, and dug a pit for a winepress. He built a watchtower and then leased the vineyard to vine growers. Then he went away on a journey. ² At the right time, he sent a servant to the vine growers to receive from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. ³ But they took him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Again he sent to them another servant, and they wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵ He sent yet another, and this one they killed. They treated many others in the same way, beating some and killing others. ⁶ He had still one more person to send, a beloved son. He was the last one he sent to them. He said, 'They will respect my son.'

⁷ "But the vine growers said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' ⁸ They seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁹ Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine growers and will give the vineyard to others.

¹⁰ Have you not read this scripture?

'The stone which the builders rejected
has been made the cornerstone.

¹¹ This was from the Lord,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.'"

¹² After this the Jewish leaders sought a way to arrest Jesus because they understood that he spoke the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him and went away.

¹³ Then they sent some of the Pharisees and the Herodians to him to trap him with words. ¹⁴ When they came, they said to him, "Teacher, what people think is not a concern to you because you do not show partiality to anyone. You truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or not?"

¹⁵ But Jesus knew their hypocrisy and said to them, "Why do you test me? Bring me a denarius so I can look at it." ¹⁶ They brought one to Jesus. He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"

They said, "Caesar's."

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." They marveled at him.

¹⁸ Then Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him. They asked him, saying, ¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us, 'If a man's brother dies and leaves a wife behind him, but had no child, the man should take the brother's wife, and raise up children for his brother.' ²⁰ There were seven brothers; the first took a wife and then died, having no children. ²¹ Then the second took her and died, leaving no child, and the third in the same way. ²² The seven left no children. Last of all, the woman also died. ²³ In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For all seven brothers had her as their wife."

²⁴ Jesus said, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, because you do not know the scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵ For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like angels in heaven. ²⁶ But concerning the dead that are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account about the bush, how God spoke to him and said, 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite mistaken."

²⁸ One of the scribes came and heard their discussion; he saw that Jesus answered them well. He asked him, "What commandment is the most important of all?"

²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second commandment is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other greater commandment than these."

³² The scribe said, "Good, Teacher! You have truly said that God is one, and that there is no other besides him. ³³ To love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself is even more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had given a wise answer, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

³⁵ While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he said, "How is it that the scribes say the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself, in the Holy Spirit, said,

'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand
until I put your enemies under your feet.'"

³⁷ David himself calls him 'Lord,' so how can the Christ be David's son?" The large crowd gladly listened to him.

³⁸ In his teaching Jesus said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk in long robes and be greeted in the marketplaces, ³⁹ and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts.

⁴⁰ They also devour widows' houses, and they pray long prayers for people to see. These men will receive greater condemnation."

⁴¹ Then Jesus sat down across from an offering box in the temple area; he was watching people as they dropped their money into the box. Many rich people put in large amounts of money. ⁴² Then a poor widow came and put in two mites, worth about a penny. ⁴³ He called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them who contributed to the offering box. ⁴⁴ For all of them gave out of their abundance. But this widow, out of her poverty, put in all of the money which she had to live on."

Mark 12

12:1-6

What was a parable?

[12:1]

Jesus used a parable about a vineyard. He did this to talk about Israel. In the same way a farmer makes and protects a vineyard, so God made and protects the nation of Israel. God gave certain leaders permission to care for Israel. He sent prophets to Israel to help the Israelites obey God. However, they did not do what these prophets said to do. Finally, God sent Jesus. That is, he sent his son. Then the Jewish leaders had him killed.

See: [Son of God](#); [Prophet](#); [Son of God](#)

What was a vineyard?

[12:1]

A vineyard was a place where people grew grapes. The man put up plants around the field to protect it from animals. He also built a watchtower. This is a tall tower where people could see far away.

At this time, scholars think the vineyard was owned by a Gentile who did not live in this area. Instead, he had made people pay him money to use his land.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See: Isaiah 5:1-2

Why did the owner of the vineyard send servants?

[12:2]

The owner of the vineyard sent his servants to get what they promised to the owner for using his land. They promised him a certain part of what they grew.

Why did the men beat the servants?

[12:3]

These men did not want to give the servant what they promised to give to the owner of the land. Therefore, they beat the servants. They wanted the owner to know they were not going to give him anything and that he should not send any more servants.

12:7-12

What was an inheritance?

[12:7]

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What scripture said these words?

[12:10]

See: Psalm 118:22-23

Why did the Jewish leaders want to arrest Jesus?

[12:12]

The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus after they heard what he said. That is, they wanted to catch him so they could kill him. This is because they knew he was speaking about them. Jesus knew the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him.

Why were the Jewish leaders afraid of the crowd?

[12:12]

Mark wrote that the Jewish leaders did not try to arrest Jesus. They feared all the people there. Many people thought Jesus was a great man. However, Mark wanted people to know that the Jewish leaders feared the people more than they feared God. They thought they were obeying God by killing Jesus. However, they were not obeying God.

12:13-17

What was a pharisee?

[12:13]

See: [Pharisees](#)

What was a Herodian?

[12:13]

A Herodian was someone who served King Herod. He was the leader of the Jews and served the Romans.

How did the Jewish leaders try to trap Jesus?

[12:13]

The Jewish leaders tried to trap Jesus. That is, they tried to get Jesus to say something that would cause someone to be angry with him. They wanted Jesus to speak against the leader of the Roman Empire. Or they wanted Jesus to say something that made the Jew.

The Jewish leaders said several things to Jesus.

1. The Jewish leaders did not believe the things Jesus said. However, they said he spoke truth when they really thought he lied.
2. The Jewish leaders said Jesus did not care what anyone thinks. That is, Jesus will say true things. He will not stop saying these things because someone does not want him to say these things. He did not say things so that people would like him.
3. Jesus does not show partiality. That is, Jesus did not favor one person over another.
4. Jesus taught the way of God. That is, he taught them about the way God wanted them to live. The Jewish leaders did not believe this. They would have obeyed Jesus if they had believed this.

Because of this, Jesus said the Jewish leaders were hypocrites. That is, they said one thing, but they did not believe it. Or they said something and did not do it.

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus about paying taxes. The Romans made the Jews pay taxes to them every year. The Jews had to pay the Romans to rule them. The Jews did not like having to pay this tax. The Jews would have been angry if Jesus said that the Jews should pay this tax to the Romans. The Romans would be angry if Jesus said that the Jews should not pay this tax to the Romans.

What did Jesus say to the Jewish leaders?

[12:15]

Jesus told the Jewish leaders to give him a Roman coin. This coin had the face of the Roman emperor on it. This man was called Caesar. The coin also had certain words on it. These words said that Caesar was God.

Jesus said that the Jews needed to obey Caesar, but they also needed to obey God more. Jesus wanted people to know that Caesar was not God and that God gave permission to Caesar to rule. He also wanted people to know that he did not think that Caesar was God.

See: Romans 13:1-7

What was a denarius?

[12:15]

See: [Denarius](#)

12:18-27

What did the Sadducees think happened when people died?

[12:18]

The Sadducees did not think that people would be resurrected. That is, they did not think people would go to heaven or hell when they died. They did not believe in many things taught in the Bible.

See: [Hell](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Heaven](#); [Hell](#)

Why did the Sadducees ask Jesus this question?

[12:19, 12:20, 12:21, 12:22, 12:23]

The Law of Moses taught the people of Israel how to care for a woman whose husband died. In ancient Israel, a woman became very poor when her husband died and she had no children. Therefore, the Law of Moses said that the husband's brother would marry her. He would care for her. They had children who would inherit the dead husband's land.

The Sadducees tried to trap Jesus by asking this question. They wanted Jesus to say something that would make people angry. They thought their question proved that no one would be resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did Jesus answer the Sadducees?

[12:24, 12:25]

Jesus told the Sadducees that they thought the wrong things. They did not know the Scriptures because they only believed God gave Israel the first five books of the Old Testament. They did not understand many things about God. Jesus told them that people were married on the earth. God wanted them to do this. They had children and helped each other. However, in heaven, people will worship God. They do not need to be married. Therefore, people will be like the angels who do not get married.

See: [Angel](#); [Heaven](#); [Worship](#); [Angel](#)

Why did Jesus speak about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

[12:26]

The Sadducees believed that God only gave Israel the first five books of the Old Testament. Here, Jesus said the same thing God said to Moses. When God said these words, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead. However, God spoke about them in the same way he would speak about someone who is alive. The Sadducees did not understand the parts of the Bible in which they believed.

See: Exodus 3:6

12:28-34

Why did the scribe ask Jesus about the greatest commandment?

[12:28]

The scribe heard what Jesus said to the Sadducees. Therefore, he wanted to know how Jesus would answer his question. At this time, scholars asked each other about which of the commandments was the greatest. However, they did not agree which was the greatest.

See: [Sadducees](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [Sadducees](#)

Why did Jesus say that these two commandments were the greatest?

[12:29, 12:30]

Jesus told the scribes that the two greatest commandments were to love God and to love other people. A person will be doing all of the other things God commands people to do if they do these two things.

See: [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#)

Why did the Scribes call Jesus teacher?

[12:32]

In ancient Israel, many people called Jesus "teacher." They believed that he was a teacher. However, they would know that Jesus was much more than a teacher if they believed in him.

How is God one?

[12:32]

God is one because there is only one God. There is nothing or no one else like him.

See: [Trinity](#)

What were burnt offerings and sacrifices?

[12:33]

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did Jesus say that the Scribe was “not far from the kingdom of God”?

[12:34]

Jesus said this man “was not far from the kingdom of God.” That is, he was close to believing in Jesus and becoming part of God’s kingdom.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did people stop asking Jesus questions?

[12:34]

Mark wrote that people stopped asking Jesus questions. People tried to trap Jesus by asking him questions. They wanted Jesus to say something that made people angry. However, they knew they could not trap Jesus by asking him questions because of the way Jesus answered them.

12:35-44

What was a temple court?

[12:35]

See: [Temple Courts](#)

Why did Jesus ask this question?

[12:35]

Jesus asked people about something the scribes said while he was in the temple. The messiah was the “son of David.” That is, he would be a descendant of King David (see: 2 Samuel 7). However, David said that the messiah was his master (see: Psalm 110). He knew people would not know how this would happen.

See: [Covenant with David](#); [Scribe](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Covenant with David](#)

What did David say?

[12:36]

David said, “the Lord said to my lord.” That is, God said to the one who ruled David. He will sit at God’s right hand. That is, God will honor him. God will also make the messiah’s enemies his footstool. That is, one day God will defeat all of the messiah’s enemies.

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus warn people about the Scribes?

[12:38]

Jesus warned people about the scribes. They only did things so that people honored them. However, they did not honor God. God gave them permission to care for the Jewish people. However, they did not do this. Therefore, God will punish them more severely than those people who are not leaders.

See: [Scribe](#)

What was an offering box?

[12:41]

An offering box was a place in the temple where people put money. The people serving in the temple used this money. People worshipped God by giving money in this way.

See: [Worship](#); [Temple](#); [Worship](#)

Why was the woman's offering better than the offering of rich people?

[12:43, 12:44]

Giving money to the temple was an offering to God. Jesus told them that God did not care who gave the most money. The woman gave more to God because she gave everything she had to God. The rich people only gave a part of what they had to God. They kept most of what they had for themselves. However, the woman gave all she had for her to live.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

Chapter 13

¹ As Jesus was walking away from the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look at the wonderful stones and wonderful buildings!"

² Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down."

³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign when all these things are about to happen?"

⁵ Jesus began to say to them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he,' and they will lead many astray. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; these things must happen, but the end is not yet. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in many places, and famines. These are the beginnings of birth pains.

⁹ "Be on your guard. They will give you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues. You will stand before both governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them. ¹⁰ But the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations. ¹¹ When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry about what you should say. For in that hour, what you should say will be given to you; it will not be you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. ¹² Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. ¹³ You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But whoever endures to the end, that person will be saved.

¹⁴ "When you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be standing," (let the reader understand) "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, ¹⁵ let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house or take anything out of it, ¹⁶ and let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak. ¹⁷ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it might not occur in the winter. ¹⁹ For those will be days of great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of creation, which God created, until now, no, nor ever will be again. ²⁰ Unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those whom he chose, he cut short the days. ²¹ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. ²² For false Christs and false prophets will appear and will give signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²³ Be on guard! I have told you all these things ahead of time.

²⁴ "But after the tribulation of those days,

'the sun will be darkened,
the moon will not give its light,

²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky,
and the powers that are in the heavens
will be shaken.'

²⁶ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send his angels and he will gather together his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the sky.

²⁸ Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as the branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things happening, recognize that he is near, close to the gates. ³⁰ Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all of these things occur.

³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. ³² But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.

³³ "Be alert! Watch, because you do not know what time it is. ³⁴ It is like a man who goes on a journey—he leaves his house and puts his servants in charge of the house, each one with his work, and he commands the doorkeeper to stay alert. ³⁵ Therefore stay alert because you do not know when the master of the house will come home; it could be in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or in the

morning. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you I say to everyone: Watch!"

Footnotes

13:33 ^[1]Some ancient copies of the Greek text read:

Mark 13

13:1-13

Why did the disciples talk about the buildings with Jesus?

[13:1]

The disciples were amazed by the buildings that made the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus saw that the people used the temple to make money. He also saw that the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus. Therefore, he prophesied about the temple being destroyed. The destruction of the temple happened about 40 years after Jesus returned to heaven. However, it was not completely destroyed. There is one wall that still remains from the temple in Jerusalem.

See: [Heaven](#); [Temple](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Heaven](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Mount of Olives

What was a sign?

[13:4]

See: [Sign](#)

What did Jesus teach about his return to earth?

[13:5, 13:6, 13:7, 13:8]

Jesus told his disciples about things that would happen when he returned to the earth. However, the disciples did not know that he would die. They did not know it would be a long period of time before these things happened. Therefore, Jesus warned them. Many people will say that they are Jesus. Many people will believe these people who say that they are Jesus. However, Jesus talked about certain things that must happen before he returns to the earth.

1. There will be wars and rumors of wars. That is, people will worry about wars and there will be many wars.
2. There will be many earthquakes and famines. Jesus said these are "birth pains." This was a metaphor to say that difficult things will happen before he returns to earth. People and the whole world will be judged and punished before the earth is made new again.
3. People who worship Jesus will be persecuted.
4. The gospel will be told to all nations. Some scholars think this means that every person will hear the gospel. Other scholars think this means that someone from every nation will hear the gospel.
5. People will have their children, brothers, sisters, and parents killed because their family are Christians.

See: [Gospel](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What will happen when Christians are persecuted?

[13:9]

Jesus warned the disciples that Christians will be persecuted before he returns to the earth. The Holy Spirit will help Christians when they are persecuted. He will tell them what to say to leaders and those who persecute them.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How will the person who is persecuted be saved?

[13:13]

Jesus said that the person who endures to the end when persecuted will be saved. Scholars think Jesus was talking about different things when he said these words.

Some Christians reject Jesus when they are persecuted. Some scholars think when they do this, they are no longer at peace with God and will not live with him forever. Some Christians reject Jesus when they are persecuted. Other scholars think when they do this, God will save them. That is, God will rescue them from persecution and they will go to be with God. Some people say they are Christians, but they reject Jesus when persecuted. Other scholars think when they do this, they prove they were never truly Christians.

See: [Heaven](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Heaven](#)

13:14-23

What is the abomination of desolation?

[13:14]

Jesus talked about an "abomination of desolation." This was when someone who rejected God did something that greatly dishonored God. Daniel also wrote about this (see: Daniel 7:27; 11:31; 12:11). Some scholars think Daniel wrote about a Gentile leader who sacrificed an unclean animal on the altar in the temple. Some scholars think Jesus talked about a time when the antichrist would sacrifice something in the temple or claim to be God in the temple. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a time when people would no longer go to the temple. Other scholars think it is some type of idolatry.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about a time 40 years after he returned to heaven. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a time near to his return to the earth (see: Revelation 4-19).

See: [Heaven](#); Sacrifice; [Clean and Unclean](#); [Altar](#); [Temple](#); [Antichrist](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Heaven](#)

What did Jesus want people to do when they saw the abomination of desolation?

[13:14, 13:15, 13:16]

Jesus wanted people to flee and go away from Jerusalem when people saw the abomination of desolation. Jesus warned them. He wanted them to know that he will judge people at this time. He warned people by telling them that they will not want to be alive when these things happen.

See: [Tribulation](#); [Tribulation](#)

Who will Jesus save?

[13:20]

Jesus warned people about a time of great tribulation. That is a time when there will be great trouble because God will judge people. At this time, if God did not stop punishing people, no one would be saved. That is, everyone would die. When he said this, he was not talking about being separated from God forever. He was talking about someone dying on the earth, both Christians and non-Christians.

See: [Tribulation](#); [Tribulation](#)

Why should people not believe that Jesus returned?

[13:21]

Jesus warned about a time when many people would say they are the messiah or that they are Jesus who returned to earth. However, everyone will know that Jesus has returned to earth when he returns (see:

Matthew 24:23-27). Therefore, people should not believe other people who say this even if they do miracles and signs. However, many Christians will believe these false messiahs and false prophets.

See: [Miracle](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Prophet](#); [Sign](#); [Miracle](#)

13:24-37

When are the days of tribulation?

[13:24]

Jesus spoke about certain days of tribulation or trouble. Some scholars think he spoke about the difficult times that happened soon after he returned to earth. Other scholars think he spoke about the time near his return to the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Jesus talk about things that happen in the sky?

[13:24, 13:25]

Jesus spoke about certain things people could see in the sky. Some scholars think these things will actually happen just before Jesus returns to the earth. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. Just as the stars will fall from the sky, so the rulers of the world will be destroyed. Jesus said these things to warn people.

See: Joel 2:10; 3:15; Ezekiel 32:7-8)

See: [Metaphor](#)

What will people see?

[13:26]

The people will see the Son of Man coming to the earth with glory. Jesus would return to the earth and everyone would know that he is God.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What will Jesus do when he returns to the earth?

[13:27]

When Jesus returns to the earth, he will bring angels who serve him. He will gather all Christians from all over the world and bring them to himself.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why did Jesus talk about a fig tree?

[13:28]

Jesus talked about a fig tree to help people understand the things he said. This was a metaphor. When a fig tree does certain things, people know that the seasons are changing. He wanted people to know that he was going to return to the earth soon when the things he spoke about happened.

See: [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#); [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#)

When did these things happen?

[13:30]

Jesus prophesied that these things happened before the people listening to him died. Some scholars think that these things happened 40 years after he said these things. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about

people in the future who lived when they saw the things he spoke about in this passage. Once these things happened, Jesus would return to the earth in a few years.

Jesus said that heaven and earth will end, but his words will not change. The apostle spoke about heaven and earth ending (see: Revelation 21). However, these things must happen.

Jesus said that he did not know when these things would happen. Only God the Father knew these things will happen.

See: [Apostle](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Apostle](#)

What did Jesus tell people to do?

[13:33]

In some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament, Jesus told people to “watch.” In fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament, Jesus told people to “watch and pray.”

Why did Jesus talk about a man going on a journey?

[13:34]

Jesus spoke about a man going on a journey. This was a metaphor. He wanted people to be ready for him to return to the earth. When he returns, Jesus’ followers will need to tell Jesus about the things they did while they were waiting for him to return. Jesus wanted Christians to serve him. He wanted them to tell other people about Jesus and the gospel. He wanted Christians to do things that honor God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#)

Chapter 14

¹ It was now two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking ways to stealthily arrest Jesus and then kill him. ² For they were saying, "Not during the festival, so that a riot does not arise among the people."

³ While Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the table, a woman came to him having an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which was pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the nard on his head. ⁴ But there were some who were angry. They spoke among themselves and said, "What is the reason for the waste of this perfume? ⁵ This perfume could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and given to the poor." Then they scolded her.

⁶ But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why are you troubling her? She has done a beautiful thing for me. ⁷ You always have the poor with you, and whenever you desire you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has anointed my body for burial. ⁹ Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be spoken of, in memory of her."

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went away to the chief priests so that he might give him over to them. ¹¹ When the chief priests heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. He began looking for an opportunity to give him over to them.

¹² On the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go to prepare, so you may eat the Passover meal?"

¹³ He sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴ Where he enters a house, follow him in and say to the owner of that house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room where I will eat the Passover with my disciples?"'" ¹⁵ He will show you a large furnished upper room that is ready. Make the preparations for us there." ¹⁶ The disciples left and went to the city. They found everything as he had said to them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁷ When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ As they were lying down at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, one of you eating with me will betray me."

¹⁹ They were all very sorrowful, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?"

²⁰ Jesus answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, the one now dipping bread with me in the bowl. ²¹ For the Son of Man will go as it is written about him. But woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for him if he had not been born."

²² As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke it. He gave it to them and said, "Take this. This is my body." ²³ He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, the blood that is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I say to you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ Jesus said to them, "All of you will fall away, for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd
and the sheep will be scattered.'

²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

²⁹ Peter said to him, "Even if all fall away, I will not."

³⁰ Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today—yes, this very night—before the rooster crows twice you will deny me three times."

31 But Peter said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." They all made the same promise.

32 They came to the place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." **33** He took Peter, James, and John with him and began to be distressed and deeply troubled. **34** He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and watch." **35** Going a little farther, Jesus fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him. **36** He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible with you. Remove this cup from me. But not my will, but yours." **37** He came back and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch for one hour? **38** Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." **39** Again he went away and prayed, and he used the same words. **40** When he came back again, he found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. **41** He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come. Look! The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. **42** Get up; let us go. Look, the one who is betraying me is near."

43 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and a large crowd was with him with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. **44** Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." **45** When Judas arrived, immediately he came up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi," and he kissed him. **46** Then they laid hands on him and seized him. **47** But one of them who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.

48 Jesus said to them, "Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to arrest me? **49** When I was daily with you and I was teaching in the temple, you did not arrest me. But this was done that the scriptures might be fulfilled." **50** All those with Jesus left him and ran away.

51 A young man, wearing only a linen garment that was wrapped around him, was following Jesus. When the men seized him, **52** he left the linen garment and ran away naked.

53 They led Jesus to the high priest. There were gathered with him all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. **54** Now Peter followed him from a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest. He sat among the officers, warming himself near the fire. **55** Now the chief priests and the entire Jewish council were seeking testimony against Jesus so they might put him to death. But they did not find any. **56** For many brought false testimony against him, but even their testimony did not agree. **57** Some stood up and brought false testimony against him; they said, **58** "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" **59** Yet even their testimony did not agree.

60 The high priest stood up among them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it these men testify against you?" **61** But he was silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest questioned him and said, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

62 Jesus said, "I am;

and you will see the Son of Man
when he sits at the right hand of power
and comes with the clouds of heaven."

63 The high priest tore his garments and said, "Do we still need witnesses? **64** You have heard the blasphemy. What is your decision?" They all condemned him as one who deserved death.

65 Some began to spit on him and to cover his face and strike him with their fists and say to him, "Prophecy!" The officers took him and beat him.

66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came to him. **67** She saw Peter warming himself, and she looked closely at him and said, "You were also with the Nazarene, Jesus."

68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." Then he went out into the gateway. And the rooster crowed. ^[1]

69 But the servant girl saw him and began to say again to those who stood there, "This man is one of them!"

70 But he denied it again. After a little while those who stood there were saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you also are a Galilean."

71 But he began to put himself under curses and to swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about."

72 The rooster immediately crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said to him: "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times," and he broke down and wept.

Footnotes

14:68 ^[1]Some ancient copies do not have,

Mark 14

14:1-11

What was Passover?

[14:1]

See: [Passover](#)

What was the Festival of Unleavened Bread?

[14:1]

See: [Festival of Unleavened Bread](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders want to “stealthily arrest” Jesus?

[14:1]

The chief priests and scribes wanted to “stealthily” arrest Jesus. That is, they wanted to arrest Jesus when no one would know that they were doing it. They did not want to make people angry with them.

See: [Scribe](#); [Scribe](#)

Where was Bethany?

[14:3]

See Map: Bethany

What was a leper?

[14:3]

See: [Leprosy \(Leper\)](#)

Why was Jesus reclining at the table?

[14:3]

In ancient Israel, people ate by laying down sideways at a table. Jesus did this because he had eaten.

What did this woman have?

[14:3]

The woman had a jar with a certain oil that smelled very good. Some people called this perfume. She opened this jar and poured it on Jesus head and feet to honor him. Jesus also said that she anointed him. This prepared his body to be buried. In ancient Israel, people poured these types of oils on a dead person before they buried them.

See: John 12:3

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Why did the disciples not want this woman to do this?

[14:4]

The disciples did not want this woman to pour this expensive oil on Jesus. This was because it would only smell good for a short time. However, it could be sold for the same amount of money that someone could make from working for one year. This could be used to help many poor people. Jesus said they were wrong. This was because what she did was a metaphor. That is, she anointed Jesus as a way to prepare him to die for people's sins so they could be at peace with God. This was greater than helping poor people.

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Why did Judas go to the chief priests?

[14:10]

Judas went to the chief priests to help them arrest Jesus. Scholars do not agree why he did this. The priests gave Judas a large amount of money to help them.

See: Matthew 26:15; Exodus 21:32; Zechariah 11:12

See: [Chief Priest](#)

14:12-21

When was the first day of unleavened bread?

[14:12]

The first day of unleavened bread was also the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This was the day they sacrificed a lamb for the passover.

See: [Passover](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Passover](#)

Why did the disciples need to prepare for the passover meal?

[14:12]

The disciples needed to prepare for the passover meal. This was because they needed to become clean so they could eat this meal. They also needed to get certain foods ready to eat for this meal.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Passover](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus say that one of the disciples would betray him?

[14:18]

After travelling with these twelve disciples for three years, Jesus had one last meal with them. During this meal, he told them that one of the disciples would betray him. This was to fulfill a prophecy spoken about the messiah (see: Psalm 41:9).

The man that betrayed Jesus would be punished for what he did. He would live forever in hell and be punished there forever. That was why Jesus said it would be better for that man to have not been born than to be punished forever in hell.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Hell](#); [Son of Man](#); [Woe](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

14:22-31

What did Jesus say to the disciples during the passover meal?

[14:22]

Jesus told the disciples about the eating of bread and drinking of wine during this last meal. Some scholars called this the last supper or the Lord's supper. From that time on, Christians ate bread and drank wine at certain times in order to remember that Jesus died for Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Lord's Supper](#); [Covenant](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Passover](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What was a hymn?

[14:26]

A hymn was a song that was sung to worship God.

Where was the Mount of Olives?

[14:26]

See Map: Mount of Olives

Why did Jesus say that "all of you will fall away"?

[14:27]

Jesus said that the disciples would "fall away." That is, they would fall away from Jesus. He said this would fulfill what Zechariah prophesied (see: Zechariah 13:7). This was a metaphor. Jesus was the shepherd and the disciples were the sheep. The disciples would not want people to know they followed Jesus when Jesus died. However, this did not last for very long.

Peter said that he would never do this. However, he said that he did not know Jesus three times that night.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Metaphor](#)

14:32-42

Where was Gethsemane?

[14:32]

See Map: Gethsemane

What is a soul?

[14:33]

See: [Soul](#)

Why was Jesus distressed?

[14:33]

Jesus was distressed when he prayed. That is he had a feeling of great sadness and pain in his soul while he prayed. He knew he was about to die. He was not afraid to die because he knew why he had to die. However, he was distressed because he knew that he was about to be separated from God the Father in some way. He knew separation from God was part of the punishment from God for the sins of all people.

See: [Soul](#); [Sin](#); [God the Father](#); [Soul](#)

Why did Jesus want the hour to pass?

[14:36]

Jesus asked God the Father if it was possible for the hour to pass. That is, he asked God the Father not to make him die. He wanted God to remove the cup. This is a metaphor. He wanted to not have to be punished for all people. However, he was willing to die to obey God.

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

Why did Jesus want Peter to pray not to enter into temptation?

[14:38]

Jesus wanted Peter to pray. However, Peter could not pray for one hour without falling asleep. Jesus told Peter to pray and ask not to enter into temptation. That is, that he would not be tempted. Peter was about to be tempted to say that he did not know Jesus.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

How was the spirit willing but the flesh weak?

[14:38]

Jesus said that the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. That is, the disciples wanted to stay awake and pray, but their bodies were too tired to remain awake. They could only do these things with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wanted to help Peter. Peter just needed to ask for help (see: Psalm 51:12).

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

How has the hour come?

[14:41]

Jesus said the hour has come. That is, the things he talked about things that were about to happen.

Who were the sinners?

[14:41]

Jesus said that he was betrayed to sinners. That is, someone would give him to the people who wanted to kill him. These sinners were the Jewish leaders. They were supposed to help people worship God. Instead, they did evil. He knew Judas was about to betray him.

See: [Sin](#)

14:43-52

Who were the chief priests, scribes, and elders?

[143:43]

See: [Elder](#); [Scribe](#); [Elder](#)

How did Judas kiss Jesus?

[14:44, 14:45]

Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek. In ancient Israel, people often greeted each other in this way.

What was a rabbi?

[14:45]

See: [Rabbi](#)

Why did someone cut off this man's ear?

[14:47]

Peter tried to stop the Jewish leaders from arresting Jesus (see: John 18:10-11). He did this by cutting off someone's ear with a sword or knife.

See: [High Priest](#)

What scriptures does this fulfill?

[14:49]

Jesus said that certain prophecies were fulfilled when the Jewish leaders arrested him. These were prophecies spoken by Isaiah (see: Isaiah 53) and Zechariah (see: Zechariah 13:7).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did Mark talk about this young man?

[14:51, 14:52]

Scholars think Mark wrote about this young man running away naked because Mark was this young man. He was there when Jesus was arrested. Other scholars think the young man symbolises all people who ran after Jesus' arrest. This was a fulfillment of prophecy (see: Amos 2:16).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Symbol](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

14:53-65

What was the courtyard of the high priest?

[14:54]

The Jewish leaders took Jesus to the high priest. They wanted the high priest to say Jesus had done something wrong so Jesus could be killed. They took him to the courtyard of the high priest. This was outside of where the high priest lived.

See: [High Priest](#)

What was testimony against Jesus?

[14:55]

The Jewish leaders wanted testimony against Jesus. They wanted people to say Jesus had done something wrong. They wanted them to say that he broke the Law of Moses in a way that he needed to be put to death.

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

Why did Mark write that the people's testimony did not agree?

[14:56]

People said that Jesus said things or did things that were wrong in the Law of Moses. However, Mark wrote that what the people said about Jesus did not agree with one another. Mark wrote this because someone could not be punished for something they did wrong unless two people had seen this person doing this wrong thing.

See: Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

What did the high priest do?

[14:60]

The high priest asked Jesus two questions. He asked Jesus if Jesus was going to say anything. The high priest wanted Jesus to say something because he wanted Jesus to say the wrong thing. He also asked Jesus if he was going to say something about what people said about Jesus. The high priest thought Jesus did something written in the Law of Moses that people should not do. However, the high priest did something written in the law of Moses that he should not do. He said that Jesus did something wrong without the testimony of two people agreeing with one another.

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

Why did the high priest ask Jesus if he was the messiah, the son of the blessed one?

[14:61]

The high priest asked Jesus if he was the messiah, the son of the blessed one. He wanted Jesus to say that this was true. The high priest would then say that Jesus blasphemed.

See: [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What did Jesus say to the high priest?

[14:62]

Jesus told the high priest, "I am." He said that he is God when he said this. He then told the high priest that the high priest will see Jesus again when he is next to God in heaven when Jesus returns to the earth to judge the world.

The high priest tore his clothes because he thought Jesus blasphemed God. This was what the high priest did when someone blasphemed. According to the Law of Moses, blasphemy was punished by killing the person who blasphemed.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Right Hand](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did the people ask Jesus to prophesy?

[14:65]

Many people hit Jesus at the same time. They mocked Jesus. That is, they insulted him. So they asked him to prophesy and tell them which person hit Jesus.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

14:66-72**Why did Peter say that he did not know Jesus?**

[14:68]

Peter followed the soldiers who arrested Jesus. However, he did not go near Jesus. He did not want anyone to know he was a disciple of Jesus. He feared being arrested. This is why he said he did not know Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Mark write in 14:68?

[14:68]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words, "then the rooster crowed." Other, older ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. However, Matthew, Luke, and John said that the rooster crowed (see: Matthew 26:74; Luke 22:60; John 18:27). Therefore, the rooster crowed whether or not Mark wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What was a Galilean?

[14:70]

The people in Jerusalem spoke in a different way than the people in Galilee. Because of this, the girl knew Peter lived in Galilee. This was the same place where Jesus and his disciples lived.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Galilee

Why did Peter begin to curse and swear?

[14:71]

Peter wanted this girl to think he was not a disciple of Jesus. He then swore and cursed himself. That is, he said that God needed to curse him if Peter was lying. He swore to her in the same way someone swears an oath to a judge.

See: [Curse](#); [Swear \(Oath\)](#); [Curse](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes and the entire Jewish council consulted together. Then they bound Jesus and led him away. They handed him over to Pilate. ² Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

He answered him, "You say so." ³ The chief priests were accusing him of many things.

⁴ Pilate again asked him, "Do you give no answer? See how many things they are accusing you of!" ⁵ But Jesus no longer answered Pilate, and that amazed him.

⁶ Now at the time of the festival, Pilate usually released to them one prisoner, a prisoner they requested.

⁷ There was a man called Barabbas in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the rebellion. ⁸ The crowd came to Pilate and began to ask him to do for them as he had done in the past. ⁹ Pilate answered them and said, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he knew that it was because of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to cry out that Barabbas should be released instead. ¹² Pilate answered them again and said, "What then should I do with the King of the Jews?"

¹³ They shouted again, "Crucify him!"

¹⁴ Pilate said to them, "What evil has he done?"

But they shouted more and more, "Crucify him." ¹⁵ Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, so he released Barabbas to them. He scourged Jesus and then handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers led him inside the courtyard (which is the government headquarters), and they called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on Jesus, and they twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on him. ¹⁸ They began to salute him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ They were striking his head with a reed staff and spitting on him. They went to their knees and they bowed down before him. ²⁰ When they had mocked him, they took off of him the purple robe and put his own garments on him, and then led him out to crucify him. ²¹ A certain man, Simon of Cyrene, was coming in from the country (he was the father of Alexander and Rufus), and they forced him to carry his cross.

²² The soldiers brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which is translated "Place of a Skull"). ²³ They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not drink it. ²⁴ They crucified him and divided up his garments by casting lots to determine what piece each soldier would take. ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ On a sign they wrote the charge against him, "The king of the Jews." ²⁷ With him they crucified two robbers, one on the right of him and one on his left. ²⁸^[1]²⁹ Those who passed by insulted him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself and come down from the cross!"

³¹ In the same way the chief priests were mocking him with each other, along with the scribes, and said, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also insulted him.

³³ At the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is interpreted, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" ³⁵ Some of those standing by heard his words and said, "Look, he is calling for Elijah."

³⁶ Someone ran, put sour wine on a sponge, put it on a reed staff, and gave it to him to drink. The man said, "Let us see if Elijah comes to take him down." ³⁷ Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice and died.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom. ³⁹ When the centurion who stood and faced Jesus saw that he had died in this way, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." ⁴⁰ There were also women who looked on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James the younger and of Joses), ^[2] and Salome. ⁴¹ When he was in Galilee they followed him and served him. Many other women also came up with him to Jerusalem.

⁴² When evening had come, because it was the Day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea came there. He was a respected member of the council who was waiting for the kingdom of God. He boldly went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was amazed that Jesus was already dead; he called the centurion and asked him if Jesus was dead. ⁴⁵ When Pilate learned from the centurion that Jesus was dead, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Joseph had bought a linen cloth. He took him down from the cross, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of a rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw the place where Jesus was buried.

Footnotes

15:28 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have Mark 15:28,

15:40 ^[2]The man called

Mark 15

15:1-15

What was the Jewish council?

[15:1]

See: Jewish Council (sanhedrin); [Scribe](#); [Elder](#); [Scribe](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders take Jesus to Pilate?

[15:1]

Pilate was a Roman leader of Jerusalem. At this time, the Jews were not allowed to kill someone if the person was guilty of a crime. Therefore, the Jewish leaders needed permission from Pilate to have Jesus killed.

Why did Pilate ask Jesus if Jesus was the king of the Jews?

[15:2]

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus because they said he spoke blasphemy against God (see: Matthew 27:1-2; Luke 22:66-71). However, the Jewish leaders did not tell Pilate that Jesus was blaspheming God. Instead, they said that Jesus said he was the king of the Jews. Blasphemy of God was not wrong for the Romans. However, they killed people who rebelled against the Romans.

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

Why did Jesus not answer Pilate?

[15:5]

Jesus did not answer Pilate because he did not do anything wrong. He also knew he needed to die for people's sins. This also fulfilled a prophecy of Isaiah (see: Isaiah 53:7). This made Pilate think that Jesus was not guilty of the things the Jewish leaders said he did.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Atonement \(Atonement\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

What was the feast?

[15:6]

Mark wrote about a feast. This was the passover festival.

See: [Passover](#)

Why did Pilate release a prisoner?

[15:6]

In ancient Israel, the Roman leader released a prisoner during the Jewish passover festival. This helped make peace between the Romans and the Jews.

See: [Passover](#)

Who did Pilate want the people to release from prison?

[15:9]

Pilate did not think Jesus was guilty. However, he did not want to make the Jewish leaders angry. Therefore, he tried to get the people to free Jesus. However, they did not want Jesus to live. They told Pilate to kill Jesus.

How was someone crucified?

[15:13]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How was Jesus scourged?

[15:15]

Pilate told soldiers scourge Jesus. That is, they beat him very badly. Some scholars think that scourging a person made them die faster after they were crucified. Other scholars think Pilate had Jesus scourged so the Jewish leaders would have pity for Jesus. He hoped the Jews would not want Jesus crucified after this (see: John 19:1-15).

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

15:16-21

Where did the soldiers take Jesus?

[15:16]

The soldiers took Jesus to the courtyard where a Roman leader lived. The courtyard was a large area outside of a home where many people gathered.

How many soldiers are a cohort?

[15:16]

There were about 600 soldiers in a cohort.

How did the soldiers mock Jesus?

[15:20]

The soldiers placed a purple robe on Jesus. They did this to mock Jesus. In ancient times, kings wore purple clothes. This was because it was very expensive to make purple clothes. They also put a crown on Jesus. They also did this to mock Jesus. Kings wore crowns. However, this crown had large thorns, so it hurt Jesus. The soldiers also mocked Jesus by saluting him in the way they saluted a king. They also hit Jesus with a staff. Kings held a special staff. They also bowed to Jesus in the same way they would have bowed to their king.

Where was Cyrene?

[15:21]

See Map: Cyrene

15:22-32

Where was Golgotha?

[15:22]

Golgotha was a place outside of the wall of the city of Jerusalem. In English, this place is often called "calvary." It was a hill that looked like a person's skull.

Why did the soldiers give Jesus wine mixed with myrrh?

[15:23]

The soldiers gave Jesus something to drink. People thought that this would stop pain. However, Jesus did not want to drink the mixed wine.

What is casting lots?

[15:24]

See: [Cast Lots](#)

Why did the soldiers make a sign?

[15:26]

The soldiers made a sign. This sign told people that Jesus was killed for saying that he was the king of the Jews.

Did Mark write the words found in verse 28?

[15:28]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words found in 15:28. A greater number of older copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Therefore, most translations do not have these words.

How did the people insult Jesus?

[15:29]

The people insulted Jesus while he died. They mocked him because they did not know what he said when he said that he would destroy and rebuild the temple. They thought he spoke about the temple building. However, it was a metaphor. He wanted people to know that he would die and be resurrected in three days. They also mocked Jesus and told him to come off the cross if he was God. They spoke against Jesus because they did not believe he was the Son of God.

See: [Son of God](#); [Temple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Cross](#); [Son of God](#)

How did the Jewish leaders mock Jesus?

[15:31]

The Jewish leaders mocked Jesus in the same way people mocked him. They wanted Jesus to do something so they would know that he was the messiah. However, he did not listen to them. Jesus knew that his death on the cross was part of the work that God the Father sent him to do.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Cross](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

15:33-37

When was the sixth hour?

[15:33]

The sixth hour was about 12pm.

When was the ninth hour?

The ninth hour was about 3pm.

Why did Jesus cry out about God had forsaken him?

[15:34]

As Jesus died, people's sins were placed on him in some way. He was separated from God in some way for the first time. Jesus fulfilled prophecy with these words. In Psalm 22, David cried out to God. Jesus quoted the beginning of this Psalm so the people would know that he was the fulfillment of this prophecy.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did people think Jesus was calling for Elijah?

[15:35]

When Jesus said, "Eli," the people thought they heard Jesus calling to Elijah to help him.

15:38-47

Why did the temple curtain split into two pieces?

[15:38]

In the temple, there was a curtain that separated the most holy place from everything else. It was the place where the high priest went once a year to give a sacrifice to God. God was in this place in a certain way. The curtain was so big and thick that it could not be torn. When Jesus died, it tore. This was a metaphor. It allowed everyone to know that nothing separated people from God anymore after Jesus died.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Metaphor](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the Roman soldier think Jesus was the son of God?

[15:39]

The Roman soldier thought Jesus was the son of God. Some scholars think the soldier believed that Jesus was God. More scholars think that he said that Jesus was a very great man whom God blessed. Mark wanted people to think about how the roman soldier believed the truth about Jesus even though the Jewish leaders did not.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[15:41]

See Map: Galilee

Why did Jesus need to be buried before the sun went down?

[15:42]

According to the Law of Moses, a dead body needed to be buried before the sun set.

See: Deuteronomy 21:23

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How was Joseph of Arimathea waiting for the kingdom of God?

[15:43]

Joseph of Arimathea was a pharisee, but he believed in Jesus (see: John 19:38). He believed what Jesus taught about the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why was Pilate amazed that Jesus was dead?

[15:44]

Pilate was amazed that Jesus was dead because he died very fast. Jesus was beaten and very weak when he was placed on the cross. When most people were put on a cross it took a long time for them to die, sometimes two or three days.

See: [Cross](#)

Why did Joseph wrap Jesus' body in a linen cloth and put it into a tomb?

[15:46]

Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus' body in linen cloth to prepare him to be buried. At that time, people wrapped a body in linen cloths with strong smelling spices. When Jesus' body was ready to be buried, it was put into a tomb. This honored the person who had died.

Why did Joseph place a large stone in front of the entrance to the tomb?

[15:46]

Joseph placed a very large stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. This kept people and animals out of the tomb.

Chapter 16

¹ When the Sabbath day was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices that they might come and anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb when the sun had come up. ³ They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, for it was very large. ⁵ They entered the tomb and saw a young man dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ He said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. Look at the place where they had laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

⁸ They went out and ran from the tomb; they were trembling and amazed. They said nothing to anyone because they were so afraid. ⁹^[1] [Early on the first day of the week, after he arose, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who were with him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ They heard that he was alive and that he had been seen by her, but they did not believe.

¹² After these things he appeared in a different form to two of them as they were walking out into the country. ¹³ They went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

¹⁴ Jesus later appeared to the eleven as they were reclining at the table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw him after he rose from the dead. ¹⁵ He said to them, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the entire creation. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved, and he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ These signs will go with those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons. They will speak in new languages. ¹⁸ They will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

¹⁹ After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ The disciples left and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word by the signs that went with them.] ^[2]

Footnotes

16:9 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have Mark 16:9-20.

16:20 ^[2]See the note on Mark 16:9.

Mark 16

16:1-11

What was the Sabbath?

[16:1]

See: [Sabbath](#)

Why did these women bring spices to anoint the body?

[16:1]

The women brought spices to anoint Jesus' body. In ancient Israel, people did this to someone after they died. They did not think Jesus would be made alive again. The spices were used to stop the body from smelling bad. People did this for people they loved when the person died.

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

What day was the first day of the week?

[16:2]

The Sabbath began on Friday at sunset and ended Saturday at sunset. The day after the sabbath was the first day of the week. This day began on Saturday at sunset and ended on Sunday at sunset.

See: [Sabbath](#)

Why did the women need someone to roll the stone away?

[16:3]

The stone in front of Jesus' tomb was very large. It was so large three women could not move it. Therefore, they needed several men to move it.

Who was the man in the tomb?

[16:5]

The man in the tomb was an angel.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

Where was Nazareth?

[16:6]

See Map: Nazareth

How was Jesus crucified?

[16:6]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How was Jesus resurrected?

[16:6]

The man in the tomb said that Jesus was risen. That is, Jesus was resurrected and was alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[16:7]

See Map: Galilee

Why did the man say, "just as he told you"?

[16:7]

The man said that Jesus was resurrected, "just as he told you." Jesus told people that he was going to be resurrected after he died. He also said he would go to Galilee (see: 14:28). They did not understand what he said. Or perhaps they did not believe it when he said it.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

Did Mark write the words of 16:9-20?

[16:9]

The oldest copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words written in Mark 16:9-20. Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do have these words. Therefore, some scholars do not think Mark wrote these words. They think some ancient scholars added these words to the ending of Mark's gospel. Perhaps they did this to make the gospel end in a different way. That is, so the gospel would tell people about Jesus' resurrection. Other scholars think Mark wrote these words. Perhaps an early copy of Mark's gospel lost its last page and people made copies of this without the last page.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How did Jesus cast out demons?

[16:9]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why were people mourning and weeping?

[16:10]

People were mourning and weeping because they were sad. They were sad that Jesus died. They did not know that he promised to be resurrected. They also did not know that he was resurrected. When they heard that Jesus was alive, they did not believe the women. They thought the women lied because people did not become alive after they died.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

16:12-20

How did Jesus appear in a different form?

[16:12]

Jesus joined two people walking. Scholars think these people saw Jesus before he died. However, Jesus looked different from the first time they saw him. So they did not know it was Jesus (see: Luke 24:13-32).

Why were the disciples called the eleven?

[16:14]

People called the disciples the eleven. This is because Judas Iscariot was not a disciple anymore.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did the disciples recline at the table?

[16:14]

The disciples reclined at the table because they were eating.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus tell the disciples to do?

[16:15]

Jesus wanted the disciples to go tell everyone they could that Jesus was made alive again. He wanted them to tell everyone about the gospel. When Jesus said "the entire creation," he wanted everyone in the world to know these things.

See: [Gospel](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Gospel](#)

How is someone who is baptized saved?

[16:16]

Jesus said that whoever believes in him and is baptized will be saved. When someone believes in Jesus, they are at peace with God and will live with him forever. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about being baptized by the Holy Spirit. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about being baptized with water.

See: [Heaven](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Heaven](#)

How is someone who does not believe in Jesus condemned?

[16:16]

People who do not believe in Jesus are condemned. That is, they are punished and will live forever in hell.

See: [Hell](#)

What is casting out demons?

[16:17]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

How will Christians be able to speak in new languages?

[16:17]

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#)

Were Christians able to be poisoned without getting sick?

[16:18]

Jesus talked about Christians being poisoned. He said that Christians will be poisoned or bitten by poisonous snakes, but they will not die. The apostles did many miracles. These were signs so that other people would know that what they said came from God. Jesus did not talk about all Christians at all times.

See: [Sign](#); [Miracle](#); [Sign](#)

Why is Jesus at the right hand of God in heaven?

[16:19]

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How did Jesus help the disciples when they preached?

[16:20]

The disciples went many places and told people about Jesus. Jesus helped them through the Holy Spirit. He also gave them the power to do miracles. These were signs that the things they taught were from God.

See: [Sign](#); [Miracle](#); [Sign](#)

Book: Luke

Introduction to the Gospel of Luke

Overview

Luke wrote about Jesus and the things he did. He also wanted people to know that Jesus was fully human and fully God. Jesus did the things all people do. That is, he was born, he grew up, he suffered, and he died. However, Luke also wrote Jesus lived a perfect life without sinning while he was on earth. Because Jesus did this, God accepted his death as a sacrifice so that people could be at peace with God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Atonement](#)

Who was the author of the Gospel of Luke?

Scholars think the author of the Gospel of Luke was a man named Luke. Luke also wrote the book of Acts. Scholars think Luke wrote both books as one book.

The following things are known about the author of this gospel.

1. He did not see many of the things that he wrote about. He wrote what other people saw and told him about.
2. He was well-educated.
3. He knew earlier writings about Jesus and he used them in his gospel.
4. He looked for people who saw the events he wanted to write about.
5. He wrote more than any other person in the New Testament.
6. He was a Gentile.
7. Some scholars think Luke was the physician that Paul wrote about in Colossians 4:14. Other scholars think Paul wrote about a different person named Luke.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gentile](#)

Who was the audience to whom Luke wrote?

Some scholars think Luke wrote his gospel to a man named Theophilus. Theophilus was thought to be a wealthy person who gave money for Luke to research and write his book. It was normal for writers to address their books to those who helped them with money. Also, scholars think Theophilus was a leader in the Roman government because Luke wrote very respectfully to Theophilus (see: Luke 1:1).

However, other scholars believe "Theophilus" referred to all Christians. His name meant "lover of God" or "friend of God". In Luke's gospel, this name represented all Christians because all Christians love God and are friends of God.

Whether or not "Theophilus" was a single person or a word for all Christians, Luke tried to make Gentiles understand the things the Jews did and believed.

What did Luke write about in this gospel?

Prayer

Luke wrote that Jesus prayed and taught people about prayer. Luke was the only gospel that wrote Jesus prayed when the Holy Spirit came down on him at his baptism (see: Luke 3:21-22), when Jesus chose the twelve apostles (see: Luke 6:12-13), and when God changed the appearance of Jesus on a mountain (see: Luke 9:28-29). Luke was also the only gospel that wrote a parable about prayer (see: Luke 18:1-8).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Gospel](#); [Parable](#)

Holy Spirit

Luke wrote about the Holy Spirit when he wrote about John the Baptist and Jesus being born (see: Luke 1:15,35,41; 2:25-35). Luke wrote Jesus "rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit" (see: Luke 10:21). Luke was the only gospel where Jesus talked about the promise of God the Father, which was the promise of the Holy Spirit (see: Luke 24:49).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Gospel](#); [God the Father](#)

Poor People

Luke wrote about how God cared for poor people. When Mary, the mother of Jesus, brought her offering to the temple it was an offering poor people brought (see: Luke 2:24). The other three gospels did not write about this. When Jesus read from Isaiah, he read about taking the good news to poor people (see: Luke 4:18). The other three gospels did not write about this. Luke wrote how Jesus talked about the rich man and the poor man Lazarus (see: Luke 16:19-31), but the other three gospels did not write about it.

See: [Temple](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

Women

In the ancient world, people did not often write about what women did. However, Luke wrote about several things women did. God chose Elizabeth to give birth to John the Baptist (see: Luke 1:18-25,57-66). The angel Gabriel told Mary she found favor with God (see: Luke 1:26-38). Mary served God (see: Luke 1:38) and she sang a song of praise to God because God chose her to give birth to Jesus (see: Luke 1:46-55). Jesus made alive again the only son of a widow (see: Luke 7:11-17). A woman anointed the feet of Jesus (see: Luke 7:36-50). Several women served Jesus and the twelve disciples (see: Luke 8:3). Jesus spoke well of Mary, the sister of Martha (see: Luke 10:38-42). Also, Jesus used examples of women when he talked about a lost coin and an unjust judge (see: Luke 15:8-10;18:1-8).

See: [Angel](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Samaritans

Luke wrote about how Samaritans did things God wanted them to do.

See: [Samarita](#)

What was the purpose of the Gospel of Luke?

Luke wrote this gospel so that people would know about Jesus and the things he did. Luke wanted people to believe in Jesus so they can be at peace with God. He also wanted them to live in a way that honors God.

Outline of the Gospel of Luke

1. Luke named whom he wrote to and wrote why he wrote (1:1-4)
2. The birth of Jesus (1:5-2:38)
3. When Jesus was a boy (2:39-52)
4. Jesus' baptism (3:1-4:13)
5. Jesus in Galilee (4:14-9:50)
6. Jesus traveled to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27)
7. The last week before Jesus died (19:28-23:56)

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Luke

Chapter 1

¹ Many have taken on the work of putting together an account of the things that have been accomplished among us, ² just as they were passed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³ So it seemed good to me also, because I have accurately investigated everything from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you might know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

⁵ In the days of Herod king of Judea there was a certain priest named Zechariah from the division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ They were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no child because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in their days.

⁸ Now it came about that Zechariah was in God's presence, carrying out the priestly duties in the order of his division. ⁹ According to the customary way of choosing which priest would serve, he had been chosen

by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense. ¹⁰ The whole crowd of people was praying outside at the hour when the incense was burned. ¹¹ Now an angel of the Lord appeared to him and stood at the right side of the incense altar. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell on him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You will call his name John. ¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. ¹⁶ Many of the descendants of Israel will be turned to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will go before the face of the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him."

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days." ¹⁹ The angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you, to bring you this good news. ²⁰ Behold! You will be silent, unable to speak, until the day these things take place. This is because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at the right time." ²¹ Now the people were waiting for Zechariah. They were surprised that he was spending so much time in the temple. ²² But when he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple. He kept on making signs to them and remained silent. ²³ It came about that when the days of his service were over, he went to his house.

²⁴ After these days, his wife Elizabeth conceived and for five months she kept herself hidden. She said, ²⁵ "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked at me with favor in order to take away my shame before people."

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, who was a descendant of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ He came to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was very confused by his words and she wondered what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ See, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son. You will call his name 'Jesus.' ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen, since I have not known any man?"

³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will overshadow you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ See, your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age. This is the sixth month for her, she who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible for God."

³⁸ Mary said, "See, I am the female servant of the Lord. Let it be for me according to your message." Then the angel left her.

³⁹ Then Mary arose in those days and quickly went into the hill country, to a city in Judea. ⁴⁰ She went into the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ Now it happened that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb jumped, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² She cried out with a loud shout and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ Why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For see, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of the things that were told her from the Lord."

⁴⁶ Mary said,

"My soul praises the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

⁴⁸ For he has looked

at the low condition of his female servant.

For see, from now on all generations will call me blessed.

⁴⁹ For the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and his name is holy.

⁵⁰ His mercy lasts from generation to generation
for those who fear him.

⁵¹ He has displayed strength with his arm;
he has scattered those who were proud
about the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has thrown down princes from their thrones
and he has raised up those of low condition.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things,
but the rich he has sent away empty-handed.

⁵⁴ He has given help to Israel his servant,
so as to remember to show mercy

⁵⁵ (as he said to our fathers)
to Abraham and his descendants forever."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her house.

⁵⁷ Now the time had come for Elizabeth to deliver her baby and she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors
and her relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹ Now it happened on the eighth day that they came to circumcise the child. They would have called him
"Zechariah," after the name of his father. ⁶⁰ But his mother answered and said, "No. He will be called
John." ⁶¹ They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." ⁶² They
made signs to his father as to how he wanted him to be named. ⁶³ His father asked for a writing tablet
and wrote, "His name is John." They all were astonished at this. ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened
and his tongue was freed. He spoke and praised God. ⁶⁵ Fear came on all who lived around them. All
these matters were spread throughout all the hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶ All who heard them stored them in
their hearts, saying, "What then will this child become?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷ His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ "Praised be the Lord, the God of Israel,
for he has come to help
and he has accomplished redemption for his people.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago),
⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² He will do this to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore
to Abraham our father.

⁷⁴ He swore to grant to us that we,
having been delivered out of the hand of our enemies,
would serve him without fear

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.

⁷⁶ Yes, and you, child,
will be called a prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the face of the Lord
to prepare his paths,
to prepare people for his coming,

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸ This will happen because
of the tender mercy of our God,
because of which the sunrise
from on high will come to help us,

⁷⁹ to shine on those who sit in darkness

and in the shadow of death.
He will do this to guide our feet
into the path of peace."

80 Now the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 1 Commentary

1:1-4

How did Luke begin his gospel?

[1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4]

The first four verses of the Gospel of Luke introduce his gospel. Luke began his gospel in the same way that other people in ancient times began to write their own books. Like them, Luke said why he wrote his gospel, and how he wrote it.

See: [Gospel](#)

Who was Theophilus?

[1:3]

Luke wrote his gospel to someone named Theophilus. Luke called him "most excellent," so he showed that he respected him. Some scholars think that Theophilus was a government official. Some scholars have said that his name is perhaps a metaphor, because his name means "lover of God" or "friend of God." These scholars believe that his name showed that Luke wrote his gospel to anyone who wanted to love God or be a friend of God.

Luke did not call Theophilus a brother, so some scholars think that he was not a Christian. However, someone had taught Theophilus about Jesus. Perhaps Luke considered him to be in the group of Christians whom he called "us" in verses 1-2. Scholars do not know anything else about Theophilus.

See: [Name](#)

Folktales are stories that people tell to one another. They are passed down from parents to children, even though they know that these stories did not actually happen. How did Luke describe the events that actually happen? Luke spoke about things that actually happened. These things did not come from folktales. People could find out that the things that Luke wrote about were true because they did happen. People who saw these things happen told other people about them. It was from these people, the ones who saw these things, that Luke learned much about what Jesus did.

In ancient times, when Jews thought about why some nations became strong, and other nations became weak, they wanted to know what God did to make these things happen. The Gentiles thought in the same way. They were always thinking about what their gods made happen.

However, it is not the same today. Today, if someone says that God makes things happen in the world, many people think that that person is not telling the truth. However, the men who wrote the Old Testament wrote what the Holy Spirit told them to write. They showed that God did many things for the Israelites in ancient times.

When Luke wrote his gospel, he was thinking in the same way. He told about the wonderful things that God did. Luke wrote many things everywhere in his gospel, and in Acts, about what the Holy Spirit did.

See: Acts 1:1-4

How did Luke write?

[1:3, 1:4]

Luke wrote "order" (καθ' ἑξῆς/g2517) in verse three in order to tell how he wrote his gospel. Perhaps he wanted to say that he thought much about the things he wrote about.

Perhaps Luke wanted to say that he wrote first about the things that happened first. However, sometimes he wrote about later things first. For example, in 3:19-20, Luke wrote about why John the Baptist went into prison. He wrote this before he wrote that John baptized Jesus. However, John went into prison some time after he baptized Jesus.

See: Luke 3:19-20; Acts 18:24-28; 19:1-7

1:5-25

When was John the Baptist born?

[1:5]

Luke said that John was born when Herod was king of Judea. The Old Testament writers also said who was king when something happened. In this way, Luke wrote as the Old Testament writers wrote (see: Isaiah 1:1).

King Herod ruled Judea for the Romans between the years 40 B.C. and 4 or 5 B.C. Scholars think that he was close to dying when the first things that Luke wrote about happened.

The Jews knew that Herod was very cruel. He murdered many people. But he did rebuild the Jewish temple. Luke begins his story by telling about something that happened in this temple.

See: Isaiah 1:1

See: [King Herod](#)

What did Zechariah's and Elizabeth's names mean?

[1:5]

Zechariah's name meant, "The Lord remembers." His wife Elizabeth's name meant, "My God is an oath or a promise." This was because they had no children, and they were too old to have any. Why did God punish Zechariah? God punished Zechariah for not thinking that the angel Gabriel was telling him the truth (see: Luke 1:20). Zechariah should have remembered that God healed many women in the Old Testament who could not have children.

Instead, Zechariah was not able to speak until God made what he told Gabriel happen. Since Elizabeth was unable to have children, people thought that God had punished her and humiliated her. However, this did not happen because she had sinned.

See: Romans 3:21-31

See: [Sin](#); [Gospel](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Luke write Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous and blameless?

[1:6]

Luke wrote Zechariah and Elizabeth "lived in a way that honored God or lived the right way" (δίκαιος/g1342) and "innocent, blameless, or obeyed the rules" (ἄμεμπτος/g0273). Luke meant that Zechariah and Elizabeth honored God completely and did their best to obey him. Luke wanted his readers to think that God was pleased with Zechariah and Elizabeth because they did so.

Luke also wrote about people who lived in a way that honored God in verse seventeen. He said that John the Baptist helped many people to become wise like other people who honor God.

However, there were many other Jews who did not know God's law and who did not care about obeying it. These Jews were the people that the Pharisees called "sinners or people who sinned" (ἁμαρτωλός/g0268). The Pharisees said that Jesus was a "sinner" because they thought that he did not obey the law, even though he did (see: John 9:24).

However, when the Apostle Paul wrote about people who lived rightly and sinners, he meant something different. Paul wanted to show everyone that they have all sinned, and that they needed for Jesus Christ

to die for them. He showed that God considers righteous anyone who believes in Jesus, even if that person still sins (see: Romans 3:21-31).

See: [Sin](#); [Blameless](#); [Pharisees](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Luke write about the Jewish temple?

[1:9]

About one thousand years before Jesus lived, King David ordered the priests to serve in different divisions or groups at the temple. After the Jews returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and rebuilt the temple, the priests served in these divisions again.

Zechariah belonged to the division of Abijah. The priests in each division served at the temple two weeks every year. There were about 18,000 priests, so not all priests got the chance to serve at the temple even one time their whole life. The leaders of the priests cast lots to choose which priests would burn incense at the morning and evening sacrifice that happened each day.

Luke began telling about what happened before Jesus was born. He began in this chapter by telling about what Zechariah the priest saw in the temple. Luke ended the next chapter by writing about what Jesus did in the temple when he was twelve years old. It is in this way that words about the temple begin and end this part of Luke's gospel.

See: 1 Chronicles 24

See: [Temple](#)

What did John the Baptist succeed in doing by serving God?

[1:16, 1:17]

John the Baptist had to get the people ready to receive the Messiah. He did this by telling them to repent because they sinned.

Gabriel repeated some words the prophet Malachi wrote (see: Malachi 4:6). These words were about bringing the fathers' hearts back to their children. This was a prophecy about John the Baptist. Perhaps Luke was also thinking about what Malachi said right after that, and to bring back "the heart of the children to their fathers." When people "repent" ([μετανοέω/g3340](#)), fathers begin to love their children again, and children love their fathers.

Malachi also said that if this did not happen, God would curse the land of Israel. However, Gabriel did not say anything about this. So perhaps Gabriel was thinking that after the people "repented", God would do for Israel everything he had promised to do in his covenant with Israel.

See: [Covenant](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Curse](#); [Covenant](#)

How did Zechariah's son come with the spirit and power of Elijah?

[1:17]

Some scholars note that about eight hundred years earlier, some prophets said Elisha also had the spirit of Elijah because Elisha did powerful miracles like the ones that Elijah did (see: 2 Kings 2:15). This meant that Elisha did his work in the way that Elijah had done his. God caused Elisha to continue to serve him as Elijah had done. Much later, God caused John the Baptist to do the same kind of work as Elijah. This is what Malachi said would happen (see: Malachi 4:5-6).

Later in this chapter, when the angel told Mary that she would have a son (see: Luke 1:35), the angel said that the Holy Spirit and God's power would come upon her. Also, in Luke 4:14, Luke said that Jesus came out of the wilderness with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In verse fifteen, Luke said that the Holy Spirit would fill John even before he was born. Here in verse seventeen, when the angel told Zechariah that John the Baptist would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, perhaps the angel was talking about the Holy Spirit. However, most scholars think that the angel was saying that John would think and act in the same way that Elijah had done. This is how John would serve God.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Elizabeth hide herself for five months?

[1:24]

When Zechariah and Elizabeth returned to their house in Judea, Elizabeth decided to stay in her house for five months without coming out. Scholars give reasons for this.

1. She was afraid of having a miscarriage.
2. She was afraid people would not believe she was really pregnant, so she wanted to wait until everyone was able to see she was pregnant.
3. She wanted to pray.
4. She wanted to follow her husband's example of not spreading this good news.
5. She wanted to be sure that Mary would be the first person to know she was pregnant.

See Map: Judea

1:26-38

How the angel Gabriel greet Mary?

[1:28]

Most scholars believe the angel Gabriel greeted Mary in a way that the Jews usually greeted each other (see: Luke 1:28). They think the angel said that God favored Mary. This was why he chose her to bear the baby Jesus and to raise him. These scholars also say that in the Old Testament, some people greeted other people like this. When they greeted a person like this, they meant that God had chosen this person to do something very good for him.

Fewer scholars think the angel meant that Mary was able to show favor to other people and help them in this way. These scholars think this because of an old translation of scripture that said Mary is 'full of grace.' These scholars also believe that Mary never sinned in her whole life.

See: Exodus 33:16; Proverbs 12:2

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

Advice to Translators: Translate "the house of Jacob" as you did in your local version of the gospel of Luke.

How will Jesus make come true what God had promised King David that he would do?

[1:32]

The angel Gabriel described Jesus, then he said what Jesus would do (see: Luke 1:32-33). Jesus would become king and rule forever over Israel, the "house of Jacob." This is what God said he would make happen to King David. He made this happen by means of Jesus (see: 2 Samuel 7:14).

However, some scholars think that God has now made these things happen. They say that he made these things happen when Jesus was born. This is because Jesus began to rule over the hearts of those who believed in him.

Other scholars think that God will make these things happen when Jesus returns to earth. They say that this will happen when Jesus becomes king.

Still other scholars say that both of these things are true. They think that God made some of these things happen when Jesus was born, and that God will make the rest of them happen when Jesus comes back to earth.

Advice to Translators: Translate "the son of the Most High" here as you did in your local version of the gospel of Luke.

The angel Gabriel called Jesus “the Son of the Most High.” This shows that Jesus, the Messiah who is a descendant of King David, is also God. It was God who gave King David the power to rule over Israel. But after the Babylonians took the Jews to their own country as prisoners, the Israelites never had a king again. However, the Israelites will once again prosper because Jesus, a descendant of King David, will rule over them.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites had many kings, one after another. They were descendants of King David. But now Jesus the Messiah, also a descendant of David, will rule forever.

Why did Mary have to be a virgin when she became pregnant?

[1:34]

It was necessary for Mary to be a virgin when she became pregnant with Jesus. This meant that God was Jesus’ father, not any man. God was Jesus’ father, so Jesus was born without wanting to sin in any way.

When God created Adam and Eve, they did not sin at first, either. God was Jesus’ father, so when Mary gave birth to Jesus, Jesus did not sin. However, after Adam and Eve sinned for the first time, all people have been born wanting to sin. All men and women pass this desire on to their children. Every person who was born after Adam, God considered to be guilty of sin because they were born wanting to sin. When a person wants to sin, this is wrong and it is a sin. But God was Jesus’ father, so Jesus never sinned, and He was not born wanting to sin. Therefore, God did not consider Jesus guilty of wanting to sin.

See: Isaiah 7:14; Psalm 51:5; 71:6; Romans 5:12

See: [Sinful Nature](#); [Sinful Nature](#)

Did God sleep with Mary?

[1:35]

The Holy Spirit came upon Mary to make her pregnant with Jesus. But when God gave Mary this baby, he did not sleep with her.

Jesus, the Son of God, has always been the son of God the Father. When Mary gave birth to Jesus, this was the same Son of God, but he became a human being when Mary became pregnant with him. But he did not stop being God. This is why Jesus is called the “God-Man,” that is, the man who is also God, and God who is also man. It is because he is human, even though he is also God.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

Mary asked Gabriel a different question from what Zechariah asked him. How was it different?

[1:34, 1:38]

Luke wrote that both Mary and Zechariah asked the angel Gabriel a question. However, Luke showed that they thought differently. Zechariah wanted Gabriel to do something that would make him think he was saying the truth (see: Luke 1:18). This was because Zechariah did not believe Gabriel. But Luke made his readers know that Mary believed what Gabriel told her (see: Luke 1:38). Also, Mary’s cousin Elizabeth knew that Mary had believed what Gabriel said to her (see: Luke 1:45). Mary even called herself a servant of God, ready to do anything that God commanded her to do (see: Luke 1:20).

1:39-45

How was Mary the mother of Elizabeth’s “Lord” in Luke 1:43?

[1:43]

Elizabeth called Mary the mother of my “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). This word can mean “master” or “God.” Some scholars think that Elizabeth knew that Mary’s baby would be God because God was referred to as the “Lord.” However, other scholars think that Elizabeth called the baby my “Lord” because she knew that the baby would become someone very great. So when she said “my Lord,” she was showing respect for the baby.

In some places the New Testament called Mary the mother of Jesus (see: John 2:1). Today, some people call Mary the mother of God. However, Mary is not as great as Jesus.

See: [Love](#)

See Map: Judah

1:46-56

What was Mary's Song?

[1:46]

This section of poetry is called "Mary's Song." After Elizabeth greeted Mary, Mary praised God with this song. Mary knew the Old Testament, and during her journey of two or three days to visit Elizabeth, Mary probably thought about people in the Old Testament whom God had helped, and people to whom God had sent angels.

In her song, Mary repeated words from two Psalms. She was probably thinking about Hannah, whom God enabled to have a son, and also about how God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. In the first part of her song, Mary sang about herself. In the second part, she sang about Israel. This song shows that Mary was thinking much about being a servant of God, giving him honor, and about God giving her more than she deserved.

See: Psalms 103:17; 107:9; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Exodus 6:6

Why did Mary call herself "a low condition"?

[1:48]

Mary said that she was a humble servant of God. She knew that she was not great. She belonged to the village of Nazareth, a place that no one in the Old Testament even spoke about. But she said that many, many people would come to honor her because she obeyed God. Mary was thinking of Psalm 103:17. She was not thinking about all Jewish people who were not yet born, but of all the Christians everywhere in the world who would later honor her.

See Map: Nazareth

Advice to Translators: Everything in Greek in these verses that Mary said seemed to be about things that God had already done. However, many translations make it seem that God is now doing these things, or that he will do them in the future. Translators must decide if they want to use this entry or not.

Mary talked as if God had already had mercy on Israel. Why did she talk this way?

[1:50]

In verses 51-55 (see: Luke 1:51-55) Mary said that God had already done all these things for Israel. However, she meant that God was going to do them, not that he had already done them.

In the Old Testament, prophets often spoke about what would happen later as if it had already happened. They thought that those things were certain to happen, so they spoke of them as if they had happened. Mary said that God would one day defeat all of Israel's enemies and set the nation free from those who were ruling over it.

1:57-66

How did people in Israel choose what names to give to their children?

[1:59]

Israelite parents usually named their children when they were born. Usually these were names that others in their family had, or they gave certain names because of something that happened when they were born (see: Genesis 29:32-35). Sometimes they waited one week after the babies were born (see: 2 Samuel 12; Luke 2:21). God also changed Abram's name when he was circumcised (see: Genesis 17).

Zechariah and Elizabeth waited one week to name their child. They named him when he was circumcised. They surprised people by giving him a name that was different from the names of all the other people in their own family. In this way, they helped them to know that God was going to make this boy do great things.

The angel Gabriel had told Zechariah (see: Luke 1:20) that he must name the boy “John,” which means, “the Lord has mercy.” When Zechariah began to speak and praise God, this also made what the angel had said to him come true.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

1:67-79

What does Luke mean by being “filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[1:67]

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel with the words “filled” (πίμπλημι/g4130) with the Holy Spirit.” Luke almost always wrote “fill” when he wrote about the Holy Spirit coming on people. He never shortened “Holy Spirit” to “Spirit” when using “fill”.

In this chapter, many people were “filled” with the Holy Spirit. Gabriel said that the Spirit is holy and would give John the power to serve God (see: Luke 1:15,17). For Elizabeth and Zechariah, when the Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth, she blessed Mary and Mary’s child right away. When the Spirit filled Zechariah, right away he praised God and said what God would do for Israel.

Luke used different words to tell how the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary. This was probably because she was going to bear the baby Jesus, something that no one else would ever do. When Luke said this, he called the Holy Spirit the power from the “Most High” God (see: Luke 1:35). When the Holy Spirit filled people, one thing most of them did was immediately say things that the Spirit enabled them to say.

See: Acts 13:52

Advice to Translators: Some versions use ideas different from “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Translators should choose what ideas in this entry to translate.

What was Zechariah’s prophecy?

[1:68]

This poetic section is called “Zechariah’s prophecy.” In this section, Zechariah answered the question that the people asked in verse 66 (see: Luke 1:66). Zechariah was a priest, so he knew the Old Testament. During the time that he could not speak, he was probably thinking about things that people in the Old Testament had wrote.

He repeated some words from a psalm (see: Psalm 106:10), and from what the prophets Malachi (see: Malachi 3:1) and Isaiah (see: Isaiah 9:2) had written. He was also thinking about things that other people in the Old Testament had said.

Zechariah spoke two kinds of things. In the first part, he spoke about the Messiah. He did this when he spoke about the family of King David.

In the second part, Zechariah began talking to his newborn son about how he would serve God. Zechariah spoke much about how God was helping the Israelites, how God was giving them more than they deserved and how God would rescue them from their enemies.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

How did Zechariah think that God will save people?

[1:71]

Some scholars say that Zechariah spoke about how God would rescue Israel from its enemies in the first part of his song. They say that then he spoke in the second part about how God would rescue the Israelites by forgiving their sins.

However, if a person thinks about everything together that Zechariah said, then it is easier to understand Zechariah's song. In verse 71, Zechariah repeated words from Psalm 106:10. Those words were about the time when God rescued the Israelites from the people of Egypt. When Zechariah talked about "the 'horn'(κέρας/g2768) of salvation" in verse 69, he was thinking about Psalm 132:17. There "horn of salvation" meant the power of King David, who defeated the enemies of Israel. In verses 72-74, Zechariah talked about the covenant that God had made with Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites. In that covenant, God promised Abraham that he would defeat Israel's enemies and rescue the Israelites so Israel could worship him.

In the second part of his prophecy, Zechariah stopped speaking about what God did for Israel in the past. He began speaking about what the Messiah was going to do, and about what his own son John would do to get the people ready to believe in the Messiah.

Zechariah was no longer speaking about Israel's enemies. Now he was saying that God would forgive the Israelites and make them live in peace (see: 1:78-79). Some scholars also say that Zechariah was thinking that Jesus would heal people and rescue them from evil spirits.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

1:80

How did John the Baptist grow up "in spirit"?

[1:80]

Most scholars think when Luke wrote "in spirit," he meant John's mind and heart. However, some scholars think that Luke was talking about the Holy Spirit. Perhaps Luke meant both at the same time (see: Ephesians 3:16). Where did John the Baptist grow up? John the Baptist was in the wilderness until he began to preach to the Israelites, so some scholars think he may have been among some more radical religious people. Other scholars do not think he did this. This is because these radical, religious people rejected the temple and its priests. But John's family had priests who served in the temple. Luke did not say what part of the wilderness John lived in.

See: [Zeal \(Zealous, Zealot\)](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Now in those days, it came about that Caesar Augustus sent out a decree ordering that a census be taken of all the people living in the world. ² This was the first census made while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ So everyone went to his own city to be registered for the census. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David. ⁵ He went there to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. ⁶ Now it came about that while they were there, the time came for her to deliver her baby. ⁷ She gave birth to a son, her firstborn child, and she wrapped him in long strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ There were shepherds in that region who were staying in the fields, guarding their flock at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, because I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all the people. ¹¹ Today a Savior was born for you in the city of David! He is Christ the Lord! ¹² This is the sign that will be given to you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly there was together with the angel a great multitude from heaven, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,

and may there be peace on earth
among people with whom he is pleased." [1]

¹⁵ It came about that when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ They hurried there and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in a manger. ¹⁷ After they had seen him, they made known what had been said to them about this child. ¹⁸ All who heard it were amazed at what was spoken to them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept thinking about all the things she had heard, treasuring them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for everything that they had heard and seen, just as it had been spoken to them.

²¹ When it was the end of the eighth day, when he was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name he had been given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

²² When the required number of days for their purification had passed, according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. ²³ As it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb will be set apart to the Lord." ²⁴ So they offered a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord, "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." ²⁵ Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ Led by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple. When the parents brought in the infant Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, ²⁸ he took him into his arms and praised God, and he said,

²⁹ "Now let your servant depart in peace, Lord,

according to your word.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:

³² A light for revelation to the Gentiles
and glory to your people Israel."

³³ His father and mother [2] were amazed at what was said about him. ³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the downfall and rising up of many people in Israel

and for a sign that is rejected—³⁵ and a sword will pierce your own soul—so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." ³⁶ A prophetess named Anna was there. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in her days. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her virginity, ³⁷ and was a widow for eighty-four years. She never left the temple but was serving with fastings and prayers, night and day. ³⁸ At that very hour she came near to them and began giving thanks to God, and she spoke about the child to everyone who had been waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹ When they had finished everything they were required to do according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

⁴¹ His parents went every year to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴² When he was twelve years old, they again went up at the customary time for the festival. ⁴³ After they had stayed the full number of days for the feast, they began to return home. But the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem and his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ They assumed that he was with the group that was traveling with them, so they traveled a day's journey. Then they started to search carefully for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem and started to search carefully for him there. ⁴⁶ It came about that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the middle of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When they saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us this way? Look, your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." ⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I had to be about my Father's business?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he meant by those words. ⁵¹ Then he went back home with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵² But Jesus continued to grow in wisdom and stature, and increased in favor with God and people.

Footnotes

2:14 ^[1]Some ancient Greek copies have different spellings that suggest two possible meanings of the last phrase of verse 14, the second being preferred. The suggestions are:

2:33 ^[2]Some copies of the ancient Greek text add to the text the name of his father,

2:49 ^[3]Some scholars translate "about my Father's business" as

Luke 2

2:1-7

When did this census occur?

[2:1]

It is often important for a government to count its people. This is called a "census." Near the time when Jesus was born, the Roman emperor began a census. This census required people to go to where they were born or where their family was from. During this census, the Roman emperor was Augustus and the governor of the province of Syria was Quirinius.

However, some scholars do not think that the Romans held a census at that time. They believe that Quirinius did not become governor of Syria until A.D. 6. This was at least ten years after Jesus was born. Despite this, other scholars believe that Quirinius became governor before A.D. 6. Scholars have given different explanations concerning Quirinius and the census.

1. Quirinius was governor of Syria at two different times. Or he had been an administrator in Syria when he ordered a census before A.D. 6, before he became governor (see: Acts 5:37).
2. The word "first" in verse two meant "before." If it meant "before" here, then the census was held before Quirinius was governor of Syria.
3. An earlier governor of Syria began the census and Quirinius completed it.
4. The emperor in Rome had ordered the census and it took several years to complete.

Because of some things in the past, scholars think the Romans held many censuses. However, there is little that is known about these censuses.

Why did the Romans hold this census?

[2:1, 2:3]

The Romans held a census to collect taxes and enlist men to serve as soldiers. However, God used this census to cause Mary to go to the place where the Messiah would be born, in the way the Old Testament prophets had said centuries before. In this way, God used the Roman emperor, the most powerful ruler in the world at that time, to fulfill Micah's prophecy (See: Micah 5:2; Acts 4:27-28).

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why was Bethlehem called the "city of David"?

[2:4]

Here, "city of David" referred to Bethlehem. Bethlehem had been the hometown of King David. Luke called Bethlehem the "city of David" in order to say that both David and the Messiah were born in the same place. This was not always the "city of David." In the Old Testament, the "city of David" was Jerusalem.

See: 2 Samuel 5:7,9; 2 Samuel 20:6

See Map: Judah; Bethlehem

Why did Mary put the infant Jesus into a feeding trough?

[2:7]

Mary put the infant Jesus into a "trough" (φάτνη/g5336) for feeding animals. Because of the census, many people travelled to Bethlehem at this time. Therefore, Luke explained there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the "inn" (κατάλυμα/g2646).

What was the "inn"?

[2:7]

Scholars give different ideas of what the "inn" was.

1. A room for guests in someone's home.
2. A stopping place for travelers.
3. A stable for animals.

See: Luke 9:58; 7:44-46; 9:52-53

2:8-20

What season was Jesus born?

[2:8]

Most people believe that Jesus was born in the winter. However, some scholars do not think that Jesus was born in the winter. This is because it would have been too cold for sheep to stay in pastures. However, other scholars believe that the winters in ancient Israel were warm enough for the sheep to be outdoors. Luke did not say what season Jesus was born.

Advice to Translators: For languages that do not speak of four seasons (spring, summer, autumn, and winter), the idea of winter can be expressed as "the cold season."

How did Luke write the word "today"?

[2:11]

Luke wrote the word “today” (see: Luke 2:11) many times in his gospel (see: Luke 4:21; 5:26; 19:9; 23:43). Some scholars think that he wrote this word to show that something fulfilled a prophecy. However, other scholars think that “today” did not have any special meaning. They think that in this verse “today” means simply the day of Jesus’ birth.

Advice to Translators: The sentence below about fulfilling a prophecy can be restructured as, “Some scholars think that Luke writes ‘today’ when he is showing that a message from a prophet in the past came true in his gospel.”

What did the angel call the baby Jesus at his birth?

[2:11]

The angel called Jesus three different things when he was born.

1. The angel called Jesus “Savior”(σωτήρ/g4990). People who worshiped many gods sometimes called their gods “savior”, and the people of Rome sometimes called their leaders “savior”. However, here “Savior” refers to Zechariah’s prophecy that Jesus would save people from their sins (see: Luke 1:77).
2. The angel called Jesus the “Christ”(Χριστός/g5547). That is, Jesus is the “anointed one” whom God chose to be Israel’s Messiah.
3. The angel called Jesus “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). This word is usually translated “Lord,” but God the Father is called “Lord” in the Greek Old Testament. Scholars say when the angel called Jesus this same thing, he meant that Jesus is himself God.

When the angel called Jesus “Savior,” “Christ,” and “Lord,” perhaps he was explaining what the angel Gabriel said to Mary (see: Luke 1:32-35).

See: [Savior](#); [Incarnation](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Savior](#)

What were “signs”?

[2:12]

The angel told the shepherds that the newborn baby would be wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding trough. He said that this would be a “sign”(σημεῖον/g4952) for them. Signs are things that show people that God has power, or that he is telling the truth about something.

When the shepherds saw the baby in a feeding trough, they would know that this was the child of which the angel had spoken. They would also know that the angel had told them the truth. Luke often wrote about signs. He wrote about signs in the sky (see: Luke 21:25), and signs that King Herod wanted to see Jesus do (see: Luke 23:8). Even though Luke did not call it a sign, some scholars believe the judgment on Zechariah was a sign (see: Luke 1:20).

See: [Sign](#)

Advice to Translators: Some languages prefer to use a verb instead of a noun such as “sign.” For example, instead of translating, “This will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a feeding trough,” some languages will want to translate, “This is how you will know what I am talking about: You will find a baby....” In the same way, instead of writing, “Signs are things that show people that God has power....,” some languages will prefer to say, “God uses things to show people that he has power....”

What did the angels mean when spoke about peace on earth?

[2:14]

The angels either promised or wished that God would give peace to certain people on earth. They did not speak, as many believe, of God giving general peace to everyone on earth. Here, “peace” meant complete well-being. It means more than just not worrying, or just not fighting with other people.

See: Luke 7:50; 8:48

Did the angels say “among people with whom God is pleased” or “among people who please God”?

[2:14]

The oldest Greek copies disagreed about whether the angels said “among people whom God ‘favors’”(εὐδοκία/g2017) or “among people who please God”. The difference of meaning is whether God choose people because of his “favor”, or whether he gave peace to people who had “favor” for God, that is, who loved God.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

2:21-40

Why did the parents of Jesus take him to the temple in Jerusalem?

[2:22]

Mary and Joseph were careful to obey the Law of Moses (see: Luke 2:22,23,24,27,39). Because Bethlehem was near the temple in Jerusalem, they were able to take Jesus to the temple. There, they asked God to bless Jesus.

See: [Temple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Bethlehem

How was Jesus’ family poor?

[2:24]

Some scholars believe that Mary and Joseph were poor because they brought two small birds to sacrifice for her. This was for them to obey the law of Moses. The normal sacrifice was a lamb, but it could be two small birds if the family was poor.

Some scholars believe that Mary and Joseph made this trip to the temple before the “learned men”(μάγος/g3097) visited Jesus. Mary and Joseph would have been able to buy a lamb after the “learned men” brought Jesus valuable gifts (see: Matthew 2:11).

See: Leviticus 12:8

Who was Simeon?

[2:25]

Luke wrote nothing about Simeon except that he honored God and obeyed him. He was waiting for the “helper”(παράκλησις/g3874) of Israel. That is, he was waiting for God to help Israel. Also the Holy Spirit was “on him”. That is, was with him. This was how Simeon was able to speak about what Jesus would do in the future.

What were the “helper” of Israel and the “deliverer” of Jerusalem?

[2:25]

The “helper”(παράκλησις/g3874) of Israel and the “deliverer”(λύτρωσις/g3085) of Jerusalem are both in this passage (see: Luke 2:25,38). They were both things that Simeon, Anna, and others were “waiting”(προσδέχομαι/g4327) for God to make happen. Some scholars believe that they were waiting for God to free Israel from the Romans, who ruled over it. Others believe that they were waiting for the kingdom of God, that is, for God to begin to rule in Israel.

Simeon, Anna, and others like them were probably waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue them from their suffering. Some scholars say that when Jews talked about the “helper” of Israel, they were talking about the Messiah, the person they were expecting to come.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why was the Holy Spirit was upon Simeon?

[2:25]

The Holy Spirit was “upon”(ἐπί/g1909) Simeon. Because of this, Simeon honored God (see: Luke 2:25). Also, the Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would see the Messiah (see: Luke 2:26). The Holy Spirit guided Simeon’s life until he went to the temple at the right time to see the Messiah (see: Luke 2:27). Finally, the Holy Spirit made Simeon able to recognize the Messiah and to prophesy about him.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What did Simeon believe about Jesus?

[2:26]

Simeon believed that Jesus is the Messiah God sent (see: Luke 2:26). He also believed that Jesus would “save”(σωτήριος/g4992) the people of Israel (see: Luke 2:30). Simeon also called Jesus the “light”(φῶς/g5457) for the Gentiles. This metaphor meant that Jesus would enable Gentiles to also know God. Simeon also believed that Jesus would bring “glory”(δόξα/g1391) to Israel (see: Luke 2:32). Some scholars say all the people in the world will honor Israel because of Jesus. Other scholars say Jesus is the Israelite whom all people in the world will honor in the future (see: Isaiah 49:5). God also honored Israel by planning to save people everywhere through Jesus, an Israelite man.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why were Joseph and Mary amazed at what Simeon said about Jesus?

[2:33]

Jesus’ parents were amazed at what Simeon said about Jesus (see: 2:33). Most Jews did not believe that Gentiles could live together with God forever. Mary probably did not expect Simeon to praise God because of her child.

How did Simeon say to Mary that Jesus will be very great?

[2:34]

Simeon said that Jesus was “appointed”(κεῖμαι/g2749) to do a certain task. He meant that God had sent Jesus in order to cause many in Israel to “rise” and many others to “fall.” That is, God would bless many Israelites through Jesus, and would condemn many others, those who would reject Jesus. Some scholars also believe that “rise” represents living with God forever, and that “fall” represents suffering forever away from God.

Simeon also called Jesus a “sign,” that is, someone that God would show to the people. Despite this, many people would speak against him and not accept his message.

See: Luke 11:23

See: [Sign](#); [Heaven](#); [Hell](#); [Sign](#)

How will a sword pierce Mary’s “soul”?

[2:35]

Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her “soul”(ψυχή/g5590). By saying this, Simeon meant that Mary would become very sad. Many scholars believe that it was over the death of Jesus that Mary would become sad like this. Some scholars believe that she would become sad over the division in Israel between those who would accept her Son and those who would reject him. Other scholars believe that she would become sad over grief Jesus caused when he stayed in the temple (see: Luke 2:49), and when he gave his disciples priority over his own family (see: Luke 8:21). It is also possible that Simeon spoke about the sword for more than one of these reasons. In any case, Mary would suffer greatly in the years ahead.

See: John 19:25; Luke 12:51-53

How did the birth of John the Baptist compare to Jesus' birth?

There were some ways in which the birth of John the Baptist was born in the same way Jesus was born.

1. The angel Gabriel announced beforehand that each would be born.
2. Both John's mother and Jesus' mother did not expect to become pregnant.
3. Men gave prophecies about each of the babies.
4. Both babies caused people to rejoice.

However, scholars have pointed out several differences.

1. John was born to old and barren parents, but Jesus was born to a virgin.
2. John was a prophet of God, but Jesus is the Son of God.
3. The Holy Spirit filled John while he was in his mother's womb, but Jesus' mother conceived him as the Holy Spirit came on her.
4. Neighbors and relatives rejoiced because of John's birth, but angels rejoiced because of Jesus' birth.
5. John grew and became strong in spirit (see: Luke 1:80), but Jesus also increased in wisdom.
6. John was the greatest human to ever live, but Jesus is more excellent than John.

These differences were how Jesus was greater than John.

How did the Holy Spirit begin to work in a different way after Jesus was born?

[2:38]

Most scholars believe that God stopped sending prophets to Israel about four hundred years before Jesus was born. These four hundred years are called the "inter-testamental years," that is, the years between when the last book of the Old Testament was written and when Jesus was born.

However, since Luke calls Anna a "prophetess" (προφῆτις/g4398), some scholars believe that the Holy Spirit continued to work in the same way in Israel. Still other scholars believe that God began to send prophets again after these four hundred years.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

2:41-52

Why did Jesus' parents go to Jerusalem every year?

[2:41]

The Law of Moses required Jewish men to go to three festivals in Jerusalem each year (see: Deuteronomy 16:16), but it was often impossible for the poor to go so often, because for many of them, Jerusalem was very far away. Probably many people went only to the Passover festival, as Mary and Joseph did. In doing so, they showed themselves to be people who honored God. At the Passover, they offered sacrifices and celebrated for a week. This festival was to remember how God had brought the Israelites out from Egypt and freed them from being slaves.

See: Leviticus 23:6

See: [Passover](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

When did Jesus' parents take him to the Passover?

[2:41]

Some scholars believe that this was the first time that Jesus' parents took him to Jerusalem for the Passover. Other scholars believe that they took him every year. Either is possible.

How did Jesus become a son of the Law of Moses?

[2:43]

The Jews thought that when boys became twelve years old, they were old enough to know the difference between right and wrong. It was at this age that a Jewish boy began to have to obey the Law of Moses. People then began to call him a “son of the Law”.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How did Jesus’ parents leave him in Jerusalem?

[2:44]

Jesus and his parents traveled to Jerusalem in a large group of people. Mary and Joseph probably thought that everyone in the group made sure that all the children were with them.

Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus?

[2:46]

Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple. Jesus was not inside the temple itself. He was in the courtyard of the temple.

See: [Temple Courts](#); [Temple Courts](#)

How did Jesus amaze teachers in the temple?

[2:47]

During Passover, many teachers came to the temple. They taught by asking questions and then answering their own questions. At the end of the festival, although most visitors had left Jerusalem, the boy Jesus stayed behind in the temple. Perhaps Jesus asked questions of the teachers because he truly wanted to know various things about the Law of Moses. Perhaps he also asked questions in the same way the teachers did, in order to answer them himself. In any case, he answered questions in a way that amazed the teachers.

See: [Temple](#)

Why did Mary ask Jesus a question?

[2:48]

Mary asked Jesus a question because she cared for her son. She was very worried after she and Joseph could not find Jesus for three days. She thought that Jesus had done wrong when he left their group and stayed behind in Jerusalem. However, Jesus did not do anything wrong.

Who was Jesus’ Father?

[2:49]

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

What was “necessary” to happen?

[2:49]

Luke wrote the word “necessary” (δεῖ/g1163) to say God required Jesus to be in his Father’s house, or to be busy with his Father’s affairs. Jesus had no choice other than to honor and obey God. At the age of twelve, Jesus understood that he had to do what his Father wished him to do.

How did Jesus grow in wisdom?

[2:52]

Jesus grew up like other children grow up. Even though he was God, he was also a human being, so he needed to learn just like any other child. Luke seems to want to say that as Jesus grew, he understood better and better how he was going to serve God his Father.

See: [Incarnation](#)

Chapter 3

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

"A voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley will be filled,
and every mountain and hill will be made low,
and the crooked roads will be made straight,
and the uneven places will be built into roads,

⁶ and all flesh will see the salvation of God."

⁷ So John said to the crowds who were coming out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers! Who warned you to run away from the wrath that is coming? ⁸ Therefore, produce fruits that are worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹ Even now the ax is set against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ Then the crowds kept asking him, saying, "What then are we to do?"

¹¹ He answered and said to them, "If someone has two tunics, he should share it with a person who has none, and the one having food should do the same."

¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what must we do?"

¹³ He said to them, "Do not collect more money than you have been ordered to collect."

¹⁴ Some soldiers also asked him, saying, "What about us? What must we do?"

He said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, and do not accuse anyone falsely. Be content with your wages."

¹⁵ Now as the people were eagerly expecting the Christ to come, everyone was wondering in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ. ¹⁶ John answered by saying to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water, but someone is coming who is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy even to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse. But he will burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out."

¹⁸ With many other exhortations also, John was announcing the good news to the people. ¹⁹ When Herod the tetrarch had been reproved for marrying his brother's wife Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰ he added this to them all, that he locked John up in prison.

²¹ Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized, and while he was praying, the heavens opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit in bodily form came down on him like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son. I am pleased with you."

²³ When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years of age. He was the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph.

²⁵ Joseph was the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda.

²⁷ Joda was the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,

²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi. ³⁰ Levi was the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,

³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon.

³³ Nahshon was the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,

³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah. ³⁶ Shelah was the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,

³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Luke 3

3:1-20

Who was Tiberius Caesar?

[3:1]

Tiberius Caesar ruled the entire Roman Empire from A.D. 14 to 37. The fifteenth year of his reign was A.D. 27.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Who was Pontius Pilate?

[3:1]

Pontius Pilate was a “leader”(ἡγεμονεύω/g2230) in the Roman Empire. He ruled over Judea and the area near Judea from A.D. 26 to 36.

See Map: Judea

Who was Herod?

[3:1]

There are several men named Herod in the Bible. The man in this verse is Herod Antipas, one of the sons of King Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετραρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled. Herod Antipas ruled over Galilee from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39.

See: [King Herod](#)

Who was Philip?

[3:1]

Philip was another one of the sons of Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετραρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled. This included the regions of Iturea and Trachonitis, which were located east of Caesarea Philippi, and south of Damascus.

See Map: Israel

Who was Lysanias?

[3:1]

The only thing that is known about Lysanias is that Luke said he was ruler of Abilene at this time. Abilene was place north of Mt. Hermon. Perhaps he was another son of Herod the Great. He ruled a “fourth”(τετρααρχέω/g5075) of the area that his father ruled.

See: [King Herod](#)

See Map: Israel

Why did Luke give the names of Roman and Jewish rulers at the time of John the Baptist?

[3:1]

Luke gave the names of Roman and Jewish rulers at the time of John because John was a prophet who served God. In the Old Testament, when someone wrote about a prophet, they often said what kings were ruling when the prophets served God (see: Isaiah 1:1; Zechariah 1:1). Although Luke did not call John a prophet in this scripture (see: Luke 3:2), Zechariah and Jesus called John a prophet (see: Luke 1:76; 7:26). This was because God told him what to say to people.

Also, Luke gave the names of the rulers because his readers knew them. They knew that these rulers had did many evil things, and that the prophets suffered because of them. When the people of Israel read about these things, perhaps they thought about how kings in the past made the prophets suffer and die (see: Hebrews 11:32-40). John suffered and died because of evil rulers in the same way other prophets suffered and died.

See: [Prophet](#)

Advice to translators: Use the expression for “clean” or “ritually pure” that you use in your version of the gospels.

Why was John’s baptism different than other kinds of baptism?

[3:3]

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

See Map: Jordan

How did Luke write about repenting?

[3:3]

“Repentance”(μετάνοια/g3341) is a turning, in the same way when someone turns from facing one way to facing another way. Some scholars think that it means to stop dishonoring God and to turn to follow a path that honors him. Other scholars think it means for a person to change what he thinks about God. John used the word “repentance” because he wanted the people to get ready for the messiah to come to them.

See: Isaiah 40:3-5

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did God forgive a Jew’s sins?

[3:3]

God will only forgive a person for sinning if that person believes in him. Before Jesus came to Earth, the Jews showed God that they believed in him by obeying the Law of Moses. When John the Baptist preached, some Jews showed that they trusted God by “repenting”(μετάνοια/g3341) and asking John to baptize them. However, it was not because of the way that they acted that God forgave them. It was because they trusted in him.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did John serve God and Jesus?

[3:4]

John served God by helping the Jewish people to know that Jesus was the messiah and to believe in Jesus. Luke wrote about the way John served Jesus as if John was announcing that a king was coming (see: Luke 3:5). When a king visited, the people often repaired the road and made it easy to travel on. John explained to the people that the right way to receive Jesus was to repent and trust in God to save them.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Luke write all flesh will see God's salvation?

[3:6]

Luke wrote all flesh will see God's salvation. Luke was repeating Isaiah 40:5. The Greek translation of the Old Testament used the word "salvation" in Isaiah 40:5. Luke may have also thinking about Isaiah 45:8,17; 46:13 and other scriptures in Isaiah. Isaiah wrote about God's salvation many times.

See: Luke 2:30; Isaiah 12:2-3; 17:10; 25:9; 52:7; 59:17

What was flesh?

[3:6]

Flesh was "people"(σάρξ/g4561). That is, flesh was a metaphor to say that all people will know about the salvation God brings.

Why did John call the Jews poisonous snakes?

[3:7]

John called the Jews children of poisonous snakes because they did evil things. The Jews thought they were Abraham's children and friends with God. While Abraham was their ancestor, they did not do the things that Abraham did. Therefore, they were not friends with God. Isaiah said that God's enemies among the Israelites were poisonous snakes (see: Isaiah 59:5).

See: Luke 19:40

See: [Fire](#); [Fire](#)

Advice to translators: "Imply" means to want to say something without saying it clearly.

Why did John speak of the wrath to come?

[3:7]

John implied that God will be angry with the people who do not "repent"(μετάνοια/g3341). He also implied that he was talking about the "Day of the Lord," when God will judge the whole world.

See: Isaiah 13:9; Zephaniah 2:2

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of the Lord](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

How did John speak about fruit?

[3:8]

John spoke about people doing good things as if they were trees producing fruit. That is, when people "repented"(μετάνοια/g3341), they made fruit. John said that if there was no fruit, then they did not truly "repent".

If Jews did not do good things, then John said they did not live in the same way Abraham lived. If Jews did good things, then John said they were “true” descendants of Abraham. That is, they lived in the way that Abraham lived. However, the Jews thought they were “true” descendants of Abraham even when they did evil things. John said they were wrong to think that. He said they needed to do good things.

John said when trees did not make fruit, they were useless. Therefore, men cut them down and burned them. In the Bible, when God punishes sinners it is often spoken about as if they were being burned (see: Matthew 13:49-50; Revelation 21:8). If the Jews did not “repent”, God would punish them. They only had a short period of time in which to repent.

Finally, when people “repented,” they changed how they treated other people. They were to share with those who lacked what they needed every day. They were also to treat all people the same way. John wanted people to think about the things they did.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

What did the Jews think about tax collectors?

[3:12]

The Jews hated tax collectors for many reasons.

1. Tax collectors collected taxes for the Roman government. The Jews hated the Roman government because they were Gentiles and they treated the Jews badly.
2. Tax collectors often took more money than they needed to take.
3. The Jews believed they were giving money to people who were evil and reject God.

Because of this, the Jews considered Jewish tax collectors to be traitors to their own people so that they could gain money for themselves.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

Advice to translators: A sandal is a type of shoe that does not completely surround the foot. When someone wears a sandal, you can see his toes.

Why was John unworthy to untie Jesus’ sandals?

[3:16]

Except for Jesus, John the Baptist honored God more than anyone else who ever lived (see: Luke 7:28). He was humble, and he knew that Jesus was far stronger than himself. He knew Jesus is God. Because of this, John did not feel that he was good enough to approach Jesus. For the Jews, God could not be approached because he is perfectly “holy”(ἅγιος/g0040). That is, God is perfect and completely different from men.

In ancient Israel, people’s feet got dirty from the dusty ground they walked on. Only servants would touch someone’s feet; they did so in order to wash them for them. People wore sandals on their feet, so their sandals also became dirty. John thought that Jesus was so much greater than himself, that he did not deserve even to help him remove his sandals.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

Why did people baptize other people?

[3:16]

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How did Jesus baptize in the Holy Spirit and in fire?

[3:16]

Some scholars say Jesus baptized in the Holy Spirit and in fire when he punished people who did evil things (see: Luke 3:9,17). Other scholars say Jesus baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire by filling people with the Holy Spirit so they could serve God (see: Acts 1:5; 2:3-4).

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Advice to translators: This entry is mainly for people in cultures that do not know or use threshing floors.

What was a threshing floor?

[3:17]

A [threshing floor](#) was a bare place on the ground where people separated grain from its stalk. In some places, people made threshing floors inside large buildings. At the time of John the Baptist, most threshing floors were outside.

When people separated the grain from its stalk, they often beat the stalks or they had large animals pull heavy loads across the stalks. Then, the people threw the stalks into the air, where the wind blew away the useless parts. The grain, which was heavier, fell back to the ground. Then the people put the grain into bags.

When John said that the messiah would separate grain, he meant that the messiah would separate the people who believed in him from those who rejected him. The writers of the Bible often spoke of God punishing the wicked people as if he were making a fire burn forever (see: Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10,15).

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#); [Fire](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What was the good news John announced?

[3:18]

When Luke said that John announced the “good news” or “gospel”(εὐαγγέλιζω/g2097) to the Jews, he meant that John told everyone to repent of their sins. They must also be “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) to get ready for the messiah.

When Jesus began to teach the people, he told them more things about this good news. He told people that the “kingdom of God” was coming. He also spoke more and more clearly about what he would do. He would die on a cross but he would rise again. This was what he must do as the “Lamb of God.” However, it seems that he only said this to the twelve disciples. It does not seem that he ever told the people in general about these things.

See: [Lamb of God](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Lamb of God](#)

3:21-22

Why was Jesus praying when he was baptized?

[3:21}

Jesus was praying when he was baptized because he wanted the Holy Spirit to help him serve God. Luke often wrote about someone praying at the same time when he wrote about the Holy Spirit. He wrote about how Jesus taught his disciples how to pray to God. Later, God the Father gave the Holy Spirit to them (see: Luke 11:13). God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit when they prayed (see: Acts 4:31).

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Advice to translators: For “the Holy Spirit filled Christians,” consider using the expression in your version of Acts 2:4.

Why was the Holy Spirit in bodily form of a dove?

[3:22]

In the Bible, a dove represented many different things. Only Luke wrote the Holy Spirit was in the “bodily”(σωματικός/g4984) “form”(εἶδος/g1491) of a dove.” Luke wrote that because he noted well the service of the Holy Spirit at the start of his Gospel (see: Luke 1:15,35,41,67; 2:25-27).

See: Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Isaiah 42:1

Advice to translators: For “the bodily form of a dove,” use the expression in your Bible version.

Why did God call Jesus his Son?

[3:22]

God called Jesus his Son because God was announcing that Jesus was the messiah whom he had promised to send. In Psalms 2:7, God said the person he made king was his “Son”. God also loves Jesus and is pleased with him. God spoke from heaven when Jesus was baptized. The people heard him, but they did not see him.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

Why was Jesus baptized?

[3:22]

John “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) people as part of their “repenting”(μετανοέω/g3340) from their sins. He did this so that they would be able to welcome the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He also “baptized” Jesus (see: Mark 1:9), because Jesus asked him to do so, even though Jesus had never sinned. He never needed to “repent” of having sinned. Most scholars think that Jesus wanted to be “baptized” in order to prepare him to be a sacrifice to God. He would die in the same way a sacrifice was done to allow people to be at peace with God.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:21

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

3:23-38

Why did Luke write how old Jesus was when he began to serve the people?

[3:23]

Luke wrote that Jesus was about thirty years old when he began to serve the people. The Jews thought that this was when a man should begin doing the work that he would do for the rest of his life. Joseph was thirty years old when he became a leader in Egypt (see: Genesis 41:46). David was thirty when he began to rule over Israel (see: 2 Samuel 5:4). The Levites began serving in the tent of meeting at the age of thirty (see: Numbers 4:3).

See: [Tent of Meeting](#)

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone’s ancestors or descendants.

How was Luke’s genealogy of Jesus different from Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Luke’s genealogy of Jesus is different from Matthew’s genealogy in several ways.

1. Matthew wrote the genealogy first in his gospel. However, Luke wrote the genealogy after he wrote about how Jesus was “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907). However, he wrote about it before he wrote about how Satan tried to make Jesus sin.
2. Matthew started Jesus’ genealogy with Abraham. He wrote Jesus’ descendants until Joseph, who people thought was the father of Jesus. However, Luke started Jesus’ genealogy with Joseph. He wrote Jesus’ ancestors all the way back to Adam, the first man.
3. Matthew wrote about David’s son Solomon in his genealogy. However, Luke wrote about David’s son Nathan.
4. Matthew wrote about women in his genealogy. However, Luke did not write about any women.
5. Matthew wrote about three groups of fourteen people. This was forty-two people. Luke wrote about eleven groups of seven people. This was seventy-seven people.
6. The people between Jesus to David are different in Matthew and Luke.

See: [Son of David](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Genealogy](#); [Son of David](#)

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone's ancestors or descendants.

Why was Luke's genealogy of Jesus different from Matthew's genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Scholars give different reasons why Luke's genealogy of Jesus was different from Matthew's genealogy.

1. Matthew and Luke thought different kinds of people would read their gospels. Matthew wrote for Jewish Christians and Luke wrote for Gentile Christians.
2. Luke wrote Jesus' ancestors from his mother Mary but Matthew wrote Jesus' ancestors from Joseph.
3. Luke wrote about Nathan instead of Solomon because of prophecies that David would stop having descendants (see: Jeremiah 22:28-30; 36:30-31).
4. Luke wanted to imply that Jesus was also a prophet.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Advice to translators: A genealogy is a list of someone's ancestors or descendants.

Why did Luke write a genealogy of Jesus?

[3:23]

Luke's genealogy named the ancestors of Jesus back to Adam, the first man, and then back to God. Luke wanted people to know that Jesus was related to all mankind, not only to the Jews. Therefore, Luke also wanted his readers to know that Jesus came to bring the gospel to all mankind.

Some scholars think Luke wanted people to know Jesus was different than Adam (see: Romans 5:12-21). When Adam sinned, the whole world rebelled against God and began to die. However, Jesus came so that people could live forever with God.

See: [Gospel](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Then Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of that time he was hungry. ³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

⁵ Then the devil led Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant of time. ⁶ The devil said to him, "I will give to you all this authority and all their glory, for they have been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want. ⁷ So then, if you will bow down and worship me, it will be yours."

⁸ But Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, 'You will worship the Lord your God, and you will serve only him.'"

⁹ Then the devil led Jesus to Jerusalem and put him on the very highest point of the temple building, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written,

'He will give orders to his angels regarding you,
to protect you,'

¹¹ and, 'They will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

¹² Answering him, Jesus said, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

¹³ When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he went away and left him until another time.

¹⁴ Then Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread throughout the entire surrounding region. ¹⁵ Then he began to teach in their synagogues and he was praised by all.

¹⁶ He came into Nazareth, where he had been raised, and, as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and he stood up to read aloud. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. He opened the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he anointed me
to announce good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ He began to speak to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

²² Everyone there spoke well of him and they were amazed at the gracious words which were coming out of his mouth, and they asked, "Is this not the son of Joseph?"

²³ He said to them, "Surely you will say this proverb to me, 'Doctor, heal yourself. Whatever we heard that you did in Capernaum, do the same in your hometown.'"²⁴ But he said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is received in his own hometown. ²⁵ But in truth I tell you that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months and a great famine came upon all the land. ²⁶ But Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath in Sidon, to a widow living there.

²⁷ There were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet, but none of them were cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were filled with rage when they heard these things. ²⁹ They got up, forced him out of the town, and led him to the cliff of the hill on which

their town was built, so they might throw him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the middle of them and he went to another place.

³¹ Then he went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and he began to teach them on the Sabbath. ³² They were astonished at his teaching, because he spoke with authority. ³³ Now in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ "Ah! What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

³⁵ Jesus rebuked the demon, saying, "Do not speak! Come out of him!" When the demon had thrown the man down in the middle of them, he came out of him, and did not harm him in any way.

³⁶ All the people were very amazed, and they kept talking about it with one another. They said, "What kind of words are these? He commands the unclean spirits with authority and power and they come out."

³⁷ So news about him began to spread into every part of the surrounding region.

³⁸ Then Jesus left the synagogue and entered into the house of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering with a high fever, and they pleaded with him on her behalf. ³⁹ So he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and started serving them.

⁴⁰ When the sun was setting, people brought to Jesus everyone who was sick with various kinds of diseases. He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ Demons also came out from many of them, crying out and saying, "You are the Son of God!" Jesus rebuked the demons and would not let them speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

⁴² When daybreak came, he went out into a solitary place. Crowds of people were looking for him and came to the place where he was. They tried to keep him from going away from them. ⁴³ But he said to them, "I must also preach the gospel about the kingdom of God to many other cities, because this is the reason I was sent here."

⁴⁴ Then he continued to preach in the synagogues throughout Judea.

Luke 4

4:1-13

Why did Luke write that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit when he went into the wilderness?

[4:1]

Luke wrote that the Holy Spirit wanted Jesus to go into the wilderness. In the wilderness, the devil tried to make Jesus sin. Matthew and Mark also wrote about the Holy Spirit doing this (see: Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12). However, only Luke wrote that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. Some scholars say Jesus had the Holy Spirit in him and was full of the Holy Spirit since he was baptized (see: Luke 3:21-22). Other scholars say Luke wanted people to know that Jesus was not "tempted or tested" (πειράζω/g3985) because he did something wrong.

See: [Test](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Wilderness](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Test](#)

Advice to translators: The devil tried to trap Jesus and get him to sin, this was a "temptation." A "temptation" was a certain type of test or a trap. A "wilderness" was an area that was very hot and had no water.

See Map: Judea

How did Jesus in the wilderness compare with the Israelites?

[4:1, 4:2]

Jesus in the wilderness compared to the Israelites because God tested Israel in the wilderness after they left Egypt with Moses. They did not obey God. However, Jesus obeyed God when the devil tried to make

him sin. Also, the forty days Jesus was in the wilderness compared to the forty years the Israelites were in the wilderness. The Israelites were in the wilderness one year for each day the spies were in the promised land. In the same way Jesus was in the wilderness one day for each year the Israelites were in the wilderness (see: Numbers 14:33-34).

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

Why did Jesus fast for forty days?

[4:2]

The Old Testament used the number forty is used many times. Moses and Elijah began to serve God in a special way after they fasted for forty days (see: Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8). After Jesus fasted, he began to serve God in a special way and tell Israel that he was the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

The devil tried to convince Adam to sin. He also tried to convince Jesus to sin. How did Satan do this?

[4:2]

The devil tried to convince Adam to sin. He also tried to convince Jesus to sin. Some scholars think that Satan did this in the same way. They think that he did it in a certain way for a certain reason. Perhaps, John talked about these reasons in 1 John 2:16.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Advice to translators: In some translations, Satan said “if” you are the son of God. However, Satan knew that Jesus was the Son of God. This question may need to be adapted to explain your local translation.

Did Satan know that Jesus is the Son of God?

[4:3]

Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. However, the devil wanted Jesus to stop being the Son of God. Perhaps he thought that God would reject Jesus if Jesus rejected God.

In the Old Testament, Israel was also called the “son” of God (see: Exodus 4:22-23; Hosea 11:1). Jesus is also the Son of God. However, he is not the son of God in the same way that Israel was the son of God. Israel disobeyed God and God punished them in the same way a parent punished their son. The devil wanted Jesus to disobey God. Perhaps, Satan wanted God to punish Jesus. Despite this, Jesus obeyed God in the same way a son should obey his father.

See: Luke 3:22

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did the devil tempt Jesus when Jesus was hungry?

[4:3]

The devil wanted Jesus to turn a stone into bread because Jesus was hungry. Jesus was very hungry after not eating for forty days. The devil knew Jesus was a human being in every way except Jesus did not sin. Perhaps Luke remembered that the Israelites were also hungry in the desert. When they were hungry, they disobeyed God (see: Exodus 16:8). However, Jesus obeyed God when he was hungry.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

The devil told Jesus to make himself food in the desert. Why did Jesus not do this?

[4:4]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus did not make himself food in the desert.

1. God did not want him to eat food. Jesus was fasting when he was in the desert.
2. Jesus needed to suffer in the same way that people suffered (see: Hebrews 2:18; 4:15). This helped Jesus to become a priest who knew what people felt when they were hungry.
3. Jesus trusted God. Jesus knew that God would give him food to eat. He knew that God would give him everything that he needed to live. He also trusted in the things that God said in Scripture. Therefore, he said to the devil the things that Scripture wrote.

However, some scholars say it was not always wrong for Jesus to make food. When Jesus answered the devil, he repeated a scripture that spoke about the manna that God made (see: Deuteronomy 8:3). Later, Jesus made food for people (see: Luke 5:4-10; 9:12-17).

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

How did the devil show Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:5]

Scholars believe the devil showed Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” in a vision. Whether it was the world that Rome ruled or the whole world, no one was able to see all of it at one time from a mountain. It was a real seeing but it did not belong to this world. Some scholars say it was real the same way the heavens opened at Jesus’ baptism (see: Luke 3:21). Some scholars say that is why Luke did not say Jesus was on a mountain. Other scholars say when the devil led Jesus up it was on a mountain.

See: Deuteronomy 32:49; 34:1-3

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [World](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How was the devil able to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:6]

The devil was able to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” because God gave permission to the devil to rule the whole world (see: 1 John 5:19). However, this is only for a limited time (see: John 12:31; 16:11).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the devil want to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:6, 4:7]

The devil wanted to give Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” because that was not God’s plan for Jesus. God gives Jesus authority to rule the world (see: Psalm 2:8; Daniel 7:14; Matthew 28:18). However, God’s plan was for Jesus to suffer and die before he entered into glory (see: Luke 24:26). Paul also wrote about this (see: Philippians 2:5-11).

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Cross](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Jesus refuse to worship the devil to receive “all the kingdoms of the world”?

[4:8]

Jesus refused to worship the devil to receive “all the kingdoms of the world” because the Old Testament wrote only God must be worshipped. That is, someone cannot worship God and worship someone else at the same time. Jesus noted this well by adding the word “only”(μόνος/g3441) when he repeated the Old Testament scripture (see: Deuteronomy 6:13).

See: [Worship](#)

How did the devil use Psalm 91 in a wrong way?

[4:10, 4:11]

The devil used Psalm 91 in a wrong way by telling Jesus that God protected people from harm even when they tested God. The devil tried to convince Jesus that he was able to throw himself down from the “highest point of the temple.” However, the writer of Psalm 91 wrote about someone who trusted God, even when things were difficult. He also wrote about how God promised to care for people who trusted in him. However, the devil wanted to use this Psalm in a different way. He wanted Jesus to think God would help him, even if Jesus tested God or rejected the things that God said. However, God did not promise to protect those who rejected him in Psalm 91.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Temple](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why was Jesus not willing to test God?

[4:12]

Jesus was not willing to test God because Jesus knew all scriptures and he knew how to follow them in the right way. Jesus repeated Deuteronomy 6:16 to the devil. That Scripture said people must not test God. Jesus did not argue with the devil about scripture.

Advice to translators: Translate the phrase “until another time” as your local translation does. Why did Luke write “until another time”? Luke wrote “until another time” so his readers would know the devil left Jesus in order to wait for another time to try to make Jesus disobey God. The devil also tempted Jesus when he died on the cross. At that time, people spoke to Jesus using words using the same words the devil said, “If you are the Son of God” (see: Matthew 27:40).

4:14-15

Why did the second major section of Luke’s gospel begin here?

[4:14]

Jesus’ temptation concluded the first major section of Luke’s gospel. Jesus was a baby born from a virgin when he came into the world. John the Baptist prepared people for Jesus’ coming. Luke recorded Jesus’ genealogy and temptation. Jesus then began seeking people. He announced his ministry at his hometown. He taught and did miracles. This division of major sections is taken from the key verse of Luke’s gospel (see: Luke 19:10).

What did Luke say about the start of Jesus’ earthly service?

[4:15]

After the devil tempted Jesus, Jesus went back to Galilee in the “power”(δύναμις/g1411) of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helped Jesus to do the great things that he did. He taught and did miracles because the Holy Spirit gave him the power to do these things. Also, Luke said that many people believed in Jesus when he started his earthly service. When Jesus began teaching, everyone in Galilee spoke well of him.

See Map: Galilee

4:16-30

Why did Jesus stand to read the scroll in the synagogue?

[4:16]

Jesus stood to read the scroll in the synagogue because when someone read scripture they needed to stand. This was a way to honor God. Luke wrote that Jesus often went to the synagogue. This time when Jesus went to the synagogue, he asked to read Scripture. Jesus read the words of the prophet Isaiah (see: Isaiah 61:1-2).

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

How did the prophecy that Jesus read from Isaiah say Jesus is the Messiah?

[4:18, 4:19]

Isaiah prophesied that the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) of the “Lord”(κύριος/g2962), would be with the messiah (see: Luke 3:22). There were three ways that the people would know the messiah.

1. The messiah told “good news or gospel”(εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) to the “poor”(πτωχός/g4434). The good news was to the “poor” because the poor needed help. People needed help to be at peace with God.
2. The messiah told people in prison that they would be free. The devil caused some people to be sick. The messiah made many sick people healthy. He also freed people from the way that they used to live before they believed in Jesus.
3. The messiah announced the “time”(ἐνιαυτός/g1763) of the Lord’s “favor”(δεκτός/g1184) (see: Luke 4:19; Isaiah 61:2). Some scholars think that Isaiah was speaking about a special Sabbath time called the Year of Jubilee in the Law of Moses (see: Leviticus 25:8-55). Other scholars think that Isaiah was speaking about how God would give favor to Christians. He did this when Jesus died so that Christians could be at peace with God.

See: [Sabbath](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#)

Why did Jesus not talk about God’s judgment when he read from Isaiah?

[4:19]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus did not talk about God’s judgment when he read from Isaiah.

1. Jesus did not want people to think about Isaiah’s warnings of judgment.
2. The people thought Isaiah’s judgment was for the Gentiles. Jesus wanted them to know the Lord’s favor was for the Gentiles also.
3. This was not time for the judgment. It was the time for the Lord’s favor. The judgment will come when Jesus returns at the end of the world (see: Revelation 19:11-16).
4. The people become angry enough in verse twenty-eight without hearing Jesus read about Judgment from Isaiah.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the people a proverb?

[4:23]

Jesus told the people a proverb about a doctor healing himself because the people wanted Jesus to do miracles in Nazareth. They knew Jesus did miracles in Capernaum and now they wanted him to do the same things in Nazareth (see: Luke 4:23). However, Jesus did not do what they wanted because the people did not believe in him (see: Matthew 13:57-58).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

See Map: Nazareth; Capernaum; Galilee

Why did Jesus talk about the prophets, Elijah and Elisha?

[4:25, 4:26, 4:27]

Jesus talked about the prophets, Elijah and Elisha. These men died many years before. Jesus wanted the people of Nazareth to know that they rejected him in the same way that the Israelites rejected Elijah and Elisha. However, the people of Nazareth knew that God sent Elijah and Elisha. After the Israelites rejected them, Elijah and Elisha helped the Gentiles. The Israelites thought that the Gentiles were evil and did not honor God. Therefore, a prophet should not help them. After the people of Nazareth rejected him, Jesus began to help Gentiles.

See: 1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 5

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Sidon; Syria

Why did all the people in the synagogue try to kill Jesus?

[4:29]

Jesus read the words of Isaiah to the people in Luke 4:18-19 (see: Isaiah 61:1-2). All the people in the synagogue tried to kill Jesus because the things he said made them angry. They thought that Isaiah was speaking about God saving Israel. Jesus said that it was about the Gentiles. This insulted the Jews because they thought the Gentiles were evil.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

4:31-44

Why were the people amazed at the teaching of Jesus?

[4:32]

Luke said that the people were “amazed”(ἐκπλήσσω/g1605) at the things Jesus taught. They were amazed because Jesus said the words God commanded him to speak (see: Matthew 7:29). Jesus spoke with “power”(ἐξουσία/g1849) that came from the Holy Spirit and God himself. Scholars think that Jesus explained the Old Testament to the people.

What was another way Jesus demonstrated his power in the synagogue?

[4:35]

While Jesus was teaching in the synagogue, a man began to shout loudly. The man was controlled by a demon. Jesus commanded the demon to be “quiet”(φιμόω/g5392) and he commanded the demon to “come out”(ἐξέρχομαι/g1831) of the shouting man. Luke wanted people to know that Jesus could make demons obey him because he is God. Once again, the people were amazed with Jesus and the power that God had given him.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

How did Jesus heal Simon’s mother-in-law?

[4:39]

Simon’s mother-in-law was sick with a “high fever”(πυρετός/g4446)(μέγας/g3173) fever. Jesus stood over Simon’s mother-in-law and “commanded”(ἐπιτιμάω/g2008) the fever to leave. Simon’s mother-in-law was immediately healed. Some scholars think that Luke wanted people to know that Jesus could immediately heal a sick person. Other scholars think a demon caused the fever. Jesus “commanded” the fever to leave in the same way that he “commanded” the demon to leave the man in the synagogue.

Why did people come to Jesus after sunset?

[4:40]

People came to Jesus after sunset because it was the sabbath. People did not travel very far or carry a heavy load on the Sabbath. Therefore, after the sabbath they brought ill and demon possessed people to Jesus. Jesus healed them of various diseases and cast out demons.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

Why did Jesus lay his hands on people when healing them?

[4:40]

Jesus laid his hands on people when he healed them because he loved them or he favored them. However, putting his hands on people was not what healed them. Instead, it was the power of God.

Why did Jesus command the demons not to say he is the Son of God even though they were right that he is the Messiah?

[4:41]

Scholars give several reasons why Jesus commanded the demons not to say he is the Son of God even though they were right that he is the messiah.

1. Demons taught people wrong things about the messiah.
2. Jesus did not want the evil demons to tell people about him.
3. Jesus wanted his disciples to tell people about him.

See: [Demon](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Demon](#)

Why did God sent Jesus?

[4:43]

God sent Jesus to tell people about God's reign. Some scholars think Jesus told people he was the messiah. They think Jesus offered to rule the Jews on the earth. Other scholars think that Jesus wanted people to believe in him and obey him as their king. They think God sent him to help people to be at peace with God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Now it happened while the people were crowding around Jesus and listening to the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. ² He saw two boats pulled up by the edge of the lake. The fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³ Jesus got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put it out in the water a short distance from the land. Then he sat down and taught the people out of the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Take the boat out into the deeper water and let down your nets for a catch."

⁵ Simon answered and said, "Master, we have labored all night and caught nothing, but at your word, I will let down the nets." ⁶ When they had done this, they gathered a very large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. ⁷ So they motioned to their partners in the other boat that they should come and help them. They came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord." ⁹ For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish which they had taken. ¹⁰ And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid, because from now on you will catch men." ¹¹ When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

¹² It came about that while he was in one of the cities, a man full of leprosy was there. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

¹³ Then Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean." Immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁴ He instructed him to tell no one but told him, "Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." ¹⁵ But the report about him spread even farther, and large crowds of people came together to hear him teach and to be healed of their sicknesses. ¹⁶ But he often withdrew into the deserted places and prayed.

¹⁷ It came about on one of those days that he was teaching, and there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was with him to heal. ¹⁸ Now some men came carrying on a mat a man who was paralyzed, and they looked for a way to bring him inside in order to lay him down in front of Jesus. ¹⁹ They could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, so they went up to the housetop and let the man down through the tiles, on his mat, into the midst of the people, right in front of Jesus. ²⁰ Seeing their faith, Jesus said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

²¹ The scribes and the Pharisees began to question this, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

²² But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking, answered and said to them, "Why are you questioning this in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"—he said to the paralyzed man—"I tell you, get up, pick up your mat and go to your house." ²⁵ Immediately he got up in front of them and picked up the mat on which he was lying. Then he went away to his house, glorifying God.

²⁶ Everyone was amazed and they glorified God. They were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

²⁷ After these things happened, Jesus went out from there and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax collector's tent. He said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ So Levi got up and followed him, leaving everything behind.

²⁹ Then Levi gave a big banquet in his house for Jesus. There were many tax collectors there and other people who were reclining at the table and eating with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹ Jesus answered them, "People who are well do not need a physician; only those who are sick. ³² I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

³³ They said to him, "The disciples of John often fast and pray, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same. But your disciples eat and drink."

³⁴ Jesus said to them, "Can anyone make the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is still with them? ³⁵ But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, then in those days they will fast." ³⁶ Then Jesus also spoke a parable to them. "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and uses it to mend an old garment. If he does that, he will tear the new garment, and the piece of cloth from the new garment will not fit with the cloth of the old garment. ³⁷ No one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does that, the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

Luke 5

5:1-11

Why were the people coming to Jesus?

[5:1]

Luke said that many people went Jesus to hear the "word" (λόγος/g3056) of God. That is, they wanted to hear the things that God told Jesus to say. These were often instructions, warnings, or prophecies. Jesus did this from a boat. Luke said Jesus asked Peter to take him out into the water on Peter's boat. Jesus sat down in the boat and began to speak the word of God to the people. Teachers often sat when giving instruction during the time of Jesus.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did Simon not want to fish in the deep water?

[5:5]

Simon did not want to fish in deeper water because he knew that people fished in deep water at night, not in the day. Simon fished all night the previous night in the deep water. Simon knew this was not a good way to fish. Some scholars think he thought he knew more about fishing than Jesus knew. Other scholars think he tired and was discouraged from fishing all night and not catching anything. In any case, some scholars say Simon respected Jesus because he was a great teacher. He called him "master" (ἐπιστάτης/g1988). Simon finally did what Jesus asked of him. Other scholars say he did what Jesus asked because he knew Jesus could do things that only God could do.

See Map: Capernaum

Why did Simon bow down to Jesus?

[5:8]

When Simon Peter saw how many fish he caught, he bowed down to Jesus. This miracle showed Simon that Jesus was more than his master or leader. Jesus has power that only God has. Simon called Jesus "Lord" (κύριος/g2962). Simon knew himself to be a "sinful man" (ἁμαρτωλός/g0268). In the Old Testament, people often bowed down and did not look at God because they feared God and knew how great he is (see: Isaiah 6:5). Simon and all the people with him were "amazed" (θαμβος/g2285) at what Jesus did.

Advice to translators: When someone "bows down" to another person, they either bend at the waist or lie down on the ground. When they did this, they were not as tall as the other person and they did not look at them. This was a way to show respect to people who were greater.

See: [Miracle](#)

What did Jesus do because Simon was amazed?

[5:9]

Jesus told Simon to not “fear”(φοβέω/g5399). He told Simon that he will be catching people now, not fish. This was a metaphor. In the same way Peter gathered fish for his work by fishing, Jesus wanted Peter to gather people into the kingdom of God (see: Acts 2:38-42). After Jesus spoke, Simon, James, and John left “everything”(πᾶς/g3956) and followed him.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

5:12-16**Why did Luke say that the man was “full of leprosy”?**

[5:12]

Some scholars think Luke used the medical term “full of leprosy” because this meant a severe case of leprosy. Luke described a man who was “completely covered”(πλήρης/g4134) with a skin disease called “leprosy”(λέπρα/g3014). A person full of leprosy was unable to be healed.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What did the leper do when he saw Jesus coming?

[5:12]

The man with leprosy came to Jesus and “dropped to the ground”(πίπτω/g4098). Some scholars think he heard about Jesus healing many people (see: Luke 4:37). The man called Jesus “Lord”(κύριος/g2962). He told Jesus that if Jesus wanted him to be healed, he would be healed. He knew that Jesus had the ability to heal him from leprosy. But he knew he had no power to make Jesus do this if Jesus did not want to heal him. However, Jesus said he wanted to heal the man. Jesus told the man to “be cleansed”(καθαρίζω/g2511). The leprosy healed immediately.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus tell the leper not to tell anyone but go to the priest immediately?

[5:14]

Jesus told the man he healed to immediately go to the priest. Some scholars think that Jesus did not want to bring attention to himself. Other scholars think Jesus wanted the man to go to the priest and have the priest say that this man was clean. That is, he wanted the Priest to prove he was clean before the man began speaking with other people in the town. If a man with leprosy went into the town, he broke the Law of Moses. The priest had to say he was clean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What other things did Jesus tell the man with leprosy to do?

[5:14]

Jesus also told the man to make an offering in the same way the Law of Moses commanded (see: Leviticus 4-7). Jesus said giving this offering showed the man’s healing and cleansing of leprosy. Some scholars think this showed only the priest and those at the temple his healing. Other scholars think this showed all people his healing. For both of these reasons, Jesus wanted the man to obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus go to the wilderness to pray?

[5:16]

Scholars say Jesus prayed alone in the wilderness (See: Luke 5:16) because he did not want other people to see him. He did not want other people to give him attention for praying. Jesus prayed alone many times. People gave Jesus a lot of attention when he healed people and got rid of their demons. God gave Jesus the strength not to want attention when he prayed. Jesus showed his disciples that he obeyed God in everything he did. God guided him when he prayed.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

5:17-26

What was the “power of the Lord” in Jesus?

[5:17]

Many scholars think that the “power of the Lord” in Jesus was the Holy Spirit (see: Luke 4:18) This made Jesus able to heal people. Some scholars think Luke wanted people to know that God the Father was also with Jesus. That is, all of God’s power gave Jesus the ability to heal people.

How did the paralyzed man get to Jesus?

[5:18]

Luke said the paralyzed man was taken to Jesus on a “bed”(κλίνη/g2825). Most scholars think this was a poor man’s bed. That is, it was a mat or mattress filled with straw. The men carrying the mat went up onto the roof. They took the tiles off the roof of the house and lowered the bed to Jesus in the house (see: Mark 2:3-4).

Who believed in Jesus?

[5:19, 5:20]

Some scholars think it was the men who helped the paralyzed man who believed in Jesus. They did anything they needed to do in order to get their friend to Jesus. They had no doubt that Jesus was able to heal their friend. Other scholars think Jesus also spoke about the paralyzed man who believed in Jesus. The paralyzed man gave permission to his friends to lower him down to Jesus through the roof. He knew Jesus had the ability to heal him.

Why did the Pharisees and Scribes say that Jesus insulted God?

[5:21]

The Pharisees and Scribes said Jesus “insulted God”(βλασφημία/g0988) because Jesus told the paralyzed man that he forgave his sins. The Pharisees and Scribes understood that only God can forgive sin (see: Isaiah 43:25; Psalm 32:5; Psalm 51:4). They did not understand that Jesus is God, and he can forgive sins also.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How did Jesus know what the Scribes and Pharisees were thinking?

[5:22]

Scholars say Jesus showed the people that he is God because he knew what the Scribes and Pharisees were thinking.

How did Jesus show that he had the power to forgive sins?

[5:24]

To show that he was able to forgive sins, Jesus healed the paralyzed man. The Jews knew that only God forgives sins and only God heals people. Jesus also knew this. Jesus showed that he was God by healing this man and forgiving his sins.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

5:27-32

Who was Levi?

[5:27]

Luke said that Levi was a tax collector. Many scholars think Levi was this man's name in the Aramaic language. The Book of Matthew said that this tax collector was also called Matthew. Jesus called Matthew one of the first of the twelve apostles. (see: Matthew 10:2-4).

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees when they asked why he ate with sinners?

[5:31]

Jesus said that "healthy" (ὕγιαινω/g5198) people do not need a doctor. Jesus used the metaphor of someone needing a doctor to talk about people who thought they were at peace with God because they did the right things. They thought they did not need God's forgiveness for their sins. The Pharisees thought they were at peace with God because they did the right things. They closely followed the Jewish Law. Jesus said to his disciples and to the Pharisees that he had come for the "sick" (κακῶς/g2560). "Sick" was a metaphor talking about sinners.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Jesus say he "called people to repentance"?

[5:32]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What did it mean to fast?

[5:33]

See: [Fasting](#)

Who were the wedding guests and the bridegroom?

[5:34]

Jesus used the metaphor of wedding guests to speak about all the people who followed him. He used the metaphor of a bridegroom to speak about himself. Many scholars think that much feasting and rejoicing happened at a wedding, not fasting. Jesus spoke clearly that the time for fasting comes when the bridegroom leaves the wedding. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the future when he was going to be crucified.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Wedding](#); [Fasting](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about old and new clothes?

[5:36]

Jesus used the metaphor of "old clothes" to speak about a person who was living by Jewish traditions made from their law. Jesus used the metaphor of "new clothes" to speak about those who believed in Jesus. That is, they are changed into something new because of Jesus. Someone cannot become new by just adding new ideas to their old idea. That is, they cannot simply "patch" themselves. Becoming a new person is to be changed into someone completely different. The Holy Spirit inside the Christian makes these changes.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus talk about old and new wineskins?

[5:37]

The old wineskin spoke about the person in their old way of living. That is, they lived in the same way all sinners live. The new wineskin spoke about a person who believed in Jesus. The old wineskin cannot hold the life of Jesus. God works to make a person new when Jesus comes to live in the new person through faith in Jesus.

Many scholars think this last part of the parable spoke directly to the Pharisees. These scholars think Jesus told them they did not want this new idea, that is, believing in Jesus. That is, they found comfort with the old works of the Law of Moses. **Advice to Translators:** A wineskin was a leather sac used to hold wine.

Chapter 6

¹ Now it happened on a Sabbath that Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating the grain. ² But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing something that is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?"

³ Answering them, Jesus said, "Have you not even read what David did when he was hungry, he and the men who were with him? ⁴ He went into the house of God and took the bread of the presence and ate some of it, and also gave some to the men who were with him to eat, even though it was only lawful for the priests to eat it." ⁵ Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

⁶ It happened on another Sabbath that he went into the synagogue and taught the people there. A man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷ The scribes and the Pharisees were watching him closely to see whether he would heal someone on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him. ⁸ But he knew what they were thinking and he said to the man whose hand was withered, "Get up and stand here in the middle of everyone." So the man got up and stood there. ⁹ Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰ Then he looked around at them all and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored. ¹¹ But they were filled with senseless rage, and they talked to each other about what they might do to Jesus.

¹² It happened in those days that he went out to the mountain to pray. He continued all night in prayer to God. ¹³ When it was day, he called his disciples to him, and he chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles. ¹⁴ The names of the apostles were Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. ¹⁷ Then Jesus came down the mountain with them and stood on a level place with a large crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to listen to him and to be healed of their diseases. People who were troubled with unclean spirits were also healed. ¹⁹ Everyone in the crowd kept trying to touch him because power to heal was coming out from him, and he healed them all.

²⁰ Then he looked at his disciples and said,

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be filled.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
and when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because you will surely have a great reward in heaven, for their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.

²⁴ But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

²⁵ Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry later.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep later.

²⁶ Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

²⁷ "But I say to you who are listening, love your enemies and do good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless those who curse you and pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer him also the other. If someone takes away your coat, do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to

everyone who asks you. If someone takes away something that belongs to you, do not ask him to give it back to you. ³¹ As you want people to do to you, you should do the same to them. ³² If you only love people who love you, what reward is there for you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good only to people who do good to you, what reward is there for you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you only lend to people from whom you hope to be repaid, what reward is there for you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies and do good to them. Lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind toward unthankful and evil people. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ³⁷ Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over—will pour into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

³⁹ Then he also told them a parable. "Can a blind person guide another blind person? If he did, they would both fall into a pit, would they not? ⁴⁰ A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹ Why do you look at the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the piece of straw that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not even see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the piece of straw that is in your brother's eye. ⁴³ For there is no good tree that produces rotten fruit, nor is there a rotten tree that produces good fruit. ⁴⁴ For each tree is known by the kind of fruit it produces. For people do not gather figs from a thornbush, nor do they gather grapes from a briar bush. ⁴⁵ The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

⁴⁶ "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and yet you do not obey the things that I say? ⁴⁷ Every person who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them, I will tell you what he is like. ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep in the ground and built the house's foundation on solid rock. When a flood came, the torrent of water flowed against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ But the person who hears my words and does not obey them, he is like a man who built a house on top of the ground without a foundation. When the torrent of water flowed against that house, it immediately collapsed, and the ruin of that house was complete."

Luke 6

6:1-5

Why did the Pharisees not want Jesus and his disciples to pick grain?

[6:1, 6:2]

The Pharisees did not want Jesus and his disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath. The Law of Moses said that people cannot harvest grain on the Sabbath. But, the religious teachers said that picking grain on the Sabbath and harvesting grain on the Sabbath were the same activity. They said that both broke the Law of Moses. But, the Law of Moses says that it is good for a person to pick grain if they are hungry. However, they cannot use a tool to cut the grain (see: Deuteronomy 23:25).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees?

[6:3, 6:4]

Jesus told the Pharisees about when David went to the house of God and "received" (λαμβάνω/g2983) the bread from the priest. The priest made new bread every Sabbath day. The Law gave the old bread to the priest for food. The Law of Moses always said to do good things, even on the Sabbath. The priest did a good thing by giving David and his men the bread because they were hungry.

See: 1 Samuel 21:6

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why did Jesus say that the “Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath”?

[6:5]

Jesus said that the “Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” because he is God, and God made the laws in the Law of Moses about the Sabbath. That is, because he made the Sabbath, he can say what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath (see: Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11). Genesis said that “God”(יְהוָה/h0430) created heaven and earth (see: Genesis 1:1). The Hebrew word for God is in the plural form. Also, God said in the plural, “Let us make” (see: Genesis 1:26). This means that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit helped create heaven and earth. That is, God the Son, Jesus, created heaven and earth and also created the laws about the Sabbath (see: John 1:1-5; Colossians 1:15-18).

See: [Trinity](#); [Son of Man](#); [Sabbath](#); [Trinity](#)

6:6-11

Why did the Scribes and Pharisees become angry when Jesus healed a person?

[6:11]

The Scribes and Pharisees said giving medical help on the Sabbath was work. The Scribes and Pharisees said the things they taught must be obeyed in the same way people obeyed the Law of Moses. However, nothing in the Law of Moses said giving medical help on the Sabbath day was wrong. The Old Testament made it clear that it was always lawful to do good everyday of the week (see: Deuteronomy 22:1-4).

See: Luke 13:10-17

See: [Miracle](#); [Pharisees](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Miracle](#)

6:12-16

Why did Jesus go to the mountain to pray?

[6:12]

Perhaps Jesus went to the mountain to talk with God about the apostles. That is, he was about to choose those to be his special disciples. Luke does not say how many disciples Jesus had when he called them to be apostles. Later in Luke’s gospel, he spoke about his having seventy other disciples (see: Luke 10:1).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did Jesus choose twelve of the disciples to be apostles?

[6:13]

Some scholars think that in the same way there were twelve tribes of Israel, Jesus chose twelve disciples to be apostles. They think Jesus chose the twelve apostles to be the new spiritual leaders of Israel. They think Jesus wanted these apostles to lead Israel based on the promises of the New Covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:31-33). Other scholars think Jesus chose the twelve apostles to be the spiritual leaders of the church, and not the new leaders of Israel. The Apostle Paul spoke about apostles and prophets being the foundation of God’s household. They held up the church with the truth of the gospel in the same way a house is held up by its foundation. That is, they lead the church, told others about the gospel, and protected the gospel from false teachers. The household of God consisted of both Christian Jews and Christian Gentiles (see: Ephesians 2:19-20; 3:1-7).

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Disciple](#); [Apostle](#); [New Covenant](#); [Church](#)

6:17-19

Why did the crowds wait for Jesus and his disciples?

[6:17, 6:18]

The crowds waited for Jesus because they wanted to hear him teach. Also, they wanted him to heal them from their sicknesses. These people never heard anyone teach in the way Jesus taught. No one ever healed others in the same way that Jesus healed. Many people went to Jesus so they could touch him and be healed. They wanted to touch him because healing power was coming from him. Jesus healed people who were attacked by evil, unclean spirits. Many more of Jesus' disciples were in the crowds that came to Jesus.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Judea; Tyre; Sidon

6:20-23

To whom did Jesus teach?

[6:20]

Luke wrote that Jesus looked at his disciples when he taught. This was the twelve apostles who came down the mountain with him. Also, it was the larger crowd of Jesus' disciples waiting for him to come down from the mountain (see: Luke 6:17).

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

What four things did Jesus teach that God approved?

[6:20, 6:21, 6:22, 6:23]

1. Jesus taught that God approved of those who were "poor" (πτωχός/g4434). Some scholars think Jesus spoke of people who did not have food, clothing, or shelter. Other scholars think Jesus spoke of the spiritually poor (see: Matthew 5:3). That is, they knew their great need for God, or people treated them badly (see: Matthew 5:10).
2. Jesus taught that God approved of those who were hungry. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about people who did not have food. These scholars think when God promised to feed people who were hungry, he was thinking about a feast held in heaven (see: Luke 13:29). Other scholars think Jesus spoke using a metaphor. He wanted to say that those who were hungry and thirsty really wanted to do the things that God wanted them to do (see: Matthew 5:6). These scholars think the words, "you will be filled" spoke about God's promise to approve those who hungered for him in this way.
3. Jesus taught that God approved those who "weep" (κλαίω/g2799). God promised them that their weeping will change to laughter. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about people being sorry for their sin or for the sins of other people. This sorrow caused them to weep. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about the evil of the world. This also caused Christians to weep. These scholars think Jesus spoke about the day when God gathers his people into his kingdom. There will be no weeping in the kingdom of God. There, all weeping will be changed to laughter (see: Jeremiah 31:13; Revelation 7:17; 21:4).
4. Jesus taught that God approves the disciples when people hate them for following Jesus. That is, when others treat Christians badly for following Jesus, Jesus told them to "rejoice" (χαίρω/g5463). Their reward will be in heaven when they die (see: Romans 5:3-5; 1 Peter 4:13).

See: Matthew 5:3; Ephesians 2:1-5

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

6:24-26

What four things did Jesus teach that God did not reward?

[6:24, 6:25, 6:26]

1. Jesus said "woe" (οὐαί/g3759) to rich people. That is, disaster comes for people who trust in the things they own or in what they know. Jesus said these people received their reward here on this earth. No reward is given to them in heaven (see: Luke 12:16-21).

2. Jesus said “woe” to the “full”(ἐμπλήρη/g1705) people. That is, they do not think they needed God because they meet their own needs. However, Jesus warned them and said they will hunger. That is, spiritual hunger destroys them after their death (see: Luke 16:19-30; Isaiah 65:13-14).
3. God warned those who “laugh”(γελάω/g1070) now. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a certain type of laughing. That is, he warned those who do not take care of the needs of others. Jesus said these people will one day weep and mourn.
4. Jesus said “woe” to you if people only say good things about you. Many people said evil things about Jesus because they hated his message. Jesus told the crowd that their fathers spoke good things which were said by false prophets (see: Jeremiah 5:31).

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

6:27-36

Why did Jesus talk to those “who hear”?

[6:27]

Some scholars think Jesus was speaking to his disciples when he said, “I say to you who hear”(ἀκούω/g0191) (see: 6:20-26). Jesus only spoke to the whole crowd around him after he spoke to the disciples. Other scholars think that when Jesus said, “I say to you who hear,” he was speaking to those who listened and obeyed his words. That is, they obeyed because they heard.

See: [Disciple](#)

What three things did Jesus tell his disciples to do?

[6:27, 6:28, 6:29]

1. Jesus told his disciples to “love”(ἀγαπάω/g0025) their enemies. That is, they needed to be respectful to those who hated them and do good to those who hated them. Jesus said the world hated him, it will also hate people who believe in Jesus (see: John 15:18). God rewards those who give this type of love to others (see: 6:32,35).
2. Jesus told his disciples to “do good”(καλῶς/g2573) to those who hate them. That is, they need to be kind to those who hate them. In the same way Jesus taught about love, Christians are not to want to be treated kindly simply because they treated others kindly (see: Luke 6:33, 35). Christians show kindness in two ways. First, they speak good about a person who speaks evil of them. Second, they pray for the people who treat them badly.
3. Jesus told his disciples to give to those who ask to borrow something from them. In the same way Christians are to love and do good without wanting anything for this, they are to give whatever is asked of them without wanting to get anything back from the one who asked (see: Luke 6:34-35).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How did God the Father show mercy to people?

[6:36]

Some scholars think Jesus said God the Father shows mercy to people by not getting angry quickly. He also gives approval and unchanging love to them (see: Psalm 103:8). Luke later said that Jesus told a story of a man who showed the same type of mercy that the Father shows (see: Luke 10:30-37).

6:37-38

How did Jesus tell Christians to treat others?

[6:37]

Jesus told Christians not to “judge” (κρίνω/g2919). Only God can judge a person because he knows what a person really wants, even if they do not tell anyone or do not know themselves. Also, Jesus told believers not to “condemn” (καταδικάζω/g2613) others. Only God can condemn.

Jesus told Christians to forgive others. That is, Christians are to forgive others when they do something wrong to them. This is not the same forgiveness for disobeying God. Only God can forgive those sins. Also, Jesus told Christians to freely “give” (δίδωμι/g1325) to others. That is, to meet the needs of others.

What was a “good measure?”

[6:38]

Jesus said the metaphor “good measure” to tell Christians about how valuable it was to give a lot to others. In the days of Jesus, the shop owners measured and sold their grain by pouring it into a person’s lap. The people wore a robe with a fold between their legs. A seller measured the grain and filled the fold of the robe. The fold was then pressed together and shaken. This made space for more grain. The seller then poured more grain into the fold of the robe until it went over the top of the fold.

See: [Metaphor](#)

6:39-42

Why did Jesus tell this parable?

[6:39]

Jesus used this parable to say that his disciples needed to be “fully trained” (καταρτίζω/g2675). Once they become fully trained, they will teach others. A fully trained disciple is one who understands God’s word fully. That is, because he understands God’s word fully, he does what God wants him to do (see: Hebrews 5:12-14). A fully trained disciple is one who knows when they hear a false teacher. Jesus said these false teachers were blind. That is, they were blind to true things about God. He told his disciples to not follow the teachings of a blind, false teacher.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

6:43-45

What was the “treasure” of a person’s heart?

[6:45]

Jesus used the word “treasure” to say how valuable the works were from a person’s “heart” (καρδία/g2588). When the Bible wrote about a person’s “heart,” it meant a person’s inner self. A person who did not believe in Jesus was under the control of the devil (see: Ephesians 2:1-3). But a person who believed in Jesus was a new creation. The Holy Spirit controlled them (see: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:13-14).

In the same way a tree grew only one type of fruit, a person spoke what was in their heart. This was not both good and evil.

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

6:46-49

Why did Jesus say that being his disciple was like building a house?

[6:48]

Jesus said that in the same way a house was built on a solid foundation, a Christian needed to trust Jesus so that they were able to withstand the devil. Jesus’s words were their solid foundation. Jesus said that he was the cornerstone of the house (see: Ephesians 2:19-21). That is, he is the cornerstone of the church. In the same way a house with a solid foundation will not be destroyed during a severe storm, so a Christian who follows Jesus’s words will not be destroyed when the devil attacks them.

Also, in the same way a house without a solid foundation is easily destroyed when a severe storm comes, someone who does not follow Jesus' words will be destroyed by the works of the enemy, the devil.

Advice to translators: A foundation is the base or bottom part of a house. If a foundation is not made well, then the whole house cannot be made well. A cornerstone is the first stone put in place in a house or building. After this stone is put into place, it affects the rest of the house. If it is put in crooked, then the whole house will be crooked.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Chapter 7

¹ After Jesus had finished everything he was saying in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum.

² Now a centurion had a slave who was highly regarded by him, and he was sick and about to die. ³ When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ When they had come to Jesus, they asked him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, ⁵ because he loves our nation, and he is the one who built the synagogue for us."

⁶ So Jesus continued on his way with them. But when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, because I am not worthy for you to come under my roof. ⁷ For this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you, but just say a word and my servant will be healed. ⁸ For I also am a man who is under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another one, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him said, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." ¹⁰ When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant was healthy.

¹¹ Soon after that, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him.

¹² As he came near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a rather large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, he was deeply moved with compassion for her and said to her, "Do not cry." ¹⁴ Then he went up and touched the wooden frame on which they carried the body, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

¹⁶ Then fear overcame all of them, and they kept praising God, saying, "A great prophet has been raised among us" and "God has looked upon his people." ¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread throughout the whole of Judea and all the neighboring regions.

¹⁸ John's disciples told him about all these things. Then John called two of his disciples ¹⁹ and sent them to the Lord to say, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

²⁰ When they had come near to Jesus, the men said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to say, 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?'"

²¹ In that hour he healed many people from sicknesses and afflictions and from evil spirits, and to many blind people he gave sight. ²² Jesus answered and said to them, "After you have gone on your way, report to John what you have seen and heard. Blind people are receiving sight, lame people are walking, lepers are being cleansed, deaf people are hearing, people who have died are being raised back to life, and the poor are being told good news. ²³ The person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions is blessed."

²⁴ After John's messengers had gone away, Jesus began to say to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? Look, those who wear splendid clothing and who live in luxury are in kings' palaces. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is he of whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.'

²⁸ I say to you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he is." ²⁹ (When all the people heard this, including the tax collectors, they declared that God is righteous, because they had been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been

baptized by John.) ³¹ "To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? ³² They are like children playing in the marketplace, who sit and call to one another and say,

'We played a flute for you,
and you did not dance.

We sang a funeral song,

and you did not cry.' ³³ For John the Baptist came eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵ But wisdom is justified by all her children."

³⁶ Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. So after Jesus entered into the Pharisee's house, he reclined at the table to eat. ³⁷ Behold, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner. When she found out that he was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfumed oil. ³⁸ As she stood behind him near his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and she wiped them with her hair and kissed them and anointed them with perfumed oil. ³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he thought to himself, saying, "If this man were a prophet, then he would know who and what type of woman is touching him, that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰ Jesus responded and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

He said, "Say it, Teacher!"

⁴¹ Jesus said, "A certain moneylender had two debtors. The one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay him, he forgave them both. Therefore, which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon answered him and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave the most."

Jesus said to him, "You have judged correctly." ⁴⁴ Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, "You see this woman. I have entered into your house. You gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but from the time I came in she did not stop kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfumed oil. ⁴⁷ For this reason I say to you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven—for she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little." ⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹ Those reclining together began to say among themselves, "Who is this that even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰ Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Luke 7

7:1-10

Where is Capernaum?

[7:1]

See Map: Capernaum

What was a centurion?

[7:2]

A centurion was a type of Roman soldier. They led 100 soldiers.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Why did the centurion send two groups of people to Jesus?

[7:3, 7:6]

The centurion sent two groups of people to Jesus because he was a Gentile. Perhaps he thought the leaders of the Jews had more influence than he did to ask Jesus to heal his servant. So he sent the leaders of the Jews to Jesus. Scholars think the centurion was humble because he felt unworthy for Jesus to come to his house and instead he sent his friends to speak with Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#)

Why did Matthew write that the centurion himself spoke to Jesus?

Matthew also wrote about this story, but he did not say the centurion sent people to Jesus (see: Matthew 8:5-13). Many scholars think the centurion spoke through his friends. That is, their words were the same as his words.

Why did the message of the centurion amaze Jesus?

[7:9]

Scholars think the centurion's message amazed Jesus for three reasons.

1. Though the centurion led many people, he showed humility before Jesus. He believed in Jesus' ability and power to heal his servant. The centurion felt unworthy for Jesus to come to his home because of his respect for Jesus.
2. The centurion understood the ability to give commands. Luke wrote about how the soldiers were given permission to give commands to other people they lead. He understood that Jesus had the ability to heal his servant from a distance.
3. Jesus never saw people in Israel believe in him so strongly. This Gentile military leader showed that he believed in Jesus more than the people of Israel. That is, God's chosen people did not show this much faith.

See: [People of God](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [People of God](#)

7:11-17

Why did Jesus raise the young man from the dead?

[7:14]

Scholars think Jesus raised the young man from the dead for two reasons.

1. Jesus had compassion for the young man's mother. His mother was also a widow, and she did not have any other sons. In ancient times, a widow's sons helped their mother and without them, the mother would be very poor.
2. Jesus wanted people to know that he controlled death and uncleanness.

Why did Jesus not become unclean when he touched the dead body?

[7:14]

The Old Testament spoke about uncleanness coming over someone who touches a dead body (see: Number 19:11-6). However, when Jesus raised the widow's son back to life, he made the man clean. Because he raised the boy, Jesus never became unclean under the Law of Moses.

See: [Sin](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#)

Why did all the people say Jesus was a "great prophet"?

[7:16]

The people said Jesus was a “great prophet” because he raised a young man from the dead. Only two other prophets raised people from the dead. Elijah raised a widow’s son (see: 1 Kings 17:17-18), and Elisha raised the son of a Shunammite woman (see: 2 Kings 4:18-37).

See: [Prophet](#)

7:18-23

Why did John send two of his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the “Coming One”?

[7:19]

Scholars give two reasons why John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he is the “Coming One.” That is, if Jesus was the messiah whom God promised to come.

1. John wanted to strengthen the faith of his disciples.
2. John wanted to know himself that Jesus is the “Coming One.” God gave John a message to preach that spoke of a coming judgment. John expected Jesus to bring judgment on sinners quickly (see: Luke 3:8,16-17). When John was put in prison, Jesus said others will also be put in prison before the judgment of God comes on the world (see: Luke 21:10-22).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why might people “fall away” because of Jesus?

[7:23]

Some scholars think Jesus’ words spoke about people in general. They think people “fall away” because they expected the Messiah to be someone different than who he really is. Other scholars think Jesus spoke to John specifically. They think Jesus’ words told John not to stop believing in Jesus because judgment did not happen at the time John thought it was going to happen.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

7:24-28

Why did Jesus ask the crowds about going into the wilderness?

[7:24]

Jesus asked the crowds three questions about going into the wilderness to speak about the serious message of John. Jesus did not want the crowds to answer the questions, but he wanted to use the questions to teach the truth about John. The first question spoke about a reed shaken by the wind. The wind easily bent reeds back and forth, and this was a common sight. People did not travel to the wilderness to see reeds bending in the wind. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that John was not a man who was easily swayed. Rather he was a solid man who believed in the coming Messiah.

Jesus then asked the people if they went to the wilderness to see a man dressed in soft, fancy clothes. The people knew that a person in soft, fancy clothes did not live in the wilderness. The third question Jesus asked was whether the people went out to the wilderness to see a prophet. Jesus told the crowds that John was more than just a prophet.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

Why did Jesus say John was more than a prophet?

[7:26]

Many scholars think Jesus said John was “more than a prophet” because John spoke about the coming of the Messiah. The Old Testament prophet, Malachi, spoke about a prophet coming to tell people about the Messiah before the messiah came. Malachi spoke about the prophet John. John not only told people about the coming of the messiah, he also saw the messiah. He witnessed God’s words about Jesus happen (see:

John 1:32-34). Jesus even spoke about John the prophet being the same as Elijah, the prophet promised to come (see: Matthew 17:11-13).

See: Malachi 4:5-6

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus say the least in the kingdom was actually greater than John?

[7:28]

Scholars think Jesus said the least in the kingdom was actually greater than John because John lived in the time before Jesus began his ministry. That is, John did not live to see Jesus die and become alive again because he was in prison. Also, the ones Jesus called “the least” of his followers saw many believers filled with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist did not see any. However, John will be in the kingdom in heaven with all of God’s prophets (see: Luke 13:28).

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Minister \(Ministry\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

7:29-30

Why did Luke write that the people declared God to be right?

[7:29]

After the people heard Jesus speak, those John baptized said that God was right. Some scholars think because John spoke about repentance and the Messiah, it showed that John taught God’s message. However, the Pharisees refused to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and they refused to repent. They believed following the Law of Moses was right and made them be at peace with God.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

7:31-35

Who were the people of that generation?

[7:31]

Many scholars think Jesus spoke about the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law of Moses and all those who followed them. These scholars think Jesus spoke about the things the people of Israel did in the past (see: Acts 7:51-53). Jesus said that in the same way children made up games with rules, so did the Pharisees and teachers of the law of Moses criticized anyone who did not play by their rules.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did Jesus say about the accusations of the Pharisees?

[7:34, 7:35]

Jesus spoke about the things the Pharisees accused them of. They did this by saying wisdom was shown to be true by her children. This meant those who trusted in God and obeyed his commands were wise people. The Pharisees rejected the things John said that God gave him to tell the people. The Pharisees also rejected Jesus the messiah. They rejected him because he was a friend of sinners. Because the Pharisees rejected both John and Jesus, they were not considered to be children of wisdom.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

7:36-50

How did Jesus recline at the table?

[7:36]

Jesus reclined at the table by lying on his side and facing the table. His feet went away from the table. The woman was then able to touch his feet. This reclining at a table was common in the days of Jesus.

How did Luke describe the unnamed woman?

[7:37]

Luke wrote the unnamed woman was a sinner. Luke did not say how she sinned. Some scholars think she was a prostitute. Fewer scholars think she committed adultery or her husband dishonored God in his work.

See: [Adultery](#); [Adultery](#)

What was an alabaster jar?

[7:37]

An alabaster jar was a glass or soft-stone jar with a long neck that held perfume. Both the jar and the perfume were very expensive. A woman broke the long neck of the jar to pour out the perfume. Why was the woman crying? Some scholars think the woman's tears showed her humility and a deep sense of repentance. Other scholars think she felt sad because she sinned. Or she felt joy because Jesus forgave her sins. So, she showed she loved Jesus very much by pouring out her tears on his feet, wiping them with her hair, kissing them, and anointing them with perfume from her alabaster jar.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did Simon the Pharisee think Jesus was not a prophet?

[7:39]

Simon the Pharisee thought Jesus did not know the woman was a sinner. So, he must not be a prophet. The Pharisees always kept away from any contact with sinners. Simon thought that Jesus, if he were a prophet, would also keep away from sinners.

See: [Prophet](#)

How did Jesus "answer" Simon?

[7:40]

Simon did not ask his question for others to be able to hear him. He only thought the question. However, Jesus knew Simon's inner thoughts and was able to answer Simon's question. Then people knew Jesus was a prophet.

See: [Prophet](#)

How much was a denarius?

[7:41]

A denarius was a fair wage for a day of labor (see: Matthew 20:2). Scholars say the man with the large debt needed one and three-quarters years to earn what he owed. The man with the small debt needed two months to earn what he owed. This story was a metaphor. In the story to Simon, the moneylender who "forgave" ([χαρίζομαι/g5483](#)) the debts of denarii was Jesus who "forgives" ([ἀφίημι/g0863](#)) people who sinned.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus speak about water for his feet to Simon?

[7:44]

Jesus spoke to Simon about what was good and polite to do for a guest. That is, to provide water for the washing of feet, a kiss of greeting to welcome a guest into their home, and oil to anoint the guest's head.

Simon failed to provide any of these common greetings to Jesus. But, the sinful woman washed the feet of Jesus with her own tears, kissed the feet of Jesus, and anointed his feet with expensive perfume. The sinful woman went far beyond Simon but others thought Simon was a man who honored God.

See: Genesis 18:4; 43:24

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Why did Jesus forgive the woman?

[7:47, 7:48]

Jesus forgave the woman because she believed in him. Jesus said her faith saved her (see: 7:50). The woman showed great love toward Jesus because of her awareness of her great sin. She knew only Jesus saved her. Her acts of love came from her desire to repent.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What did the other guests think about Jesus forgiving the woman who sinned?

[7:49]

The other guests thought Jesus was not able to forgive people who sinned. They knew that only God is able to forgive people who sin. The other guests at the table continued to reject Jesus the Messiah. That is, they did not think he was equal with God.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 8

¹ It happened soon afterward that Jesus began traveling around to different cities and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, ² as well as certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had been driven out; ³ Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's manager; Susanna; and many others, who, out of their possessions, provided for their needs.

⁴ While a large crowd of people was gathering, and people were coming to him from town after town, he told a parable: ⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some fell beside the road and it was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the sky devoured it. ⁶ Some fell on the rock, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷ Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up together with the seed and choked it. ⁸ But some fell on good soil and produced a crop that was a hundred times greater." After Jesus had said these things, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear."

⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but for others I speak in parables, so that

'seeing they may not see,

and hearing they may not understand.' ¹¹ Now this is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹² The ones along the road are those who have heard, but then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts so they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But they have no root; they believe for a while, and in a time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seeds that fell among the thorns are people who hear the word, but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and their fruit does not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed that fell on the good soil, these are the ones who, hearing the word with an honest and good heart, hold it securely and bear fruit with patient endurance.

¹⁶ "No one lights a lamp and covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Rather, he puts it on a lampstand so that everyone who enters may see the light. ¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not be made known, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come into the light. ¹⁸ So listen carefully, for to the one who has, more will be given to him, but the one who does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him."

¹⁹ Then his mother and brothers came to him, but they could not get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰ He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." ²¹ But Jesus answered and said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

²² Now one day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." They set sail. ²³ But as they sailed he fell asleep. A terrible windstorm came down on the lake, and their boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. ²⁴ Then Jesus' disciples came over to him and woke him up, saying, "Master! Master! We are about to die!"

He awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵ Then he said to them, "Where is your faith?"

But they were afraid and amazed, and they asked one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?"

²⁶ They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus stepped on the land, he was met by a certain man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and he said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me." ²⁹ For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him, and though he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and he would be driven by the demon into the wilderness.

³⁰ Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Legion," for many demons had entered into him. ³¹ They kept begging him not to command them to go away into the abyss. ³² Now a large herd of pigs was there feeding on the hillside. The demons begged him to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. ³³ So the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and told about it in the city and countryside. ³⁵ So the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ³⁶ Then those who had seen it told them how the man who had been possessed by demons had been healed. ³⁷ Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to depart from them, for they were overwhelmed with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned.

³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged him to let him go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home and give a full account of what God has done for you." The man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what Jesus had done for him.

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. ⁴¹ Behold, a man named Jairus, who was one of the leaders of the synagogue, came and fell down at Jesus' feet, and he begged him to come to his house ⁴² because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve years of age, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds of people pressed together around him.

⁴³ Now a woman was there who had been bleeding for twelve years ^[1] and could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came behind Jesus and touched the edge of his coat, and immediately her bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ Jesus said, "Who was it who touched me?"

When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds of people are all around you and they are pressing in against you."

⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone did touch me, for I know that power has gone out from me." ⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she could not escape notice, she came trembling and fell down before him. In the presence of all the people she declared why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

⁴⁹ While he was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue leader's house, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher any longer."

⁵⁰ But when Jesus heard this, he answered Jairus, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be healed."

⁵¹ When he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father of the child and her mother. ⁵² Now all were mourning and wailing for her, but he said, "Do not weep; she is not dead but asleep." ⁵³ But they began to mock him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But he took her by the hand and called out, saying, "Child, get up!" ⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately. He ordered them to get her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

Footnotes

8:43 ^[1]Scholars are divided whether the phrase

Luke 8

8:1-3

Why did Luke write 8:1-3?

[8:1, 8:2, 8:3]

Luke wanted his readers to know two things when he wrote 8:1-3. The other gospel writers did not write about these two things.

1. Luke wanted his readers to know that Jesus “preached”(κηρύσσω/g2784) and “proclaimed” the (εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) the gospel. The gospel is about the “kingdom of God.” Luke used the word “preached.” He used this word to write about how God gave Jesus permission to speak about the kingdom of God. Luke also used the words, “proclaimed the gospel.” He wrote this because the things Jesus spoke about were good for the people to know.
2. Luke also wanted readers to know women served Jesus. Some scholars think these women served in the same way the disciples served Jesus. Other scholars think these women served Jesus in a different way.

See: [Disciple](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Disciple](#)

Who was Mary Magdalene?

[8:2]

Mary Magdalene was a woman from a small village called Magdala. Some scholars think the village was near the west side of the Sea of Galilee. Other scholars think they do not know where Magdala was located. The apostle John wrote that Mary Magdalene witnessed the resurrection of Jesus (see: John 20:11-18).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Why did Luke write about Joanna?

[8:3]

Luke wrote about Johanna. Johanna was a person who worked for Herod. John wanted his readers to know that even the people working for Herod heard about the gospel. Some scholars think her husband, Chuza, also served Herod.

See: [Gospel](#)

8:4-15

What was a “parable”?

[8:4]

See: [Parable](#)

How did people sow seeds when Jesus lived on earth?

[8:5]

When Jesus was on the earth, people sowed seeds by having a seed bag over their shoulders. They threw seeds from the bag onto the ground. They did this in late fall or early winter. The seeds began to grow out of the ground in spring. Then they gathered what was grown in summer. Many times a dirt road or pathway went through the field where they sowed seeds.

Advice to Translators: Spring, Summer, Winter, and fall are words used to talk about the changing seasons in an area of the world. Many places in the world do not have these four seasons. They may have only two of these seasons or they may have what is called wet and dry seasons. Overall, these words are used to talk about different times of the year due to changes in the weather in that particular area.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus tell the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed?

[8:5, 8:6, 8:7, 8:8]

Jesus told the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed. He wanted people to know four different ways people heard the word of God.

See: [Word of God](#); [Gospel](#); [Word of God](#)

Why did Jesus say, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[8:8]

Scholars think Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear,” because he wanted people to listen to what he said. That is, people needed to not only know what he taught, but also they needed to do the things he taught. He did not say this because he was angry. How was the seed the word of God in the parable? Scholars do not agree about how the seed was the word of God in the parable. Some scholars think it was about God ruling (see: 8:1). Other scholars think it was about people needing to obey what Jesus taught (see: 8:21).

See: [Word of God](#); [Parable](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Word of God](#)

Why did Jesus speak about the seed beside the road?

[8:12]

Jesus spoke about the seed beside the road because he wanted his listeners to know how Satan tries to take away the word of God from people. That is, Satan took the word of God from people in the same way birds ate seeds from a road. Satan did not want people to know the word of God. He also did not want God to save people from the punishment of sinning.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

See: [Word of God](#); [Sow \(Plant\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Word of God](#)

What did Jesus say about the seed that fell on the rock?

[8:13]

Jesus said some seed fell on the rock. He used this to talk about how some people rejoice when they hear the word of God. However, they stop believing in it when they begin to suffer because of it. Seeds that were thrown over rocks did only grew for a short time. This is because it did not have any water or deep roots.

See: [Eternal Security](#); [Parable](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Word of God](#); [Sow \(Plant\)](#); [Eternal Security](#)

What happened to the seed that fell among the thorns?

[8:14]

Jesus said that thorns grew with the good plants. Thorns took the things from the soil that the good plants needed to grow. Therefore, nothing could grow around the thorns. These thorns “choked” the life from the good plants. In the same way, people were “choked”(συμπνίγω/g4846) by the “cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life.” Jesus said these people were never able to do the things that honored God (see: 3:8-9).

Advice to translators: A “thorn” was a plant with thorns. It was a type of weed. It was a plant that grew quickly and hamre other plants. It did not do anything good.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Jesus speak about the seed that fell on good soil?

[8:15]

Scholars think there were two ways Jesus spoke about the seed that fell on good soil. Some scholars think Jesus wanted Christians to know that more people believed in Jesus (see: Acts 6:7; Colossians 1:5-6). Other scholars think Jesus wanted Christians to know that there were many people who trusted in God and Jesus more than they did before. Perhaps Jesus meant both.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

8:16-18

Why did Jesus tell the parable of the lamp?

[8:16]

Jesus told the parable of the lamp to talk about how God wanted the disciples to listen very carefully to what Jesus said. Matthew and Mark also wrote about the parable of the lamp.

See: Matthew 5:14-16; Mark 4:21-25

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How did Jesus speak about the “light”?

[8:16, 8:17]

Scholars think different things about how Jesus spoke about the “light.”

1. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for the things Jesus taught. Jesus taught that God wanted people to believe in the word of God (see: 8:11-15).
2. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for the people who followed Jesus. It taught the word of God to other people (see: 24:44-48).
3. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for what people thought about the things Jesus taught.

See: [Word of God](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Word of God](#)

What did God give or take away?

[8:18]

Scholars think God either told people more things about himself or he made the things that they already knew about him leave them. This was because of how people listened to Jesus (see: 8:11-15). Some scholars say a person who did not believe in the word of God was wrong to think he knew anything about God.

See: 11:33; 12:2

See: [Word of God](#)

8:19-21

Why did Luke tell this story about Jesus and his family?

[8:19]

Luke told this story about Jesus and his family so people would know how great was the message Jesus taught. He wanted people to hear, believe, and obey the word of God (see: 8:11,15,21). Matthew and Mark also wrote about this.

See: Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35

See: [Family of Jesus](#); [Family of Jesus](#)

Why did Jesus say his family were the people who heard and did the word of God?

[8:21]

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about his “mother and brothers” as a metaphor. He wanted to say that everyone who heard his word and did the things his word said to do were a member of his family. Many scholars think Jesus did not reject his mother and brothers, but he made other people able to become members of his family. On the other hand, some scholars think Jesus spoke against family when they wanted people to stop obeying God’s word (see: Luke 14:26; 18:29-30).

See: [Word of God](#); [Children of God](#); [Word of God](#)

8:22-25

Why did Luke write about Jesus stopping the storm?

[8:24]

When Luke wrote about Jesus stopping the storm, he wanted Christians to know that Jesus controlled the winds and the seas. In ancient times, people did not think these things could be controlled. These miracles came near the time when Peter said Jesus is the Messiah (see: Luke 9:20). Matthew and Mark also wrote about this.

See: Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Sea of Galilee

Why did the disciples call Jesus “Master”?

[8:24]

The disciples called Jesus “master”(ἐπιστάτης/g1988) because they honored Jesus. They called him “master” twice because they honored Jesus in the same way they honored God.

How did Jesus “rebuke” the wind and water?

[8:24]

Jesus “rebuked”(ἐπιτιμάω/g2008) the wind and water with his own power. He did not pray to God. That is, Jesus wanted his disciples to know he has the same power God has (see: Psalm 89:9). Scholars think that the wind and water immediately settled down after Jesus spoke.

Why did the disciples not have faith?

[8:25]

Scholars think there were two reasons the disciples did not have faith. That is, they did not fully trust Jesus.

1. The disciples did not have faith because they did not think Jesus was able to stop the storm.
2. They also did not have faith because they feared they were going to die.

See: [Disciple](#)

8:26-39

Where was the “region of the Gerasenes”?

[8:26]

See Map: Sea of Galilee; Gerasenes

Why did the demon possessed man fall down in front of Jesus?

[8:28]

Scholars think the demon possessed man fell down in front of Jesus because the demons feared Jesus. The demons gave power to the possessed man, but they had no power compared to Jesus. They did not want Jesus to punish them. However, here the demons were not worshipping Jesus.

See: [Worship](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Worship](#)

What was meant by the words, “Most High God”?

[8:28]

Some scholars think the words “Most High God” were used to talk about God being more powerful and greater than any other god. Other scholars think the demon possessed man called God the “Most High” because that was what Gentiles called the God of the Jews. They were in a place where the Gentiles lived.

Advice to translators: Although this talks about God being greater than other gods, this does not mean that the other gods are real. The other gods are not real and have never lived.

See: [Gentile](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did the demon possessed man call Jesus “Son of the Most High God”?

[8:28]

Scholars think the demon possessed man called Jesus “Son of the Most High God” because Jesus rules over everything, including demons. He gave permission for Satan to rule the demons. The demons did not want Jesus to punish or harm them. Gabriel, the angel of God, also called Jesus the “Son of the Most High God” (see: 1:32).

See: [Angel](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Angel](#)

Why did Jesus ask the demon possessed man his name?

[8:30]

Scholars think there were several reasons why Jesus asked the demon possessed man his name.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that thousands of demons controlled the man. “Legion” was a name for a group of about 6,000 Roman soldiers.
2. Jesus wanted people to know that he has power over the demons. Jesus had power over demon possessed people without asking their names (see: 4:33-36).
3. Jesus wanted people to know that the man was a person even though the demons controlled him. It was a way Jesus wanted people to know that he had compassion for him.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What was the abyss?

[8:31]

See: [Abyss \(Bottomless Pit\)](#)

Why did the demons ask Jesus to send them into the pigs?

[8:32]

Scholars think there are several reasons why the demons wanted to go into the pigs.

1. The demons did not want Jesus to make them go into the abyss.

2. The demons knew that Jesus did not want the demons to go into other people.
3. The demons wanted to control animals if they were no longer able to control people.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Abyss \(Bottomless Pit\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did Jesus allow the demons to go into the pigs?

[8:32]

Jesus allowed the demons to go into the pigs. Scholars think he did this for many reasons.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that God will judge demons. This will happen when the known world ends and is recreated. He will send them into the abyss.
2. The demons went into the abyss when the pigs went into the sea.
3. Jesus created everything. Therefore, he has the ability to do anything he wants with his creation.

Jesus cared more about the man than about the pigs.

1. It made people know that the man was really free from the demons.

See: [Spiritual Warfare](#); [World](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Abyss \(Bottomless Pit\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#)

Why did the people ask Jesus to leave?

[8:37]

Scholars think there are several reasons why the people asked Jesus to leave.

1. They cared more about losing the pigs than about Jesus rescuing the man from the demons.
2. They were afraid because Jesus has the same power over demons that God has.
3. They were afraid of Jesus. They did not want him to interfere with Roman rule over the Jews.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

8:40-56

Who was Jairus?

[8:41]

Jairus was the leader of a synagogue. He read Old Testament Scriptures in the synagogue meetings. He also was a leader in the community. Some scholars think that his name was the same as, "God will awaken." He was different from other synagogue leaders. He bowed down at Jesus' feet and asked Jesus to heal. He did not argue with Jesus.

See: [Synagogue](#)

How did the woman suffer?

[8:43]

Scholars think the woman suffered in three ways.

1. She had a bleeding illness for twelve years.
2. Because of her bleeding, she was unclean according to the law of Moses (see: Leviticus 15:25-33). That is, she had to be separated from people. That is, because they would be unclean if they touched her or if she touched them. She could not worship in the temple. The people in the crowd did not have compassion for her or even look at her.

3. She was poor. The Gospel of Mark said she spent all her money on doctors but she only got more sick (see: Mark 5:26).

See: [Gospel](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Worship](#); [Temple](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did the woman want to touch the edge of Jesus' coat?

[8:44]

Some scholars think the woman wanted to touch the edge of Jesus' coat because she believed in magic. More scholars say she believed Jesus was able to heal her (see: 8:48). That is, she did not believe in magic. Jesus healed other people when they touched him (see: 6:19).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus ask who touched him?

[8:45]

Jesus asked who touched him because he wanted all the people to know he healed the woman. Scholars think Jesus already knew who touched him before he asked. He wanted the woman to talk about what had happened to her. Some scholars think this was so others would know that Jesus had the power to heal the woman completely. Also, Jesus wanted others would know that the woman was now clean. That is, she was able to go back into the community and no longer needed to be separated from people.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus call the woman "daughter"?

[8:48]

Scholars think there are three reasons Jesus called the woman "daughter."

1. Jesus wanted people to know he had compassion for her.
2. Jesus wanted people to know she came back into the community. That is, she was no longer unclean.
3. Luke wanted his readers to know that this story happened at the same time Jesus made another person's daughter alive again.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Jesus tell Jairus to not fear?

[8:50]

Scholars think Jesus told Jairus not to fear because his daughter's death made him fear. Jairus was afraid it was too late for Jesus to heal her. However, Jesus wanted Jairus to trust him that his daughter would be healed.

Why did Jesus use the word "sleep"?

[8:52]

The word "sleep" was a metaphor used to talk about someone who was dead. Some scholars think Jesus told the crowd that the girl was not dead. She was only sleeping because he knew he was going to heal her and make her alive again.

See: John 11:11-14

See: [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did all the crying people start laughing?

[8:53]

Scholars think there are two reasons why they quickly changed from crying to laughing.

1. Someone paid these people to mourn for the girl. Therefore, they were not really sad about the girl's death.
2. They did not think Jesus had the power to make the girl alive again. Perhaps they did not know Jesus made a man alive again in Nain (see: 7:11-16).

See Map: Nain

Why did Jesus tell the parents not to tell anyone that he made their daughter alive again?

[8:56]

Scholars think there are several reasons why Jesus told the parents not to tell anyone that Jesus made their daughter alive again.

1. Jesus wanted people to know that following him caused suffering, not comfort and miracles.
2. Jesus judged the people who laughed.
3. Jesus did not want those who did not believe to know about what he was doing.
4. Jesus wanted them to care for their daughter.
5. Jesus also did not want all of his disciples to see the miracle (see: Luke 8:51).
6. Jesus wanted to help his disciples understand who was Jesus (see: Luke 9:20).
7. Jesus wanted to wait until after he became alive again for people to know he has power to make people alive again.

See: Matthew 9:26

See: [Messianic Secret](#); [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Messianic Secret](#)

Chapter 9

¹ He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. ² He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³ He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey—no staff, no wallet, no bread, no money, and no extra tunic. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave. ⁵ Wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." ⁶ Then they departed and went through the villages, proclaiming the gospel and healing everywhere.

⁷ Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, ⁸ and others said that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen. ⁹ Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who is this about whom I hear such things?" And so he tried to see him.

¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they told him everything they had done. Then he took them with him, and they went away privately to a town called Bethsaida. ¹¹ But when the crowds heard about this, they followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and he cured those who needed healing. ¹² Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food, because we are here in an isolated place."

¹³ But he said to them, "You give them something to eat."

They said, "We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all these people."

¹⁴ (There were about five thousand men.) He said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." ¹⁵ So they did this, and made the people sit down. ¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, he blessed them and broke them into pieces, and he gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and what was left over was picked up—twelve baskets of broken pieces.

¹⁸ It came about while Jesus was praying by himself, the disciples were with him. He questioned them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

¹⁹ They answered, "John the Baptist. But others say Elijah, and others say that one of the prophets from long ago has risen."

²⁰ Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

²¹ But he warned and instructed them to tell this to no one, ²² saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and he will be killed and on the third day be raised." ²³ Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ What profit is there for a person to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself? ²⁶ Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his own glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ But truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

²⁸ Now about eight days after Jesus said these words, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the form of his face was changed, and his clothes became brilliant white. ³⁰ Behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory, talking with him about his departure, which he was about to bring to completion in Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who were standing with him. ³³ As they were going away from Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.) ³⁴ As he was saying this, a cloud came and

overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered into the cloud. ³⁵ A voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, the one who is chosen; listen to him." ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

³⁷ Now on the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. ³⁸ Behold, a man from the crowd cried out, saying, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. ³⁹ You see, a spirit takes control over him and he suddenly screams; it causes him to have convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him and it bruises him badly. ⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to force it out, but they could not."

⁴¹ Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverse generation, how long must I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here." ⁴² While the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and shook him with convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ Then they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While they all were marveling at everything he was doing, he said to his disciples, ⁴⁴ "Let these words go deeply into your ears: The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men." ⁴⁵ But they did not understand this statement. It was hidden from them, so they could not know its meaning, and yet they were afraid to ask about this statement.

⁴⁶ Then an argument started among them about which of them would be the greatest. ⁴⁷ But Jesus, knowing the reasoning in their hearts, took a little child and put him by his side ⁴⁸ and said to them, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. For whoever is least among you all is the one who is great."

⁴⁹ John answered, "Master, we saw someone forcing out demons in your name and we prevented him, because he does not follow along with us." ⁵⁰ "Do not stop him," Jesus said, "because whoever is not against you is for you."

⁵¹ When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵² He sent messengers on ahead of him, and they went and entered into a Samaritan village to prepare everything for him. ⁵³ But the people there did not welcome him because he had set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them?" ⁵⁵ But he turned and rebuked them, ⁵⁶ and they went on to another village.

⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

⁵⁸ Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ⁵⁹ Then he said to another, "Follow me."

But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

⁶⁰ But he said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim far and wide the kingdom of God."

⁶¹ Then someone else said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to those in my home."

⁶² Jesus replied to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9

9:1-6

Who were the twelve?

[9:1]

The twelve Luke wrote about were the twelve disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Luke wrote, “power and authority”?

[9:1]

Luke wrote that Jesus gave the disciples “power,” he wanted people to know that Jesus gave them the ability to do something. Luke wrote that Jesus gave the disciples “authority.” That is, Jesus gave them permission to do something.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did it mean to have power and authority “over all the demons”?

[9:1]

Jesus gave the disciples power and authority “over all the demons.” He gave them permission and power to make the demons to leave people and to stop controlling people.

See: [Disciple](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Disciple](#)

What did it mean to “preach the kingdom of God”?

[9:2]

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why was shaking dust off feet a testimony against people who did not receive the twelve?

[9:5]

The disciples shook the dust off of their feet because people did not believe the things they said about Jesus. This was a symbol. In ancient Israel, people did this when they left places where Gentiles lived because the Gentiles were unclean. Because people did not believe in Jesus, they were unclean. This is why the disciples shook the dust off of their feet. Perhaps this was a warning that God will reject these people.

See: Acts 13:48-51

See: [Symbol](#); [Gentile](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Symbol](#)

9:7-9

Who was Herod the tetrarch?

[9:7]

Herod the tetrarch was Herod Antipas. Sometimes people called him the tetrarch because he reigned over one fourth of the territory his father reigned over before him. Sometimes people called him a king (see: Mark 6:14).

See: [King Herod](#)

Why did some people say Elijah appeared rather than became alive again?

[9:8]

Some people said Elijah appeared rather than become alive again because Elijah did not die (see: 2 Kings 2:11). Instead, he went to heaven without dying. People expected Elijah to appear before the coming of the messiah (see: Malachi 4:5-6).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

9:10-17

Where was Behsaida?

[9:10]

See Map: Bethsaida

How many people were in the crowd?

[9:14]

Luke wrote there were five thousand men in the crowd. However, scholars say there were also women and children in the crowd. In ancient times, people often counted only men in a crowd (see: Matthew 14:21). Perhaps there were about twenty thousand people in the crowd.

How did Jesus “bless” the food?

[9:16]

Jesus blessed the food. Some scholars say Jesus “consecrated” the food. That is, Jesus asked God to bless the people who were going to eat the food. More scholars think Jesus “thanked God” for the food.

See: John 17:1

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

9:18-22

What did it mean that Jesus was “praying by himself”?

[9:18]

Luke wrote that Jesus was “praying by himself”. Jesus and the disciples were away from the crowd. Perhaps the disciples came and joined Jesus while he was praying.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Peter know that Jesus is the “Christ of God”?

[9:20]

Peter thought that Jesus was “the Christ of God”. In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus told Peter that God the Father revealed to him that Jesus is the Christ (see: Matthew 16:16-17).

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Gospel](#); [God the Father](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why did Jesus warn the disciples not to tell people he is the Christ of God?

[9:21]

See: [Messianic Secret](#)

Why did Jesus have to suffer?

[9:22]

Jesus had to suffer. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about certain prophecies about things that will happen to the messiah (see: Luke 24:45-46; Isaiah 53). Others scholars think Jesus was preparing the disciples for what was going to happen.

See: Luke 24:47; Ephesians 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

See: [Disciple](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus call himself the “Son of Man?”

[9:22]

See: [Son of Man](#)**9:23-27****What did it mean that a Christian “must deny himself”?**

[9:23]

Luke wrote that a Christian must deny himself. Scholars think Jesus meant that a Christian must do what God wants him to do. That is, a Christian must give up the right to do what they want to do and instead do what God wants them to do.

What did it mean for a Christian to “take up his cross daily”?

[9:23]

Some scholars think Jesus used a metaphor when he said that a Christian must “take up his cross daily.” This meant that anyone who wanted to be a disciple of Jesus had to be prepared to suffer for being a Christian. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about Christians doing things God wanted and not the things they wanted to do (see: Galatians 2:20).

See: [Suffer](#); [Cross](#); [Suffer](#)**What did Jesus mean by saying, “whoever would save his life will lose it”?**

[9:24]

The person who wanted to “save his life” was a person that was willing to do what God wanted him to do. When they do this, they will suffer. Scholars think Jesus was talking about a person’s soul when he spoke about their life.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Soul](#); [Metaphor](#)**What did Jesus mean by saying, “whoever loses his life for my sake will save it”?**

[9:24]

A person who “loses his life” is a person who gave up his right to live in the way he wants to live. He did this so he could follow Jesus. This person did this to honor God because they were at peace with God.

What was meant by the words, “gain the whole world”?

[9:25]

Someone who gained the whole word was someone who owned the world and everything in it. It was hyperbole to speak in this way. They were very rich and powerful.

See: [Hyperbole](#)**What did it mean to be “ashamed” of Jesus and his words?**

[9:26]

Jesus talked about someone who was ashamed of him and the things he said. This person refused to be a disciple because he felt “ashamed” and afraid of being embarrassed in front of other people. That is, he was afraid that other people would insult or mock him for following Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

When does Jesus come in “his own glory and the glory of the Father, and the angels”?

[9:26]

See: [Angel](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Angel](#)**What did Jesus mean by saying that some “will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God”?**

[9:27]

When someone tasted death, this was a way of saying that they died. Jesus said that some people will not die before they see the kingdom of God. Scholars think different things about what it meant to “see the kingdom of God”.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about the disciples who would see the form of Jesus change on the mountain (see: Luke 9:28-36).
2. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about people seeing him when God made him alive again (see: Mark 15:33-16:13).
3. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about people seeing the Holy Spirit do great things (see: Acts 2:1-4).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)**9:28-36****Where did Jesus take Peter, John, and James?**

[9:28]

Luke did not write the name of the mountain where Jesus took Peter, John, and James. Scholars think it was Hermon, Tabor, or Meron. Peter wrote the mountain was holy (see: 2 Peter 1:18).

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

See Map: Mt. Hermon; Mt. Tabor; Mt. Meron

How was “the form of his face” changed?

[9:29]

Luke wrote that the form of Jesus’ face changed. Jesus’ face looked different in some way. Perhaps this was because Jesus’ face began to shine with a glory from heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)**How did Moses and Elijah appear in “glorious splendor”?**

[9:30, 9:31]

Moses and Elijah appeared in “glorious splendor.” Like Jesus, they shone brightly with glory from heaven. That is, they were surrounded with very bright light.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)**What was the “departure” about which Jesus, Moses, and Elijah spoke?**

[9:31]

When Moses and Elijah spoke to Jesus about his “departure,” they were speaking about Jesus dying. This happened in Jerusalem.

Why did Peter want to “make three shelters”?

[9:33]

Peter wanted to make three shelters. Scholars think Peter was thinking about the shelters that were used to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles when people lived in shelters for seven days (see: Leviticus 23:33-42). They think Peter was wanted to stay on the mountain with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah.

Advice to translators: A shelter is a type of tent.

See: [Festival of Shelters](#)

What was the cloud that came and overshadowed them?

[9:34]

Luke wrote about a cloud. Some scholars think the cloud was like the pillar of cloud that led the people of Israel in the wilderness (see: Exodus 14:19-20). They think the cloud appeared and cast a shadow over Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the disciples. Other scholars think the cloud came close to the ground and surrounded Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who spoke out of the cloud?

[9:35]

When Luke wrote about someone speaking out of the cloud, it was God who was speaking.

What did it mean that Jesus was found alone?

[9:36]

Luke wrote that Jesus was found alone. He wanted people to know that the disciples no longer saw Moses and Elijah. They only saw Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

9:37-45**When speaking about a child, what did it mean that “a spirit takes control over him”?**

[9:39]

Luke was writing about an evil spirit or demon taking possession of the child. That is, the demon controlled the boy’s body and caused him to shake violently and to cry out.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did Jesus call the people an “unbelieving and depraved generation”?

[9:41]

Jesus called people an “unbelieving and depraved generation.” Some scholars think Jesus was telling the people that they were just like their ancestors, who also rejected God (see: Deuteronomy 32:5-6, 20). These people rejected Jesus.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

What did it mean that Jesus “rebuked the unclean spirit”?

[9:42]

Luke wrote that Jesus “rebuked” the unclean spirit. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to leave the boy. That is, he made the demon stop controlling the boy.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What did it mean that the Son of Man will be betrayed?

[9:44]

Luke wrote that the Son of Man was going to be betrayed. That is, someone Jesus trusted would help Jesus’ enemies arrest Jesus.

See: [Son of Man](#)

How was Jesus’ statement “hidden” from the disciples?

[9:45]

Scholars think that God caused Jesus’ statement to be “hidden.” That is, people did not understand what Jesus wanted to say. This is because it was not the right time for the meaning of what Jesus said to be revealed. God planned for a time in the future for the disciples to understand what Jesus said.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

9:46-48

What did it mean that the disciples were arguing about who would be “greatest”?

[9:46]

The disciples were arguing about who would be the greatest. Some scholars think the disciples were arguing about which of them was the greatest disciple at that present time. More scholars think the disciples were arguing about which of them was to be the greatest disciple in God’s kingdom. They wanted to be more honored than other people.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Pride](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said “whoever welcomes this child in my name”?

[9:48]

Jesus put a “little child” next to him to teach the disciples a lesson about being great. Someone needed to help or care for a child. Because of this, someone must welcome a child. Jesus wanted the disciples to know that in the kingdom of God, they too needed someone greater than themselves to help them.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Pride](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

What did it mean that “whoever is least among you all is the one who is great”?

[9:48]

Luke wrote, “whoever is least among you all is the one who is great.” Some scholars think Jesus meant that whoever was a humble person was the one who was truly great. Others scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to know that God thought certain people were great who other people did not think they were great.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Pride](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

9:49-50

Why did John say, “he does not follow along with us”?

[9:49]

When John said these words to Jesus, he meant that the person who was forcing out demons was not one of the disciples.

See: [Disciple](#); [Demon](#); [Disciple](#)

9:51-56

What did it mean for Jesus to be “taken up”?

[9:51]

Jesus would be “taken up.” That is, God was going to take Jesus back up to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What was meant by the words, “he set his face to go to Jerusalem”?

[9:51]

Luke wrote, “he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” Jesus decided to go to Jerusalem. That is, he was determined to start his journey to Jerusalem.

Who were the Samaritans?

[9:52]

See: [Samaria](#)

See Map: Samaria

Why did the people of Samaria not welcome Jesus?

[9:53]

The people of Samaria did not welcome Jesus because he was going to Jerusalem. The people of Samaria worshipped on Mount Gerizim. They did not like people traveling through Samaria to get to Jerusalem.

See Map: Mount Gerizim

Why did rebuke the disciples?

[9:55]

Scholars think that Jesus rebuked the disciples for wanting to see Samaria destroyed. This meant that Jesus told the disciples they were thinking in a wrong way. That is, they did not treat people the way God wanted them to treat other people.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

See Map: Samaria

9:57-62

Why did Luke write, “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head”?

[9:58]

Luke wrote, “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Foxes and birds had places where they lived. However, Jesus was always traveling and did not live in one place.

See: [Son of Man](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “leave the dead to bury their own dead”?

[9:60]

Jesus said, “leave the dead to bury their own dead.” Some scholars think the first use of the word “dead” was speaking about those who were spiritually dead. That is, all those who did not know Jesus or had rejected him as the messiah. Because of this, they were separated from God. In ancient Israel, people often spoke about this as a type of death.

He said those who were spiritually dead can take care of burying those who were physically dead. His command saying, “follow me” meant he wanted that person to immediately go out and tell people about the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Someone wanted to say goodbye to people at home before they followed Jesus. How did Jesus use a metaphor to answer them?

[9:62]

Someone wanted to say goodbye to people at home before they followed Jesus. Jesus answered them with a metaphor about plowing a field and then looking back. People used an animal to pull a plow. The farmer held a handle on the plow to make a straight trench in the ground. If the farmer looked back the trench was not straight. Just as the farmer should not look behind him, so a disciple should keep his eye on following Jesus.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Chapter 10

¹ Now after these things, the Lord appointed seventy ^[1] others, and sent them out two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he himself was about to go. ² He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³ Go on your way. See, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴ Do not carry a money bag, or a traveler's bag, or sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whatever house you enter, first say, 'May peace be on this house!' ⁶ If a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him, but if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Remain in that same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not move around from house to house. ⁸ Whatever town you enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you ⁹ and heal the sick that are there. Say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come close to you.' ¹⁰ Whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹ 'Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you! But know this: The kingdom of God is near.' ¹² I say to you that on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town. ¹³ Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵ You, Capernaum, do you think you will be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. ¹⁶ The one who listens to you listens to me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

¹⁷ The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submitted to us in your name."

¹⁸ Jesus said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven as lightning. ¹⁹ See, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will in any way hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice only in this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice even more that your names are engraved in heaven."

²¹ At that same hour he rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to those who are untaught, like little children. Yes, Father, for so it was well pleasing in your sight. ²² "All things have been entrusted to me from my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." ²³ Then he turned around to the disciples and said privately, "Blessed are those who see the things that you see. ²⁴ I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see the things you see, and they did not see them, and to hear the things that you hear, and they did not hear them."

²⁵ Behold, an expert in the law stood up so that he might test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

²⁷ He gave an answer and he said, "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

²⁸ Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live." ²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

³⁰ Jesus answered him and said, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell among robbers, who stripped him of his belongings, and beat him, and left him half dead. ³¹ By chance a certain priest was going down that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² In the same way, a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion. ³⁴ He approached him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He set him on his own animal, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said, 'Take care of him, and whatever extra you spend, when I return, I will repay you.' ³⁶ Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?"

³⁷ He said, "The one who showed mercy to him."

Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

³⁸ Now as they were traveling along, he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and heard his word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was overly busy with preparing to serve a meal. She came up to Jesus and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

⁴¹ But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen what is best, which will not be taken away from her."

Footnotes

10:1 ^[1]Many of the best ancient copies read

Luke 10

10:1-12

Why did Jesus send out people in groups of two?

[10:1]

Jesus sent out people in groups of two. In ancient times, people often traveled with other people. Perhaps he did this because in the Law of Moses, two people were needed to be a witness of something. These two people were witnesses of Jesus (see: Deuteronomy 19:15).

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, "the harvest is plentiful"?

[10:2]

Jesus said "the harvest is plentiful." This is a metaphor. A farmer's field was full of grain and was ready to be harvested. Jesus was saying there are many people ready to believe in him. The farmer needed people to harvest the grain. Jesus also needed his disciples to tell people about him. Jesus wanted people to pray to God, and ask him to have more people serve God.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How were the disciples like lambs being sent out "in the midst of wolves"?

[10:3]

Jesus used a metaphor when speaking about his disciples. When he spoke about sheep, he was speaking about his disciples. Sheep need a shepherd to defend them and to watch over them. Wolves were wild animals that killed sheep. There were many people who rejected Jesus and tried to harm the disciples.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Advice to Translators: A wolf is large type of dog that does not live with people.

Why did Jesus tell his disciples not to "carry a money bag, or a traveler's bag, or sandals"?

[10:4]

Jesus told his disciples not to carry certain things. Scholars disagree about why told his disciples not to bring anything with them.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was telling the disciples not to carry extra money or clothing for their journey. He wanted them to trust that God would give them what they needed to serve these people.
2. Other scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to leave immediately.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus command the disciples not to greet anyone on the road?

[10:4]

In ancient times, greetings often took a long time. Perhaps Jesus want people to hurry.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus instruct the disciples to say, “May peace be on this house”?

[10:5]

Jesus wanted his disciples to say, “may peace be on this house.” Some scholars think Jesus wanted his disciples to greet people the way the Jews greeted one another when they entered someone’s home. They wanted people to be at peace with God.

What was a person of peace?

[10:6]

A person of peace accepted the peace from Jesus. Scholars think they were ready to receive peace or God prepared them to receive peace. This person wanted to be at peace and welcomed people who followed Jesus into their house.

Why did Jesus say that peace will return to you?

[10:6]

Jesus said that peace will return to you. He wanted people to know that God’s peace would not rest on that home. It would be like the disciples never even spoke the blessing.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say, “the laborer is worthy of his wages”?

[10:7]

In ancient times, people often said “the laborer is worthy of his wages.” Anyone who did work had the right to receive money for the things he did. In the same way, Jesus wanted his disciples to know it was right for them to receive food and a place to sleep because they were teaching people about Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

How had the kingdom of God come close?

[10:9]

Luke wrote that the kingdom of God came close. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about his disciples, whom he sent out, healing and telling people about the kingdom of God. In this way, the kingdom had come near to them. Other scholars think Jesus was saying that because he was among them, the kingdom of God was now in the world. However, scholars think it will only be completed in the future. Other scholars think Jesus was offering to rule and be king, but he did not because people rejected him.

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

What did Jesus mean with the words, “we wipe off against you” when speaking about the dust on the disciple’s feet?

[10:11]

See: Luke 9:5

Why did Jesus say it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for the town that rejected the followers of Jesus?

[10:12]

Jesus said that it would be better for the people of Sodom than for those who rejected him. The people of Sodom sinned more than other people and God punished them (see: Genesis: 18:20; 19:24). God will punish people more if they reject Jesus.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

See Map: Sodom

10:13-20

What was a woe?

[10:13]

See: [Woe](#)

Where were Chorazin and Bethsaida?

[10:13]

Chorazin and Bethsaida were cities in Israel. The people in these cities were Jews.

See Map: Chorazin and Bethsaida

Where were Tyre and Sidon?

[10:13]

Tyre and Sidon were cities outside of Israel. The people in these cities were Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Tyre and Sidon

What were the “mighty works” about which Jesus spoke?

[10:13]

The “mighty works” or “miracles” about which Jesus spoke were the healings, making people alive again, and forcing out demons.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#) ; [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What did it mean to repent?

[10:13]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

When will Jesus judge these cities?

[10:14]

Jesus will judge these cities after he returns at the end of the earth.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Where was Capernaum?

[10:15]

Capernaum was a city in Israel near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus stayed there often and did many miracles and taught people.

See: [Miracle](#)

See Map: Capernaum; Sea of Galilee

How was a city exalted to “heaven?”

[10:15]

A city “exalted to heaven” was a metaphor. This city was more honored than other cities. A city was exalted to “heaven” or the “sky” when God honored it. In ancient Israel, people thought that nothing was higher than the sky.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What is Hades?

[10:15]

See: [Hades \(Sheol\)](#)

Jesus said, “whoever listens to you.” Who was he talking about?

[10:16]

When Jesus said “whoever listens to you,” he was talking about the disciples he sent. He gave them permission to say the things he wanted them to say. If the people listen to the disciples, it was as if they listened to Jesus. If people did not listen to the disciples, they rejected Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did the demons submit to the disciples in the name of Jesus?

[10:17]

The demons submitted to the disciples in the name of Jesus. Scholars think the demons knew that Jesus gave the disciples permission to do things for him. Because of this, the demons obeyed the disciples.

See: [Disciple](#); [Submit \(Submission\)](#); [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said he was “watching Satan fall from heaven”?

[10:18]

Jesus said that Satan fell from heaven. This is a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about when God cast Satan out of heaven (see: Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19). That is, God made Satan live in hell, not heaven.
2. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about Jesus defeating Satan when he was tempted (see: Matthew 4: 1-11).

3. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jesus and God defeating Satan.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

What was meant when Jesus said, “I have given you authority”?

[10:19]

Scholars think Jesus gave his disciples the permission to do things for him. He gave them the power to do things they could not do without him (see: Mark 16:17-18). They think Jesus gave his disciples power over the enemy, Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “your names are engraved in heaven”?

[10:20]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to rejoice that they were joined together in some way with other Christians. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about God’s book of life (see: Revelation 3:5).

See: [Heaven](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Heaven](#)

10:21-24

How did Jesus rejoice in the Holy Spirit?

[10:21]

Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit filled him and led him (see: 3:22;4:1). The Holy Spirit wanted Jesus to pray these things (see: 10:21-22). This brought joy to Jesus.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Who is the Lord of heaven and earth?

[10:21]

God the Father is the Lord of heaven and earth. That is, God the Father made heaven and earth. This is why he is Lord over heaven and earth.

See: Genesis 1:1-25; John 1:1-5

See: [Lord](#); [Heaven](#); [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#); [Lord](#)

What did God conceal and reveal?

[10:21]

Scholars say God concealed and revealed things about the kingdom of God. At this time, he wanted people to know certain things about the kingdom of God. At this time, he also wanted people not to know certain things about the kingdom of God.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Who were the little children?

[10:21]

Jesus spoke about little children. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think he was speaking about people who did not know much about the Bible (see: Hebrews 5:13). Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people who believed the right things about God even when the Jewish teachers did not believe the right things.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What did it mean that the Father entrusted Jesus with all things?

[10:22]

God the Father entrusted Jesus with all things. Scholars think that when the Father entrusted all things to Jesus, he gave Jesus all knowledge. That is, Jesus knew everything that God the Father was going to do. He also gave Jesus permission to give eternal life to other people (see: Matthew 28:18; John 17:2).

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Why did no one know who the Son was except the Father and no one knew who the Father was except the Son?

[10:22]

No one knew who the Son was except the Father and no one knew who the Father was except the Son. This is because only the Father and the Son know each other fully. The Father and the Son know each other from eternity.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

How did Jesus reveal God the Father to people?

[10:22]

Jesus revealed God the Father to people by telling them about God and what God wanted. He also revealed God the Father by doing God's will.

See: [Will of God](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Will of God](#)

What did it mean that the disciples were "blessed"?

[10:23]

Jesus said that the disciples were blessed. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a person who had received great favor from God. God favored them because they witnessed the things Jesus said and did.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

10:25-29

What was a teacher of the Jewish laws?

[10:25]

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did this man want to test Jesus?

[10:25]

This man tried to test Jesus. Scholars disagree about why this man did this.

1. He wanted to know the things Jesus taught about the Law of Moses.
2. He wanted to trick Jesus into saying something that would make people angry.
3. He thought he knew more about the Law of Moses than Jesus.

See: Test; [Law of Moses](#)

How did the teacher of the law answer Jesus?

[10:27]

The teacher of the Law of Moses said what was written in the Law of Moses when he answered Jesus' question (see: Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18).

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How did the teacher of the law wanted to justify himself?

[10:29]

The teacher of the Law of Moses wanted to justify himself. Some scholars think that when the teacher wanted to make people think he was right. That is, he wanted to make people think that he was wise. Other scholars say this man wanted to justify himself because he did evil things to other people.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

10:30-37

Where was Jericho?

[10:30]

See Map: Jericho

How did someone “fall among robbers”?

[10:30]

When someone “fell among robbers,” the robbers violently attacked him. They took his clothes and beat him. Some scholars think the robbers surrounded him. Other scholars think he fought the robbers and they used clubs or sticks to beat him. Other scholars think the robbers also took his money. The robbers left him half dead. That is, he was about to die if no one helped him.

What was a Samaritan?

[10:33]

See: [Samaria](#)

See Map: Samaria

What did it mean that the Samaritan was “moved with compassion”?

[10:33]

The Samaritan was moved with “compassion.” He felt sorry for the injured man.

See: [Mercy](#); [Mercy](#)

See Map: Samaria

Why did the Samaritan pour oil and wine on the injured man’s wounds?

[10:34]

In ancient times, people often used oil and wine for wounds. The oil and wine cleaned the wound and made it feel better.

Advice to translators: A wound is a place on someone’s skin that has been hurt.

What was a denarius?

[10:35]

A denarius was the amount of money someone typically made in one day.

See: [Denarius](#)

10:38-42

Why did Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet and heard his word”?

[10:39]

In ancient Israel, a student often sat on the floor to listen to their teacher while he sat on a box or chair to teach. She did this because she was humble and wanted to learn from Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How did Mary choose what was best?

[10:42]

Mary choose what was best by doing the one thing that she needed to do. That is, she needed to learn from Jesus more than she needed to help prepare a meal. Perhaps Martha needed to spend less time preparing for a meal and spend more time listening to Jesus.

How will the best not be taken away from Mary?

[10:42]

Luke wrote that the best will not be taken away from Mary. Some scholars think that Mary would always remember sitting at Jesus’ feet and hearing him teach. She would especially remember these things after Jesus was crucified, buried, and became alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Chapter 11

¹ It happened one day that Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

² Jesus said to them, "When you pray say,

'Father, may your name be honored as holy.

May your kingdom come.

³ Give us our daily bread each day.

⁴ Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive everyone who is in debt to us.
Do not lead us into temptation."

⁵ Jesus said to them, "Which of you will have a friend, and will go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend to me three loaves of bread,' ⁶ since a friend of mine just came in from the road, and I do not have anything to set before him'? ⁷ Then the one inside who answered him may say, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children, along with me, are in bed. I am not able to get up and give bread to you.' ⁸ I say to you, even if he does not get up and give bread to you because you are his friend, yet because of your shameless persistence, he will get up and give you as many loaves of bread as you need. ⁹ I also say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For every asking person receives; and the seeking person finds; and to the person who knocks, it will be opened. ¹¹ Which father among you, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will you give a scorpion to him? ¹³ Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

¹⁴ Now Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. ¹⁵ But some of the people said, "By Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he is driving out demons." ¹⁶ Others tested him and sought from him a sign from heaven.

¹⁷ But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and a house divided against itself falls. ¹⁸ If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ If I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your followers drive them out? Because of this, they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you. ²¹ When a strong man who is fully armed guards his own palace, his possessions are safe, ²² but when a stronger man overcomes him, the stronger man takes away the armor in which the man trusted and plunders the man's possessions. ²³ The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters. ²⁴ When an unclean spirit has gone away from a man, it passes through waterless places and looks for rest. Finding none, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵ Having returned, it finds the house had been swept clean and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more evil than itself and they all come in to live there. Then the final condition of that man becomes worse than the first."

²⁷ It happened that, as he said these things, a certain woman raised her voice above the crowd and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you."

²⁸ But he said, "Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it."

²⁹ As the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to say, "This generation is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, though no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so too the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation. ³¹ The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see, someone greater than Solomon is here. ³² The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation of people and will condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and see, someone greater than Jonah is here."

³³ No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it in a hidden place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of the body. When your eye is good, the whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is bad, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵ Therefore, watch out that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶ If then your whole body is full of light, not having any member in darkness, then your whole body will be like when a lamp shines its brightness on you."

³⁷ When he had finished speaking, a Pharisee asked him to eat with him at his house, so Jesus went in and reclined. ³⁸ The Pharisee was surprised that Jesus did not first wash before dinner. ³⁹ But the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of cups and bowls, but the inside of you is filled with robbery and evil. ⁴⁰ You senseless men! Did not the one who made the outside also make the inside? ⁴¹ Give what is inside as alms, and then all things will be clean for you."

⁴² "But woe to you Pharisees, because you tithe mint and rue and every other garden herb, but you neglect justice and the love of God. It is necessary to act justly and love God, without failing to do the other things also. ⁴³ Woe to you Pharisees, for you love the front seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴ Woe to you, for you are like unmarked graves that people walk over without knowing it."

⁴⁵ One of the experts in the law said to him, "Teacher, what you say insults us too." ⁴⁶ Jesus said, "Woe to you, teachers of the law! For you put people under burdens that are hard to carry, but you do not touch the burdens with one of your own fingers. ⁴⁷ Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them. ⁴⁸ So you are witnesses and you consent to the works of your ancestors, for they indeed killed them and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ For this reason also, God's wisdom said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and they will persecute and kill some of them.' ⁵⁰ As a result, this generation will be charged for all the blood of the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, ⁵¹ from Abel's blood to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, this generation will be held responsible. ⁵² Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering."

⁵³ After Jesus left there, the scribes and the Pharisees opposed him and argued with him about many things, ⁵⁴ lying in wait to catch him in something he might say.

Footnotes

11:11 ^[1]The best ancient copies have the shorter reading. Some ancient copies have a longer reading, which also is found in Matthew 7:9:

Luke 11

11:1-13

How did Jesus want his disciples to pray this prayer?

[11:2]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted his disciples to pray this prayer by saying the same words he said. Other scholars think Jesus wanted them to pray in the same way he prayed, but not say the same words he said. Other scholars think both ways of praying honored God.

See: Matthew 6:9-13

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he told the disciples to pray “may your name be sanctified”?

[11:2]

Jesus told the disciples that the name of God the Father was to “sanctified”(ἁγιάζω/g0037). He wanted the disciples to know that the name of God the Father was holy and different than every other name. They were to honor the name of God.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “may your kingdom come”?

[11:2]

When Jesus prayed “may your kingdom come,” he wanted the kingdom of God to begin.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What was “daily bread”?

[11:3]

To the people of Jesus’ day, people needed to eat bread to live. Some scholars think Jesus was not speaking about bread, but he was speaking about all food. Other scholars think bread was a metaphor. He was speaking about everything the disciple needed to live. Still other scholars think Jesus was teaching the disciples that bread represented spiritual food (see: John 6:32-35).

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus want the disciples to pray “forgive us our sins”?

[11:4]

Jesus prayed, “forgive us our sins.” He told the disciples to pray this way. God had already forgiven the sins of the disciples. He wanted them to pray that they would forgive other people when these people sinned against them. God did not forgive the disciples’ sins because of the things they do. God forgave them because of his mercy.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

How did Jesus use the word “temptation”?

[11:4]

Jesus spoke about temptation. Some scholars say Jesus was thinking about sin. Other scholars say Jesus was thinking about testing. That is, the persecution or suffering the disciples experienced.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Test](#); [Sin](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “shameless persistence”?

[11:8]

Scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence”(ἀναίδεια/g0335) in two different ways.

1. Some scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence” to speak about the friend on the outside who boldly kept knocking on the door of the house until his friend gave him what he wanted.
2. Other scholars think Jesus used “shameless persistence” to speak about the friend on the inside of the house who gave his friend what he wanted because he was worried about what people thought about him.

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to ask, seek, and knock?

[11:8, 11:9, 11:10]

Jesus told the disciples to ask, seek, and knock. Scholars think these words were metaphors. Jesus was speaking about asking God in prayer, seeking God’s wisdom in prayer, and constantly praying.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What did Luke write in verse 11?

[11:11]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words, “if your son asks for a loaf of bread, will you give him a stone?” Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. When Matthew wrote about these same things, he said these words (see: Matthew 7:9). Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

What did Jesus mean by saying, “you who are evil”?

[11:13]

Jesus said, “you who are evil.” Scholars think Jesus was comparing people’s fathers with God the Father. Everyone’s father has sinned. However, God the Father has never sinned. He is holy and righteous.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Sin](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Who is the Holy Spirit?

[11:13]

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

11:14-26

How was Jesus “driving out a demon”?

[11:14]

Jesus drove out the demon by the power of God. That is, Jesus commanded the spirit to leave which stopped the demon from controlling the man. Jesus had total control over demons (see: 4:33-36).

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

What was a demon that was mute?

[11:14]

A mute demon cannot talk. This caused the man to not be able to speak.

See: [Demon](#)

Who was Beelzebul?

[11:15]

Beelzebul was the name of a pagan god. Pagans called their gods Ba'al (see: 2 Kings 1:2). The New Testament used the name Beelzebul as a name for Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [False gods](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What did it mean that others tested Jesus?

[11:16]

Others tested Jesus. Some scholars do not know why other people tested Jesus, but they wanted a sign from heaven. Some scholars think they wanted Jesus to prove he is the messiah by doing a sign. Some scholars think these were people trying to make other people think the wrong things about Jesus. That is, they wanted people to think that Jesus was not the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Sign](#); [Heaven](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean that a kingdom “is made desolate”?

[11:17]

A kingdom that “is made desolate” is a kingdom that was destroyed.

What was Satan’s kingdom?

[11:18]

Satan’s kingdom was made of demons. Satan ruled over the demons. Jesus defeated Satan in the wilderness when Satan was not able to make Jesus sin. Jesus also defeated Satan at the cross. The final defeat of Satan will be at the end of the world.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Demon](#); [Sin](#); [Cross](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was the “finger of God”?

[11:20]

The finger of God was a metaphor for God’s power. Some scholars think it was easy for Jesus to drive out demons. Other scholars think the metaphor spoke about God not moving his finger very much to drive out demons. God did it easily. Jesus said he drove out demons by the Spirit of God (see: Matthew 12:28).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Demon](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How did the kingdom of God come to these people?

[11:20]

The kingdom of God came to these people when Jesus came and cast out demons. That was one way God began to reign. God will fully reign at the end of the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was a “strongman”?

[11:21]

Here, a strongman is a soldier or a warrior. That is, he is a man who is able to fight well. Perhaps this strongman was also Satan.

What did it mean to “plunder the man’s possessions”?

[11:22]

When someone plundered a man’s possessions, the man’s possessions were divided and then given to other people. What did Jesus mean when he said, “the one who is not with me is against me”? Jesus said, “the one who is not with me is against me.” Jesus wanted to say that anyone who was not his friend was his enemy. Here, Jesus spoke about a fight between good and evil (see: Luke 11:14-22). Anyone who was not Jesus’ friend was a friend of Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “the one who does not gather with me scatters”?

[11:23]

Jesus said, “the one who does not gather with me scatters.” He wanted to say that anyone who did not serve with him was fighting against him in some way. People made a decision to either serve with Jesus or fight against him. He spoke about this using a metaphor. Some scholars think this metaphor was about a shepherd who gathered his sheep. Satan tried to scatter the sheep. Other scholars think this metaphor was about a farmer who gathered his crop at harvest time. Christians helped Jesus gather the harvest.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Shepherd](#); [Harvest](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was an unclean spirit?

[11:24]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What were waterless places?

[11:24]

Waterless places were the dry deserts and wilderness. People did not live in these places. Demons and unclean spirits wandered through the wilderness, but they did not find a place to stay. The demons then try to go back to the person from whom they were driven.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “house swept out and put in order”?

[11:25]

Jesus spoke about a “house swept out and put in order.” This was a metaphor. He compared the heart of a man to a clean and tidy house. A clean house was ready for someone to live in it. Jesus spoke about a person who was not living in the right way and was ready to have many spirits live in him (see: Matthew 12:44).

11:27-32

Why did the woman say, “blessed is the womb that bore you”?

[11:27]

When the woman spoke the words, “blessed is the womb that bore you,” she was speaking about Jesus’ mother. The woman said that his mother is blessed.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did someone “hear the word of God and keep it”?

[11:28]

Jesus spoke about someone hearing the word of God and keeping it. Scholars think that Jesus wanted people to know that there was a greater blessing for people who believed in him and obeyed him, than his mother received.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did Jesus speak about an “evil generation”?

[11:29]

When Jesus spoke about an “evil generation” he was speaking about the people living when he was on the earth. They were “evil” because they refused to believe that God sent Jesus. They only wanted Jesus to do miracles.

See: Luke 11:16

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

What was the “sign of Jonah”?

[11:29]

Jesus said that “no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” Scholars think Jesus was speaking about a future sign. Matthew also wrote about the sign of Jonah and that Jonah was in the stomach of a big fish for three days and nights (see: Matthew 12:40). Scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jesus being crucified and being dead for three days. Just as Jonah was released from the stomach of fish, so Jesus became alive again.

See: Jonah 1:17-2:10

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Who was the queen of the south?

[11:31]

The queen of the south was the queen of Sheba who visited King Solomon of Israel (see: 1 Kings 10:1-13). Some scholars think she was from southern Arabia. Other scholars think she was from modern Yemen.

See Map: Arabia; Yemen

How will the queen of the south condemn that generation at God’s judgment?

[11:31]

Luke wrote about the queen of the south condemning a certain generation. Scholars think that when the queen of the south rises at the judgment, people will know she did things that pleased God. The Jewish people who lived at the time of Jesus, and rejected him, did not do what pleased God. They will be condemned when God judges them.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Generation](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

How will the Queen of the South come from the ends of the earth?

[11:31]

Luke wrote that the queen of the south “came from the ends of the earth.” He wanted to say that she came from very far away.

How will the men of Nineveh condemn that generation at God’s judgment?

[11:32]

Luke wrote that the men of Nineveh will condemn people. The men of Nineveh will not be acting as judges. However, they will rise and people will know that when Jonah spoke God’s word to them, they “repented” (see: Jonah 3:4-10). Their repentance pleased God. The Jewish people who lived at the time when Jesus was on the earth did not repent when Jesus spoke God’s word. This did not please God.

See: [Word of God](#); [Generation](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Word of God](#)

See Map: Nineveh

How did Jesus say something greater than Solomon and Jonah was there?

[11:32]

Jesus said something greater than Solomon and Jonah was there when he said that Solomon’s great wisdom did not compare to Jesus’ greater wisdom. Also, Jonah’s great preaching did not compare to Jesus’ greater preaching. Solomon and Jonah did not always do what God wanted (see: 1 Kings 11:1-9; Jonah 4:5-10). Jesus always did what God wanted him to do.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

11:33-36

How was the eye the lamp of the body?

[11:34]

The eye is the lamp of the body. This is a metaphor. The eye sees light. Scholars think Jesus used a metaphor in speaking about the eye. He wanted people to believe the things he taught and to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

11:37-54

What was a Pharisee?

[11:37]

See: [Pharisees](#)

Why did Jesus recline when he ate?

[11:37]

In ancient Israel, people often laid on cushions around a low table for a meal. The people leaned on one elbow while they ate.

Why was the Pharisee surprised that Jesus did not wash his hands?

[11:38]

The Pharisee was surprised Jesus did not wash his hands. They taught people that they needed to wash their hands in a certain way to be clean. They expected Jesus to follow the rules the Jewish teachers made. Jesus obeyed the Law of Moses, not the rules made by the Jewish teachers.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus say the Pharisees cleaned “the outside of cups and bowls”?

[11:39]

When Jesus spoke about the “outside of cups and bowls” he used a metaphor. People clean the “outside of cups and bowls”. That is, people did certain things so that other people thought they lived in a way that honored God. However, the inside of the cup was still dirty. That is, these people did not live in a way that honored God.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Metaphor](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What was a woe?

[11:42]

See: [Woe](#)

What was a tithe?

[11:42]

See: [Tithe](#)

What was a synagogue?

[11:43]

See: [Synagogue](#)

What did it mean when Jesus said the Pharisees were “like unmarked graves”?

[11:44]

An unmarked grave looked just like ordinary ground, because there was nothing to mark it as a grave. People could walk over these graves without knowing there were dead bodies underneath them. This was a metaphor. People did not see what happened inside an unmarked grave when they walked on it and people did not see the evil inside of the Pharisees.

Advice to translators: A grave is a hole in the ground where people put a dead person’s body. They cover it with dirt. It is often marked with a stone. This stone has the name of the person who died on it.

See: [Tomb](#); [Pharisees](#); [Tomb](#)

What was a “teacher of the law”?

[11:45, 11:46]

A “teacher of the law” was an expert in the Law of Moses. They were often Pharisees.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

Why did Jesus criticize the teachers of the law for building tombs for the dead prophets?

[11:47]

Jesus criticized the teachers of the Law of Moses. The Pharisees wanted to honor the prophets who died long before they were born. Scholars think Jesus wanted the Pharisees to honor the prophets by obeying what they taught, not by building them tombs. Because the ancestors of these teachers killed the prophets, scholars think Jesus was saying the teachers were only honoring the prophets for dying, but not living in a way that honors God.

See: [Tomb](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Pharisees](#); [Tomb](#)

Why was that generation responsible for so much?

[11:50]

Scholars give several reasons why that generation was responsible for so much.

1. That generation approved of their ancestors killing God’s prophets.
2. That generation was about to kill God’s apostles.
3. The Old Testament prophesied about the time of that generation. When that generation rejected prophets and apostles, they also rejected all the prophets from earlier times.
4. That generation rejected and killed Jesus.

See: [Generation](#); [Prophet](#); [Generation](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the deaths of Abel and Zechariah?

[11:51]

Jesus talked about the deaths of Abel and Zechariah because Abel was the first person killed in the Old Testament (see: Genesis 4:8) and Zechariah was the last person killed for obeying God in the Old Testament (see: 2 Chronicles 24:20-21).

What was the “key of knowledge”?

[11:52]

Jesus spoke about the “key of knowledge.” Scholars think Jesus was using a metaphor. A key was used to lock a door. The Jewish leaders stopped people from knowing God. They stopped people from knowing that Jesus is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was a scribe?

[11:53]

See: [Scribe](#)

Chapter 12

¹ In the meantime, when many thousands of the people were gathered together so much that they trampled on each other, he began to say to his disciples first of all, "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ² But there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known. ³ So whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops. ⁴ I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that they have no more that they can do. ⁵ But I will warn you about whom to fear. Fear the one who, after he has killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I say to you, fear him. ⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God. ⁷ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear. You are more valuable than many sparrows. ⁸ I say to you, everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man will also confess before the angels of God, ⁹ but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. ¹⁰ Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. ¹¹ When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you will speak in your defense, or what you will say, ¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that hour what you should say."

¹³ Then someone from the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

¹⁴ Jesus said to him, "Man, who appointed me a judge or a mediator over you?" ¹⁵ He said to them, "Watch that you keep yourselves from all greedy desires, because a person's life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions." ¹⁶ Then Jesus told them a parable, saying, "The field of a rich man yielded abundantly, ¹⁷ and he reasoned with himself, saying, 'What will I do, because I do not have a place to store my crops?' ¹⁸ He said, 'This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all of my grain and other goods. ¹⁹ I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Rest easy, eat, drink, be merry."' ²⁰ But God said to him, 'Foolish man, tonight your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ That is what someone is like who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

²² Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothes. ²⁴ Think about the ravens, that they do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn, but God feeds them. How much more valuable you are than the birds! ²⁵ Which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his lifespan? ²⁶ If then you are not able to do such a very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? ²⁷ Think about the lilies—how they grow. They do not labor, neither do they spin. Yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ²⁸ If God so clothes the grass in the field, which exists today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! ²⁹ Do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not be anxious. ³⁰ For all the nations of the world seek these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ But seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. ³² Do not fear, little flock, because your Father is very pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give alms. Make for yourselves purses which will not wear out—treasure in the heavens that does not run out, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

³⁵ "Keep your loins girded and your lamps lit, ³⁶ and be like people waiting expectantly for their master when he returns from the marriage feast, so that when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open the door for him. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master will find watching when he comes. Truly I say to you, he will gird himself to serve and have them sit down at the table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If the master comes in the second watch of the night, or if even in the third watch, and finds them ready, blessed are those servants. ³⁹ But understand this, that if the master of the house had known the hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect."

⁴¹ Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable only to us, or also to everyone?"

⁴² The Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager whom his lord will set over his other servants to give them their portion of food at the right time? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his lord finds doing that when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his property. ⁴⁵ But if that servant says in his heart, 'My lord delays his return,' and begins to beat the male servants and female servants and to eat and drink and to become drunk, ⁴⁶ the lord of that servant will come in a day when he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know and will cut him in pieces and appoint a place for him with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷ That servant, having known his lord's will and not having prepared or done according to his will, will be beaten with many blows. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating, he will be beaten with a few blows. But everyone who has been given much, from them much will be required, and the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be asked.

⁴⁹ "I came to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled. ⁵⁰ But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am distressed until it is completed! ⁵¹ Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵² For from now on there will be five in one house divided—three people against two, and two people against three. ⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴ Jesus was saying to the crowds also, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it happens. ⁵⁵ When a south wind is blowing, you say, 'There will be a scorching heat,' and it happens. ⁵⁶ Hypocrites, you know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the heavens, but how is it that you do not know how to interpret the present time? ⁵⁷ Why do you not judge what is right for yourselves? ⁵⁸ For when you go with your adversary before the magistrate, on the way make an effort to be reconciled with him so that he does not drag you to the judge, and so that the judge does not deliver you to the officer, and the officer does not throw you into prison. ⁵⁹ I say to you, you will never come out from there until you have paid the very last bit of money."

Luke 12

12:1-12

What was the yeast of the Pharisees?

[12:1]

When Jesus spoke about the yeast of the Pharisees, this was a metaphor. A little yeast spread through the whole lump of dough. It affected all of the dough. In the same way, the things the Pharisees did affected many people.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Pharisees](#); [Metaphor](#)

How will God reveal concealed things?

[12:2]

Jesus was speaking about God concealing things. Jesus was speaking about God knowing why people did things. Even though people wanted to conceal why they did things, but God will reveal the truth. Scholars think God will reveal the truth about why people do things when he returns to judge the earth.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Jesus say “do not be afraid of those who kill the body”?

[12:4]

Jesus told people not to be afraid of those who can kill their body. Jesus did not want Christians to be afraid of people who were only able to kill the body because those people cannot kill a Christian's soul (see: Matthew 10:28). People can kill Christians, but they cannot stop them from living with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Heaven](#)

Who has permission to throw people into hell?

[12:5]

Only God can throw people into hell. He does not give permission to anyone else to do this.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Jesus speak about sparrows and two small coins?

[12:6]

Sparrows were a common bird poor people ate in ancient Israel. Someone could buy five sparrows for two small coins. This was the amount of money someone earned for working for about one hour. People did not value the sparrow. Yet God does not forget even one sparrow. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that God will never forget them. Indeed, they were worth far more than birds.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did it mean to confess Jesus before men?

[12:8]

Jesus spoke about people confessing him before men. Jesus wanted to say that a person declared to the other people that he was a disciple of Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Who is the Son of Man?

[12:8]

See: [Son of Man](#)

What will Jesus confess about people before the angels?

[12:8]

Jesus will confess certain things about people before the angels. Scholars think that Jesus will stand before the angels of God and tell them that a person is at peace with God.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

How did people deny Jesus?

[12:9]

People denied Jesus by rejecting him in front of other people. They did not believe he is the messiah and Son of God.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

What did it mean to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?

[12:10]

To “blaspheme”(βλασφημέω/g0987) the Holy Spirit meant to dishonor, insult, or even reject the work of the Holy Spirit. Matthew wrote about people who blasphemed the Holy Spirit (see: Matthew 12:22-32).

Jesus said that every sin could be forgiven except one. That was blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Scholars disagree about how someone blasphemes the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus spoke about rejecting him. If someone does not believe in Jesus, then they will not be forgiven of their sins.
2. Jesus spoke about someone seeing Jesus do miracles and saying that Satan gave him the power to do this. Therefore, people today cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus spoke about people who said that the Holy Spirit did not do the things that he did.

See: [Miracle](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Miracle](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said the Holy Spirit will teach you what you should say?

[12:12]

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will teach the disciples what they should say. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that when they spoke to certain leaders, the Holy Spirit will cause them to know what they should say. That is, the Holy Spirit will tell them what is the right thing to say.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

12:13-21

What was an inheritance?

[12:13]

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What was a judge or mediator?

[12:14]

See: [Mediator](#); [Mediator](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions”?

[12:15]

Jesus said, “life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions.” Jesus wanted people to know that owning many things did not make a person’s life more valuable or more important. He wanted them to do things that honored God.

What was meant by the words, “your soul is required of you”?

[12:20]

The words, “your soul is required of you” meant that the man’s life would be taken from him. That is, he was to die on that night.

See: [Soul](#)

Who was a person that was “not rich toward God”?

[12:21]

A person who was “not rich toward God” was a person did not trust God. He did not do the things that God wanted him to do. He did not use the things he had to serve God.

12:22-34

Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to worry about their lives?

[12:22]

Jesus told his disciples not to “worry”(μεριμνάω/g3309). He wanted them not to think too much about whether they will have enough food to eat or clothes to wear. Jesus spoke about food, clothing, and birds of the sky because he wanted the disciples to know that God will take care of them and give them what they need.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was a cubit?

[12:25]

See: [Cubit](#)

How did someone seek the kingdom of God?

[12:31]

When someone seeked the kingdom of God, they wanted to live in a way that honors God. They did things to serve God. They do not seek the things of the world. That is, they do not do the evil things that people in the world do.

See: [Disciple](#); [World](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus call his disciples a “little flock”?

[12:32]

Jesus called his disciples a “little flock.” This was a metaphor. In the Old Testament, Israel was a flock. Jesus cared for his flock in the same way a shepherd cared for his sheep. They were little because they were few in number. They were helpless in the same way sheep were helpless. Jesus told them to not fear persecution or not having food and clothes.

Advice to translators: A flock is a group of sheep.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Shepherd](#); [People of God](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell his disciples to sell their possessions?

[12:33]

Scholars give several ways of how Jesus wanted his disciples to sell everything they owned. Jesus wanted them to know that trusting in what they owned prevented them from trusting in God. Jesus did not want them to spend a lot of time thinking about what they owned. Jesus wanted them to be ready to sell everything they owned. Jesus did not want Christians to use the things they owned to help other people.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was “treasure in the heavens”?

[12:33]

Jesus spoke about “treasures in heaven.” Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about blessings from God. Jesus was not talking about money. Fewer scholars think that Jesus was speaking about wanting people to think about the kingdom of God. This is because being in the kingdom of God is the greatest reward.

See: [Reward](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Reward](#)

Why did Jesus say, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”?

[12:34]

Jesus said, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Treasure was a metaphor for what people valued. When people valued God their hearts, they did not want the things of the world.

See: [World](#); [Metaphor](#); [World](#)

12:35-40

How did someone keep their “loins girded”?

[12:35]

Jesus spoke about someone keeping their “loins girded”. That is, they tucked in their long clothing. When someone did this, they were ready to work very hard. Some scholars think Christians must be ready for action. That is, they must be ready to serve God.

Why did Jesus tell those who served him to keep their lamps lit?

[12:35]

In ancient Israel, servants kept lamps burning at night when they knew their master would be returning. In the same way, Jesus wanted those who served him to be ready for him to return. He was speaking about his second coming.

See: [Serve](#); [Serve](#)

What was a wedding feast?

[12:36]

See: [Wedding](#)

What did it mean to be blessed?

[12:37]

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

What were the second and third watches?

[12:38]

The second and third watches were time periods of the night in which guards had duty. Typically, the watch periods were from 6:00 in the evening until 6:00 in the morning. The Jews and Romans divided the watches. The Romans divided the watches into four periods of three hours each. The Jews divided the watches into three periods of four hours each.

Why did Jesus talk about a thief?

[12:39]

When Jesus spoke about the owner of a home knowing a thief was coming, he was saying it was wise to keep alert and watch. By doing this, the owner would prevent the thief from breaking into his home. In the same way, Jesus wanted Christians to be alert and watching for him to return. He wanted them to do this even though they did not know the time of his return.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who is the son of man?

[12:40]

Jesus is the Son of Man.

See: [Son of Man](#)

12:41-48

How did Jesus answer Peter?

[12:42]

Jesus did not answer Peter's question directly. However, Jesus answered him using a parable.

See: [Parable](#)

How will the Lord come to the unfaithful servant and "cut him in pieces"?

[12:46]

Jesus spoke about a master coming to the unfaithful servant and cutting him into pieces. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think he wanted people to know that the unfaithful servant would be severely punished. Other scholars think he wanted Christians to separate themselves from their community. That is, he would have to live outside of the town.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

12:49-59

Why did Jesus speak about "cast fire upon the earth"?

[12:49]

Jesus spoke about casting fire on the earth. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about God judging people on the earth. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about God removing evil from the world.

See: [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#)

What baptism was Jesus talking about?

[12:50]

The baptism Jesus was talking about was a baptism of suffering and death. That is, he was speaking about his death as a type of baptism.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying he came to bring "division"?

Jesus said that he came to divide people. Jesus divided people. Some people believed in him. Other people rejected him. People have to choose whether they believe in Jesus or reject Jesus. They must choose to follow Jesus, or to follow Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus say that people did "not know how to interpret the present time"?

[12:56]

Jesus said that people did "not know how to interpret the present time." Jesus was saying that people did not know how to interpret what Jesus was doing. That is, they did not understand that God sent Jesus, and

did not understand what God was going to do through Jesus. The “present time” meant the time in which Jesus was living on earth.

What was a magistrate?

[12:58]

A magistrate was a ruler, or a person who had permission to make legal decisions when two people disagreed with one another.

Chapter 13

¹ At that time, some people there told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices. ² Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you think that these Galileans were more sinful than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way?" ³ No, I tell you. But if you do not repent, all of you will perish in the same way. ⁴ Or those eighteen people in Siloam on whom a tower fell and killed them, do you think they were worse sinners than other men in Jerusalem?" ⁵ No, I say. But if you do not repent, all of you will also perish."

⁶ Jesus told this parable, "Someone had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came and looked for fruit on it but found none. ⁷ The man said to the gardener, 'Look, for three years I have come and tried to find fruit on this fig tree and found none. Cut it down. Why let it waste the ground?'"

⁸ "The gardener answered and said, 'Sir, leave it alone this year while I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, good; but if it does not, cut it down!'"

¹⁰ Now Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues during the Sabbath. ¹¹ Behold, a woman was there who for eighteen years had a spirit of weakness. She was bent over and was not able to straighten up completely. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called to her and said, "Woman, you are freed from your weakness." ¹³ He placed his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight again and glorified God.

¹⁴ But the synagogue ruler was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. So the ruler answered and said to the crowd, "There are six days in which it is necessary to labor. Come and be healed then, not on the Sabbath day."

¹⁵ The Lord answered him and said, "Hypocrites! Does not each of you untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it to drink on the Sabbath?" ¹⁶ So too this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, should her bonds not be untied on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷ As he said these things, all those who opposed him were ashamed, but the whole crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things he did.

¹⁸ Then Jesus said, "What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?" ¹⁹ It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden, and it grew into a big tree, and the birds of heaven built their nests in its branches."

²⁰ Again he said, "To what can I compare the kingdom of God?" ²¹ It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the flour was leavened."

²² Then Jesus traveled through the towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem. ²³ Someone said to him, "Lord, are only a few people to be saved?"

So he said to them, ²⁴ "Struggle to enter through the narrow door, because, I say to you, many will try to enter, but will not be able to enter. ²⁵ Once the owner of the house gets up and locks the door, then you will stand outside and pound the door and say, 'Lord, Lord, let us in.'

"He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you or where you are from.'

²⁶ "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank in front of you and you taught in our streets.'

²⁷ "But he will reply, 'I say to you, I do not know where you are from. Get away from me, all you workers of unrighteousness!' ²⁸ There will be crying and the grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in God's kingdom, but you are thrown out. ²⁹ They will come from the east, west, north, and south, and be seated at a table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ Know this, those who are least important will be first, and those who are most important will be last."

³¹ In that same hour, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you."

³² Jesus said, "Go and tell that fox, 'Look, I cast out demons and perform healings today and tomorrow, and the third day I will reach my goal.' ³³ In any case, it is necessary for me to continue on today, tomorrow, and the following day, since it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem. ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. How often I desired to gather your children the way a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you did not desire this. ³⁵ See, your house is abandoned. I say to you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Luke 13

13:1-5

How was the blood of Galileans mixed with their own sacrifices?

[13:1]

Luke wrote about the blood of Galileans mixed with their sacrifices. Scholars think that at the Passover, Pilate ordered some of the Jews in Galilee to be killed while they were offering sacrifices. Their blood was mixed with the blood of the animal sacrifices for the Passover in some way.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

Where was the tower of Siloam?

[13:4]

Luke wrote about the tower of Siloam. Scholars think the tower in Siloam was a tower on the walls around Jerusalem near the pool of Siloam. Luke did not say why the tower fell.

See Map: Jerusalem; Pool of Siloam

Why did it mean to “repent”?

[13:5]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

13:6-9

What was a parable?

[13:6]

See: [Parable](#)

What was a fig tree?

[13:6]

A fig tree was a tree that was very common in Israel. The tree produced a small fruit called a fig.

What was a vineyard?

[13:6]

A vineyard was a farm where grapes and olives were grown. In this man's vineyard, there was also a fig tree planted.

See: [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#)

13:10-17

What was a synagogue?

[13:10]

See: [Synagogue](#)

What was the Sabbath?

[13:10]

See: [Sabbath](#)

What was a “spirit of weakness”?

[13:11]

A “spirit of weakness” was an evil spirit or demon. The evil spirit caused the woman to have a “weakness.” Some scholars say the “spirit of weakness” always kept the woman sick. Other scholars say it disabled the woman in some way.

See: [Demon](#)

Why was the synagogue ruler mad that Jesus “healed on the Sabbath”?

[13:14]

See: Luke 6:6-11

See: [Synagogue](#); [Synagogue](#)

Why did Jesus cry out “hypocrites”?

[13:15]

Jesus said that the rulers of the synagogue were “hypocrites.” He said this because of the things they taught about the Law of Moses and the Sabbath. The ruler and other religious leaders said they could help their own animals on the Sabbath, but they could not help other people on the Sabbath.

See: [Sabbath](#); [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#)

How did Satan bind “bound” the woman?

[13:16]

When Jesus spoke about the woman being bound for eighteen years, he was using a metaphor. Animals were were tied, or bound with a rope. They could not move. The bound woman could not move because she was sick.

See: [Metaphor](#)

13:18-21

How is the kingdom of God like a mustard seed?

[13:19]

Jesus told a parable about a mustard seed. He wanted people to know that the kingdom of God will be very large. In Israel, the mustard tree had the smallest seed. However, this seed grew into a big tree. In the same way, the kingdom of God started among a small group of people but it will grow large in some way. It will include all people of the world.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did Jesus tell the parable of yeast?

[13:21]

Jesus told a parable about yeast. He wanted people to know that the kingdom of God will spread into the whole world. When a woman mixed a small amount of yeast with a big amount of flour the flour raised. Three measures of flour fed 150 people. In the same way, the kingdom of God started among a small group of people but it will become very large. It will include all people of the world.

See: [Yeast \(Leaven\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Yeast \(Leaven\)](#)

13:22-30

What did it mean to be “saved”?

[13:23]

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What was the narrow door?

[13:24]

Jesus spoke about a narrow door. This was a metaphor. Scholars think Jesus spoke about the “narrow door” because it was difficult to enter a house through a narrow door. In the same way, it was difficult to enter the kingdom of God. Someone could only enter the kingdom of God if they repented.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why will many not be able to enter the kingdom of God?

[13:24]

Many people will not be able to enter the kingdom of God. The owner of the house gets up and locks the door. This was a metaphor. Scholars think there will be a time when Jesus will not allow people to enter the kingdom of God. Perhaps this will happen at the second coming of Jesus.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying “there will be crying and the grinding of teeth”?

[13:28]

Jesus said that there will be “crying and the grinding of teeth”. Some scholars think he was saying that people will be greatly disappointed, angry, and filled with worry because they thought they should be in heaven with God. Other scholars think there will be “crying and the grinding of teeth” because people will know they are guilty, and they will be very sad.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#) .

Who were the least important and the most important?

[13:30]

Jesus spoke about the least and most important people. Scholars think the least important were the Gentiles and the most important were the Jews.

See: [Gentile](#)

13:31-35

What was a Pharisee?

[13:31]

See: [Pharisees](#)

Why did Jesus call Herod a fox?

[13:32]

Jesus called Herod a fox. Scholars think Jesus was using a metaphor when he called Herod a “fox”. A fox was an animal that was very tricky, sneaky, and often destroyed things. He wanted to say that Herod like this because he was trying to get rid of Jesus. He was being sneaky by having others try to kill Jesus for him.

See: [King Herod](#); [King Herod](#)

What was casting out demons?

[13:32]

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

What was Jesus’ goal?

[13:33]

Jesus spoke about a goal. This was something he wanted to do. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about going to die in Jerusalem. This was when he finished the things God sent him to do.

Why did Jesus say, “it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem”?

[13:33]

Jesus said “it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem.” He wanted people to know that more prophets were killed in Jerusalem than in any other place. Jesus is the greatest of all the prophets and God planned for him to be killed in the city where most of the prophets were killed.

See: [Prophet](#)

Who were the “children” about whom Jesus spoke?

[13:34]

Jesus spoke about the “children.” He was speaking about people who lived in Jerusalem. Scholars think Jesus was talking about the whole nation of Israel.

Why did Jesus say, “your house is abandoned”?

[13:35]

Jesus said, “your house is abandoned”. Jesus spoke about something that was going to happen. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about Jerusalem. Other scholars think Jesus was saying the temple will be abandoned. The Romans destroyed both Jerusalem and the temple about 40 years after Jesus died.

See: [Temple](#)

When will people say “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”?

[13:35]

People will say “Blessed is he who come in the name of the Lord”. Jesus was speaking about returning to the earth. Perhaps the “name of the Lord” referred to the coming of the Messiah.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Chapter 14

¹ It happened one Sabbath, when he went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees to eat bread, that they were watching him closely. ² Behold, there in front of him was a man who was suffering from edema. ³ Jesus asked the experts in the Jewish law and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" ⁴ But they kept silent. So Jesus took hold of him, healed him, and sent him away. ⁵ He said to them, "Which of you who has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day will not immediately pull him out?" ⁶ They were not able to give an answer to these things.

⁷ When Jesus noticed how those who were invited chose the seats of honor, he spoke a parable, saying to them, ⁸ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the place of honor, because someone may have been invited who is more honored than you. ⁹ When the person who invited both of you arrives, he will say to you, 'Give this other person your place,' and then in shame you will proceed to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹² Jesus also said to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors, as they may also invite you in return, and you will be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, ¹⁴ and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the just."

¹⁵ When one of them who sat at the table with Jesus heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is he who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

¹⁶ But Jesus said to him, "A certain man prepared a large dinner and invited many. ¹⁷ At the dinner hour, he sent his servant to say to those who were invited, 'Come, because everything is now ready.'

¹⁸ "They all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.'

¹⁹ "Another said, 'I have bought five pairs of oxen, and I am going to try them out. Please excuse me.'

²⁰ "Then another man said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

²¹ "The servant came and told his master these things. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in here the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.'

²² "The servant said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and yet there is still room.'

²³ "The master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴ For I say to you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.'"

²⁵ Now large crowds were going with him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you who desires to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost to calculate if he has what he needs to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹ Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take advice about whether he is able with ten thousand men to fight the other king who comes against him with twenty thousand men? ³² If not, while the other army is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for conditions of peace. ³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple. ³⁴ Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? ³⁵ It is of no use for the soil or even for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Luke 14

14:1-6

What was the Sabbath?

[14:1]

See: [Sabbath](#)

What was edema?

[14:2]

Edema was swelling of the arms and legs. It affected the heart and kidneys.

Who were the “experts in the Jewish laws”?

[14:3]

The experts of the Jewish laws were people who taught about the Law of Moses. They were also called “scribes.”

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Was it lawful for Jesus to heal on the Sabbath?

[14:3]

See: Luke 6:6-11

See: [Sabbath](#)

14:7-11

What was a parable?

[14:7]

See: [Parable](#)

What were “seats of honor”?

[14:8]

The “seats of honor” were the places at a feast where the most important people sat.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Pride](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

14:12-24

What is the “resurrection of the just”?

[14:14]

The “resurrection of the just” is a time in the future when God will cause all righteous people, who have died, to live again.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#) ; [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Why are people blessed who “eat bread in the kingdom of God”?

[14:15]

People who eat bread in the kingdom of God are blessed. Some scholars think people will be blessed because they will be eating with all those who belong to the kingdom of God. More scholars think that eating in the kingdom of God will happen in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus say, “none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner”?

[14:24]

Jesus said “none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner”. He said this because the men who were invited refused when Jesus first invited them.

14:25-35

Why must Christians hate their families?

[14:26]

Jesus said that Christians must hate their families. This was a hyperbole. He wanted Christians to love him more than they loved their families (see: Matthew 10:37).

See: [Hyperbole](#)

What did it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

[14:26]

See: [Disciple](#)

What did it mean for a person to “carry his own cross”?

[14:27]

Jesus told people to carry a cross. This was a metaphor. Someone carried their own cross when they suffered or died for following Jesus. The cross was a metaphor for suffering and death.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did it mean to “count the cost”?

[14:28]

When someone counted the cost of something, they would calculate how much money the materials to build a tower would cost. He would also calculate the cost of paying people to construct the tower. He would then know if he had enough to build the tower.

Why did Jesus say that if a person “does not give up all his possessions (he) cannot be my disciple”?

[14:33]

Jesus said that if a person did not give up everything, then this person cannot be Jesus’ disciple. Jesus was telling people the cost of following him. Some scholars think Jesus was clearly saying that a disciple must give up everything they own to follow Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus was saying that a disciple must not keep anything that would stop him from following Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear”?

[14:35]

Jesus said “he who has an ear, let him hear” because he really wanted people to listen to the things that he just said. Jesus knew that when he spoke, the Holy Spirit spoke too.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Now all the tax collectors and other sinners were coming to Jesus to listen to him. ² Both the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled to each other, saying, "This man welcomes sinners, and even eats with them."

³ Jesus spoke this parable to them, saying, ⁴ "Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep and then loses one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the lost one until he finds it? ⁵ Then when he has found it, he lays it across his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ When he comes to the house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷ I say to you that even so, there will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

⁸ Or what woman who has ten silver coins, if she were to lose one coin, would not light a lamp, sweep the house, and seek diligently until she has found it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost.' ¹⁰ Even so, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons, ¹² and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of the wealth that falls to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered together all he owned and went to a country far away, and there he wasted all his wealth by living recklessly. ¹⁴ Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine spread through that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ He went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He was longing to eat the carob pods that the pigs ate because no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when the young son came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, and I am here, perishing from hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and leave here and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."' ²⁰ So the young son got up and left and came toward his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹ The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² "The father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet. ²³ Then bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let us feast and be merry! ²⁴ For my son was dead, and now he is alive. He was lost, and now he is found.' Then they began to be merry."

²⁵ "Now his older son was out in the field. As he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called to one of the servants and asked what these things might be. ²⁷ The servant said to him, 'Your brother has come home and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him in good health.'

²⁸ "The older son was angry and would not go in, and his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But the older son answered and said to his father, 'Look, these many years I slaved for you, and I never neglected a command of yours, and yet you never gave me a young goat that I might be merry with my friends, ³⁰ but when your son came, who has devoured your living with prostitutes, you killed for him the fattened calf.'

³¹ "The father said to him, 'Child, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But it was proper for us to be merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead, and is now alive; he was lost, and has now been found.'"

Luke 15

15:1-10

Who were tax collectors and sinners?

[15:1]

Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government. People in Israel hated the tax collectors. The tax collector paid the Romans so they could collect taxes from other people. If they collected more taxes than they paid the Roman government, then they were allowed to keep it. Because of this, many tax collectors became rich. The Jews thought a Jewish tax collector betrayed the Jewish people because they took money from the Jews and gave it to the Romans. They thought tax collectors were evil because they took money from people who honored God and gave it to people who rejected God.

The sinners Luke wrote about were Jewish people who did not obey the Law of Moses.

See: Luke 5:29-32

See: [Sin](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#), [Sin](#)

Who were the scribes?

[15:2]

See: [Scribe](#)

What was a parable?

[15:3]

See: [Parable](#)

How will there be “joy in heaven”?

[15:7]

Jesus said that there will be “joy in heaven.” Jesus spoke about the joy of God and the joy of the angels. They have joy because a sinner repented.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

15:11-32

What did the younger son mean when he said “the portion of the wealth that falls to me”?

[15:12]

The younger son said “the portion of the wealth that falls to me”. He was speaking about the money of his inheritance.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

How did the younger son live?

[15:13]

The younger son lived recklessly. That is, he wasted his money on doing things that did not honor God.

Why did the younger son say that he “sinned against heaven”?

[15:18]

The younger son said he “sinned against heaven.” This was a metaphor the ancient Jews used to talk about God without saying the word God. That is, the younger son sinned against God.

See: [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Heaven](#)

Why was the young man’s father “moved with compassion”?

[15:20]

Jesus said the father was “moved with compassion.” Scholars think the father wanted to be compassionate to his son. That is, he had wanted to show mercy to his young, to forgive him, and to love him.

See: [Mercy](#)

What was the “fattened calf”?

[15:23]

The fattened calf was not with the other calves in the field. People gave it extra food and then had it prepared for a special celebration.

How did people believe the younger son was “dead”?

[15:24]

The father spoke about his son being dead. However, he was not dead. He believed his son was dead in some way. That is, he meant that his son was like someone who was dead, but now had come back to life. The father never expected to see his son again.

Why did the father say to the older son, “you are always with me”?

[15:31]

The father told the older son, “you are always with me.” This was because the older son lived with the father all the time. Therefore, there was no need to have a special feast to celebrate his return.

Chapter 16

¹ Jesus also said to the disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a manager, and it was reported to him that this manager was wasting his possessions. ² So the rich man called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'

³ "The manager said to himself, 'What should I do, since my master is taking away my management job? I do not have strength to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from my management job, people will welcome me into their houses.'

⁵ "Then the manager called for each one of his master's debtors, and he asked the first one, 'How much do you owe to my master?' ⁶ He said, 'A hundred baths of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.'

⁷ "Then the manager said to another, 'How much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred cors of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

⁸ "The master then commended the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own people than are the sons of light. ⁹ I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal dwellings.

¹⁰ "He who is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and he who is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much. ¹¹ If you have not been faithful in using unrighteous wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? ¹² If you have not been faithful in using other people's property, who will give you money of your own?

¹³ "No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. ¹⁵ He said to them, "You justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts. That which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God. ¹⁶ The law and the prophets were in effect until John came. From that time on, the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone tries to force their way into it. ¹⁷ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to become invalid.

¹⁸ Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

¹⁹ "Now there was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and was enjoying every day his great wealth. ²⁰ A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² It came about that the beggar died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ So he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

²⁵ "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things. But now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶ Besides all this, a great chasm has been put in place, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot, and no one can cross over from there to us.'

²⁷ "The rich man said, 'I beg you, Father Abraham, that you would send him to my father's house— ²⁸ for I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that it may not be that they come into this place of torment.'

²⁹ "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them.'

30 "The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham, but if someone would go to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 "But Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

Luke 16

16:1-13

What was a manager?

[16:1]

A manager took care of a master's house, land, and business. A master gave the manager a ring. This was a symbol that he had permission to do things for the master. Sometimes managers were servants but sometimes they were free people.

See: [Serve](#)

What was meant by the words, "to dig"?

[16:3]

Jesus spoke about digging. Some scholars think he was speaking about digging ditches or digging in the fields using a shovel. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about doing any type of hard work.

How did the manager change what the debtors owed his master?

[16:6, 16:7]

The manager changed what the debtor owed his master. Scholars do not know how the the manager did this.

1. Some scholars think he wrote that the people owed less money than they owed.
2. Some scholars think he did not make them pay more money than they owed. They think the owner charged them more interest than he should have.
3. Some scholars think he would have made money from these people. However, he chose not to make money from them. The master did not lose any money.

Advice to translators: A debtor is someone who owed someone else money. When someone borrows money, they often have to pay more money back. This is called interest.

What was an "unrighteous manager"?

[16:8]

See: [Steward](#); [Steward](#)

How did the master "commend" the unrighteous manager?

[16:8]

Scholars think that when the master "commended" the manager, he complimented the manager for acting shrewdly.

Advice to Translators: The master did not compliment the manager for acting dishonestly. You will need to distinguish acting "shrewdly" from acting dishonestly.

What did it mean to act “shrewdly”?

[16:8]

When someone acted “shrewdly”, they acted with wisdom and skill in the face of a coming problem or crisis. Some scholars think it meant to act in a way that was prudent and they planned for things.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What was “unrighteous wealth”?

[16:9]

Money that was considered “unrighteous wealth” was money gained from doing evil.

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to make friends “by means of unrighteous wealth”?

[16:9]

Jesus told his disciples to use the money they gained on earth in a way that helped people who were in need. Jesus wanted his disciples to help people because those people might become friends of the disciples. Those friends might then believe in Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who were the “friends” who will welcome the disciples into eternal dwellings?

[16:9]

Scholars have different ideas of who the “friends” are who will welcome the disciples into eternal dwellings.

1. These friends were poor people whom the disciples helped. These poor people became Christians and died before the disciples. Then these poor people welcomed the disciples into heaven when the disciples died.
2. These friends were angels. This was a metaphor for God. They spoke about God without saying the name of God. However, the angels will also welcome the disciples into heaven.
3. These friends were God and Jesus. Only God and Jesus will receive people into heaven.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#); [Angel](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Jesus want the disciples to be “faithful”?

[16:10]

Jesus wanted the disciples to be “faithful”(πιστός/g4103) by being honest with money (see: 16:11). Then God will give them true wealth. This is a metaphor for the treasures and blessings in heaven. This is really valuable and will last forever.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did Jesus mean when he told the disciples, “you cannot serve God and wealth”?

[16:13]

Jesus said the disciples were not able to serve God and wealth. This was a metaphor. They could not serve a master other than God. If the disciples served someone or something other than God, they did not serve God. Jesus wanted his disciples to serve God only. Jesus said this more than one time (see: Matthew 6:24).

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

16:14-18

What did it mean that the Pharisees were lovers of money?

[16:14]

Luke wrote that the Pharisees loved money. Scholars think that someone who was described as a lover of money was a person who wanted to get more and more money. This person really wanted to have a lot of money.

See: 1 Timothy 6:10; 2 Timothy 3:2

See: [Pharisees](#)

How did the Pharisees justify themselves to other people?

[16:15]

The Pharisees justified themselves to other people by doing certain things so people could see them doing these things. They gave people money because people saw them give money. They did these things to try to make people think they were righteous. However, that did not justify them to God.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “God knows your hearts”?

[16:15]

God knows someone’s heart. That is, he knows what a person is thinking and what a person wants. God knew these Pharisees loved money rather than God.

See: [Love](#); [Pharisees](#); [Love](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “that which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God”?

[16:15]

Jesus said, “that which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God”. Jesus was speaking about the things people thought were valuable or to be admired. These were not the things God wanted them to do.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What were the Law and the prophets?

[16:16]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was the gospel of the kingdom of God?

[16:16]

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

How do people try to force their way into the kingdom of God?

[16:16]

Jesus said that people tried to force their way into the kingdom of God. Scholars disagree about what Jesus said.

1. Some scholars think people who believed in Jesus wanted to enter the kingdom of God.

2. Some scholars think both Christians and non-Christians wanted to enter the kingdom of God.
3. Some scholars think non-Christians tried to force their way into the kingdom of God but they were not able to get into it.
4. Some scholars think people tried to fight a war to bring the kingdom of God to earth.
5. Some scholars think Jesus warned people to enter the kingdom of God because not all people will enter into it.
6. Some scholars think the Pharisees tried to stop people from entering into the kingdom of God. Demons also tried to stop people from entering into it. Disciples opposed them.

See: [Disciple](#); [Pharisees](#); [Demon](#); [Disciple](#)

What was Jesus talking about when he talked about the Law becoming invalid?

[16:17]

Jesus talked about the Law of Moses becoming invalid. Some scholars think he was talking about certain parts of the Law of Moses. However, some parts of the Law of Moses still need to be followed. Other scholars think the Law of Moses ended when Jesus became alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is adultery?

[16:18]

See: [Adultery](#)

16:19-31

Why was the man described as being “clothed in purple and fine linen”?

[16:19]

When Jesus spoke about the rich man being “clothed in purple and fine linen,” he wanted people to know that this man was as rich as a king. For only kings and very rich people could buy this type of clothing.

What did it mean that Lazarus was laid at the rich man’s gate?

[16:20]

Lazarus was laid at the rich man’s gate. Some scholars think Lazarus was laid on his mat at the opening to the rich man’s home in hopes that the rich man would give food or money to Lazarus. Other scholars think Lazarus was thrown down or dropped off at the gate to the rich man’s house. They think he was dumped there so he could beg for money from the rich man.

Advice to Translators: A beggar was someone who asked people for money because they were poor or because they could not do anything.

What did Jesus mean when he said Lazarus was “longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table”?

[16:21]

Lazarus was “longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table.” Scholars think Lazarus was so hungry that he waited every day for the servants of the rich man to toss the food scraps out to the dogs and beggars.

Advice to translators: Food scraps were food that was not eaten and thrown away or put in the garbage.

Why did the dogs lick Lazarus' sores?

[16:21]

The dogs licked Lazarus' sores. Scholars think this was because Lazarus was too sick to stop them. Some scholars also think it helped ease Lazarus' pain from his sores.

What did it mean that Lazarus was "carried away by the angels to Abraham's side"?

[16:22]

"Abraham's side" is another name for "heaven."

See: [Heaven](#)

Where is Hades?

[16:23]

See: [Hades \(Sheol\)](#)

What was a "great chasm"?

[16:26]

Scholars think Jesus used the words "great chasm" to talk about a distance that cannot be crossed.

Why did the rich man call Abraham "Father Abraham"?

[16:27]

The rich man called Abraham "Father Abraham" because Abraham was the ancestor of all Jewish people.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

What did Abraham mean when he said, "They have Moses and the prophets"?

[16:29]

Many scholars think that "Moses and the prophets" spoke and wrote enough to teach the rich man's brothers about God.

Chapter 17

¹ Jesus said to his disciples, "It is certain there will be stumbling blocks, but woe to that person through whom they come! ² It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble. ³ Watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ If he sins against you seven times in the day, and seven times returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him!"

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

⁶ The Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. ⁷ But which of you, who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'? ⁸ Will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and put a belt around your clothes and serve me until I have finished eating and drinking. Then afterward you will eat and drink'? ⁹ He does not thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded, does he? ¹⁰ Even so you also, when you have done everything that you are commanded, should say, 'We are unworthy servants. We have only done what we ought to do.'"

¹¹ It came about that as he traveled to Jerusalem, he went along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

¹² As he entered into a certain village, there he was met by ten men who were lepers. They stood far away from him ¹³ and they lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." As they went away they were cleansed. ¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God. ¹⁶ He fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Then Jesus said, "Were not the ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸ Were there no others who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ He said to him, "Arise, and go. Your faith has made you well."

²⁰ Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with careful observing. ²¹ Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For look, the kingdom of God is within you."

²² He said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. ²³ Then they will say to you, 'Look, there! Look, here!' But do not go out or run after them, ²⁴ for as the lightning shines brightly when it flashes from one part of the sky to another part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in his day. ²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. ²⁶ As it happened in the days of Noah, even so will it also happen in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married, and they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark—and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ In the same way, even as it happened in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed them all. ³⁰ After the same manner it will be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹ In that day let him who is on the housetop not go down to get his goods out of the house, and in the same way let him who is in the field not return. ³² Remember Lot's wife. ³³ Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it. ³⁴ I tell you, in that night there will be two people in one bed. One will be taken, and the other will be left. ³⁵ There will be two women grinding grain together. One will be taken, and the other will be left." ³⁶^[1]

³⁷ They asked him, "Where, Lord?"

He said to them, "Where there is a body, there will the vultures also be gathered together."

Footnotes

17:36 ^[1] Luke 17:36 the best ancient copies do not have verse 36,

Luke 17

17:1-10

What is “woe”?

[17:1]

See: [Woe](#)

What was a “millstone”?

[17:2]

A millstone was a large, heavy round stone used to grind grain. The grain was ground between two stones. The top stone was the millstone. The millstone was often turned by a large animal.

Who were the little ones?

[17:2]

In the Bible, the little ones were often the children (see: Matthew 18:1-22). Here, some scholars think Jesus was speaking about Christians who had recently believed in Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about those people who were poor and needed people to help them.

Who was a “brother”?

[17:3]

When Jesus spoke about a brother, he was speaking about Christians.

See: [Family of God](#)

What did it mean to “rebuke” a brother?

[17:3]

When someone “rebuked” a brother, he corrected his brother and told him that what he had done was wrong.

How did someone repent?

[17:3]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “if he sins against you seven times in the day”?

[17:4]

Jesus wanted the disciples to forgive another person as often as they sinned and repented. Some scholars think that when Jesus said to forgive seven times, he was speaking about always forgiving someone. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about seven different kinds of sins and a brother was to forgive all types of sins.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did the apostles say, “Increase our faith”?

[17:5]

The apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith. Scholars think that when the apostles said “increase our faith”, they were asking Jesus to help them. They wanted Jesus to help them have more confidence in God. They wanted Jesus to help them trust and believe in God even more.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What did it mean to have “faith like a mustard seed”?

[17:6]

Jesus spoke to his disciples about having “faith like a mustard seed”. This was a metaphor. A mustard seed is a very, very small seed. However, this very small seed grows into a large tree (see: Luke 13:18-19). Jesus was telling his disciples that even if a person’s faith is small, it can do great things.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What was a mulberry tree?

[17:6]

A mulberry tree was a tree where Jesus and the disciples lived. It was a large tree and had many roots.

See: [Disciple](#)

What did it mean for a servant to “put a belt around his clothes”?

[17:8]

A servant “put a belt around his clothes”. Some scholars think the servant removed his clothes for working in the field and put on the clothes for serving meals. Other scholars think he put something over his clothes before serving other people food.

See: [Serve](#)

Why did Jesus want the apostles to say they were “unworthy servants”?

[17:10]

Jesus wanted the disciples to say that they were “unworthy servants.” They did not think they were greater than other people. They wanted to serve other people. They did not want other people to honor them.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

17:11-19

Where were Jerusalem, Samaria, and Galilee?

[17:11]

See Map: Jerusalem; Samaria; Galilee

Why did the lepers say to Jesus, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us”?

[17:13]

When the lepers asked Jesus to have mercy on them, they were asking Jesus to have compassion on them. Some scholars think they wanted Jesus to heal them. Other scholars do not think they were asking Jesus to heal them.

See: [Miracle](#); [Mercy](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus tell the lepers to go to the priests?

[17:14]

At this time, only the priests in the temple could say that someone no longer had leprosy. The priest would then declare the person to be clean (see: Leviticus 14:1-32).

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Temple](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

How did Jesus cleanse the lepers?

[17:14, 17:15]

Scholars think Jesus healed the lepers by speaking.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Who were the Samaritans?

[17:16]

See: [Samaria](#)

Why did Jesus tell the Samaritan man his faith made him “well”?

[17:19]

Jesus said, “Your faith has made you well.” Scholars think the leper was healed because he believed that Jesus would heal him. He would not have leprosy anymore.

17:20-37

Why did the Pharisees ask when the kingdom of God will come?

[17:20]

The Pharisees asked when the kingdom of God will come.

1. Some scholars think the Pharisees tried to make Jesus tell them a specific date when the kingdom of God would come. If he did this, and the kingdom of God did not come, then they could tell people that Jesus is not the messiah.
2. Some scholars think the Pharisees wanted to know how to predict when God’s kingdom will come.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Pharisees](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was the kingdom of God “within” you?

[17:21]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God was “within” or “among” (ἐντός/g1787) you.

1. The kingdom of God was “among” the people already because Jesus was among them.
2. The kingdom of God will come suddenly in the future. It will be “among” them. There will be no signs to warn them of its coming.
3. The kingdom of God was “within” the hearts of people who believed in Jesus. That is, when people obeyed God, then God ruled them in a certain way.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Sign](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was “one of the days of the Son of Man”?

[17:22]

Jesus spoke about “one of the days of the Son of Man”.

1. Some scholars think this was the days when the Messiah will be ruling over all things.
2. Some scholars think this was the day on which Jesus, the Messiah will return to the earth, at his second coming.
3. Some scholars think the disciples wanted to see the kingdom of the Messiah.

See: [Day of the Lord](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Disciple](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Day of the Lord](#)

Why did Jesus talk about lightning flashing from one part of the sky to another part?

[17:24]

On the day of the Son of Man, there will be lightning in the sky. That is, everyone will see Jesus return in the same way they see the brightness of lightning. Jesus will return suddenly in the same way lightning is sudden.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Day of the Lord](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Jesus speak about being “rejected by this generation”?

[17:25]

Jesus spoke about being rejected by this generation. Jesus was telling his disciples he must first be rejected by the people who were living at this time. That is, he would be rejected by the Jewish people.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

What were the days of Noah?

[17:26]

The “days of Noah” were to the days in which Noah lived, before the Flood. Perhaps Jesus was speaking specifically about the days just before the flood (see: Genesis 6:5-13).

What were the “days of Lot”?

[17:28]

The “days of Lot” were the days when Lot lived, before God destroyed the city of Sodom (see: Genesis 19:1-25).

See: Map: Sodom

What was meant by the words, “Lot went out from Sodom”?

[17:29]

Jesus said, “Lot went out from Sodom.” That is, Lot left the city of Sodom. Just as God waited for Noah to enter the ark before he destroyed the world with a flood, so God waited until Lot left Sodom before he destroyed the city with fire from heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

See: Map: Sodom

What did Jesus mean when he said, “After the same manner it will be in the day that the Son of man is revealed”?

[17:30]

Jesus said, “after the same manner.” He wanted to say that people will be living normal lives, just as they were before people were punished in Noah’s day, and before people were punished in Lot’s day. The day that the Son of Man is “revealed” speaks about when Jesus returns to earth.

Advice to translators: Noah’s day is the time when Noah lived. Lot’s day is the time when Lot lived.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Day of the Lord.](#); [Son of Man](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#) [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it”?

[17:33]

See: Luke 9:24

Why did Jesus say, “one will be taken, and the other will be left”?

[17:34]

Jesus said that, “one will be taken, and the other will be left.” Some scholars think that the people that will be taken are Christians who are taken to a place of safety with Jesus. The people who are left will be punished. Other scholars think the people who will be taken are the people God punishes, and the ones who are left are people who will not be punished.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [RaptureKingdom of God](#)

Why do scholars think Luke did not write the words in verse 36?

[17:36]

Scholars think Luke did not write the words in verse 36 because most ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not contain the words in verse 36. However, Jesus did say these words in the Book of Matthew (see: Matthew 24:40).

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “where there is a body, there will (be) vultures”?

[17:37]

Jesus said, “where there is a body, there will (be) vultures.” A vulture is a bird that eats dead animals. They fly over the dead animals before they eat them. Some scholars think Jesus was telling the disciples that punishment comes to wherever evil people are. Other scholars think Jesus was telling his disciples that people would know when Jesus returns to the earth, just as it is obvious there is a dead body because of the vultures flying overhead.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 18

¹ Then he spoke a parable to them about how they should always pray and not become discouraged, ² saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect people. ³ Now there was a widow in that city, and she came often to him, saying, 'Help me get justice against my opponent.'

⁴ For a long time he was not willing to help her, but after a while he said to himself, 'Though I do not fear God or respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will help her get justice, so that she does not wear me out by her constant coming.'" ⁶ Then the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ Now will not God also bring justice to his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I say to you that he will bring justice to them speedily. Even so, when the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find faith on the earth?"

⁹ Then he also spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and who despised other people, ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray—the one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed these things about himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, unrighteous people, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.

¹² I fast two times every week. I give tithes of all that I get.'

¹³ But the tax collector, standing at a distance, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but hit his breast, saying, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ I say to you, this man went back down to his house justified rather than the other, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but everyone who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹⁵ The people were also bringing to him their infants so that he might touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them. For the kingdom of God belongs to such ones. ¹⁷ Truly I say to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will definitely not enter it."

¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, saying, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁹ Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good, except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments—do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not testify falsely, honor your father and mother."

²¹ The ruler said, "All these things I have obeyed from the time I was a youth."

²² When Jesus heard that, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. You must sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me."

²³ But when the ruler heard these things, he became extremely sad, for he was very rich. ²⁴ Then Jesus, seeing him ^[1] said, "How difficult it is for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ Those hearing it said, "Then who can be saved?"

²⁷ Jesus answered, "The things which are impossible with people are possible with God."

²⁸ Peter said, "Well, we have left everything that is our own and have followed you."

²⁹ Jesus then said to them, "Truly, I say to you that there is no one who has left house, or wife, or brothers, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ who will not receive much more in this time, and in the age to come, eternal life."

³¹ After he gathered the twelve to himself, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things that have been written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³² For he will be given over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon. ³³ After whipping him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again." ³⁴ They understood none of these things, and this word was hidden from them, and they did not understand the things that were said.

³⁵ It came about that, as Jesus approached Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting by the road begging, ³⁶ and hearing a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. ³⁷ They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. ³⁸ So the blind man cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." ³⁹ The ones who were walking ahead rebuked the blind man, telling him to be quiet. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me."

⁴⁰ Jesus stood still and commanded that the man be brought to him. Then when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ "What do you want me to do for you?"

He said, "Lord, I want to receive my sight."

⁴² Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has healed you." ⁴³ Immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. All the people, when they saw this, gave praise to God.

Footnotes

18:24 ^[1]Some ancient Greek copies have the phrase:

Luke 18

18:1-8

What was a parable?

[18:1]

See: [Parable](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the judge and the widow?

[18:2, 18:3]

Jesus talked about the judge and the widow so that his disciples will pray again and again for God to bring justice to the earth when Jesus returns. Jesus also wanted the disciples to always know God hears their prayers. Some scholars think God will quickly bring justice for Christians. The unjust judge was slow to bring justice but God will not be slow. Other scholars think God will be slow to bring justice for Christians. God is patient and he does not judge a Christian's sins right away, or he limits the ability of people to persecute Christians. Other scholars think God is slow to bring justice but when Jesus returns he will bring justice quickly.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [People of God](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How does someone fear God?

[18:4]

See: [Fear of God](#)

Who were God's chosen ones?

[18:7]

God's chosen ones were the disciples or people who followed Jesus.

When will the Son of Man come?

[18:8]

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Jesus ask, “will he indeed find faith on the earth”?

[18:8]

Jesus asked about finding faith on earth. Some scholars think Jesus was asking if people will believe that he is the Messiah. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people believing that God will bring justice quickly. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about people believing that he will return to the earth.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

18:9-14

Why did Jesus talk about the Pharisee and the tax collector?

[18:10]

Jesus talked about the Pharisee and the tax collector because he warned people not to think they were doing something that honored God when they hated other people. The Pharisee listed sins he did not do, but other people did these sins. The Pharisee also fasted more times than the Law of Moses said they needed to fast. They also tithed on everything. He stood in the temple so that other people saw him when he prayed. However, he was not at peace with God. God did not think he did the right things.

On the other hand, the tax collector stood away from people and did not think he was able to look at God. He hit his chest because he was ashamed of his sins. Jesus said he was justified. That is, God forgave his sins.

See: [Tithe](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#); [Fasting](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Tithe](#)

18:15-17

Why did people bring infants to Jesus?

[18:15]

People brought infants to Jesus for him to bless them. The ancient Jews brought infants to their leaders on the Day of Atonement for their leaders to bless the infants.

See: Matthew 19:13

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the disciples rebuke these people?

[18:15]

The disciples rebuke these people. Some scholars think the disciples rebuked these people because they thought Jesus was too tired to bless the infants. Other scholars think the disciples thought Jesus did not have time to bless infants.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did someone receive the kingdom of God?

[18:16]

Someone received the kingdom of God by believing in Jesus in the same way a child believes in Jesus. Children accepted Jesus and trusted him when he blessed them. People did not honor children. Children are humble. That is, they do not think they are greater than they are. Children also trust and depended on their parents.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

18:18-30

Who was the “certain ruler”?

[18:18]

Luke did not write who the “certain ruler” was, but the ruler was young (see: Matthew 19:22). Some scholars think he was a Jewish leader who may have been the leader of a synagogue. Other scholars think he was too young to do that.

See: [Synagogue](#)

Why did Jesus say no one is good except God?

[18:19]

Jesus said that no one is good except God.

1. Some scholars think Jesus wanted the young ruler to know that only God is good. That is, he was telling the young ruler that his goodness was the goodness of God working in him.
2. Some scholars think the rich young ruler thought Jesus was only a man. He did not think Jesus was good in the same way that God is good. This was because the young ruler did not do what Jesus said.
3. Other scholars think only God is perfectly holy and righteous. If the rich young ruler wanted to please God he needed to obey God’s Son whom God sent.

See: [Son of God](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Son of God](#)

Why did Jesus repeat some of the Ten Commandments?

[18:20]

Jesus repeated some of the ten commandments to the young ruler. Some scholars think the young ruler was asking how he could have eternal life through his own power. That is, through doing good things. However, no one except for Jesus has ever been able to keep all of the commandments perfectly, and therefore have eternal life by keeping them.

See: [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the rich young ruler to sell everything and give the money to the poor?

[18:22]

Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything and give the money to the poor because the rich young ruler loved his money and the things he owned. He was not willing to give up everything to follow Jesus. Perhaps Jesus also wanted the young ruler to understand the greater value of being rewarded in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why do some scholars think Luke did not write “seeing that he had become sad” in verse 24?

[18:24]

Some scholars think Luke did not write “seeing that he had become sad” in verse 24 because some of the oldest Greek copies did not contain them.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What was the eye of the needle?

[18:25]

The eye of the needle was a small circle on one end of a needle used for sewing cloth. It was very small. The camel was a very large animal. Scholars think Jesus was saying that in the same way it was impossible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, so it was impossible for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God on his own. That is, he could not be at peace with God without Jesus.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “things which are impossible with people are possible with God”?

[18:27]

Jesus said, “things which are impossible with people are possible with God.” Scholars think that Jesus was saying that God can do what people cannot do. That is, God makes it possible for a person to be saved, whereas a person cannot possibly save himself.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How will Jesus reward people?

[18:30]

See: [Reward](#)

18:31-34

Who were the twelve?

[18:31]

When Jesus gathered the twelve, he brought the twelve apostles to him. There was a large crowd of people. Jesus wanted to talk to the twelve alone.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say they are going up to Jerusalem?

[18:31]

Jesus said they are going up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. They were going to Jerusalem.

See Map: Jerusalem

What were the things written by the prophets about the Son of Man?

[18:31]

Things were written in the prophets about the Son of Man. They said that the Son of Man will suffer (see: Isaiah 53).

See: [Son of Man](#); [Son of Man](#)

What was meant by the words, “this word was hidden from them”?

[18:34]

Some scholars think that Jesus did not allow the twelve to understand. Other scholars think that because the disciples expected the Messiah to come in a certain way, they could not understand the words of which Jesus spoke.

Where was Jericho?

[18:35]

See Map: Jericho

Why did the blind man ask Jesus to have mercy on him?

[18:38]

The blind man asked Jesus for mercy. The man was asking Jesus to show him compassion and help him. He specifically wanted Jesus to be kind to him and heal him (see: Luke 18:41).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did people rebuke this man for crying out to Jesus?

[18:39]

People rebuked this man for crying out to Jesus. Some scholars think they believed Jesus was too important to stop for a blind man. Other scholars think these people thought Jesus was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem. Other scholars think these people knew the Jewish leaders would be angry with people calling Jesus the "Son of David".

See: [Son of David](#)

How did Jesus heal the blind man?

[18:42]

Jesus immediately healed the blind man because the blind man believed in him. When Jesus told him his faith healed him, Jesus healed the blind man. Perhaps Jesus also wanted to say that this man's faith made him have peace with God.

See: 7:48-50

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Chapter 19

¹ Jesus entered and was passing through Jericho. ² Behold, there was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³ He was trying to see who Jesus was, but could not see over the crowd, because he was small in height. ⁴ So he ran on ahead of the people and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, because Jesus was about to pass that way. ⁵ When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." ⁶ So he hurried and came down and welcomed him joyfully. ⁷ When everyone saw this, they all complained, saying, "He has gone in to visit a man who is a sinner." ⁸ Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, the half of my possessions I give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I will restore four times the amount."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the people who are lost."

¹¹ As they heard these things, he continued speaking and told a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and they thought that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately. ¹² He said therefore, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then to return. ¹³ He called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Conduct business until I come back.'

¹⁴ "But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man reign over us.' ¹⁵ It happened when he returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded the servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what profit they had made by doing business.

¹⁶ "The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.'

¹⁷ "The nobleman said to him, 'Well done, good servant. Because you were faithful in very little, you will have authority over ten cities.'

¹⁸ "The second came, saying, 'Your mina, lord, has made five minas.'

¹⁹ "The nobleman said to him, 'You take charge over five cities.'

²⁰ "Another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept safely in a cloth, ²¹ for I was afraid of you, because you are a demanding person. You take up what you did not put in, and you reap what you did not sow.'

²² "The nobleman said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I am a demanding person, taking up what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow. ²³ Then why did you not put my money in the bank, so that when I returned I would have collected it with interest?' ²⁴ The nobleman said to them that stood by, 'Take away from him the mina, and give it to him that has the ten minas.'

²⁵ "They said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas.'

²⁶ "'I say to you, that everyone who has will be given more, but from him that has not, even that which he has will be taken away. ²⁷ But these enemies of mine, those who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and kill them before me.'"

²⁸ When he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

²⁹ It came about that when he came near to Bethphage and Bethany, to the mountain that is called Olives, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰ saying, "Go into the next village. As you enter, you will find a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. ³¹ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³² Those who were sent went and found the colt just as Jesus had told them.

³³ As they were untying the colt, the owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

³⁴ They said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵ They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their cloaks upon the colt and set Jesus on it. ³⁶ As he went, they spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷ As he was now approaching the place where the Mount of Olives descends, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, saying,

³⁸ "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."

⁴⁰ Jesus answered and said, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would cry out."

⁴¹ When Jesus approached the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If only you had known in this day, even you, the things which bring you peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build a barricade around you and surround you and press in on you from every side. ⁴⁴ They will strike you down to the ground, and your children with you. They will not leave one stone upon another because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

⁴⁵ Jesus entered the temple and began to cast out those who were selling, ⁴⁶ saying to them, "It is written, 'My house will be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

⁴⁷ So Jesus was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking to destroy him, as were the leaders of the people, ⁴⁸ but they could not find a way to do it because all the people were listening to him intently.

Luke 19

19:1-10

Where was Jericho?

[19:1]

See: [Map of Jericho](#)

What did it mean that Zacchaeus was the “chief tax collector”?

[19:2]

Zacchaeus was the “chief tax collector.” Scholars think he was the leader of several other tax collectors who worked for him.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

Why did Jesus say to Zacchaeus, “today I must stay at your house”?

[19:5]

Scholars think Jesus told Zacchaeus, “today I must stay at your house” because it was God’s will that Jesus stayed with Zacchaeus. They think God planned for salvation to come Zacchaeus and his house on that day (see: Luke 19:9).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\); Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did the people complain that Jesus went to visit a man who was a sinner?

[19:7]

Scholars think the people complained about Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus because they thought Zacchaeus was a greater sinner than other sinners. Tax collectors often collected more money than the required taxes for themselves. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Zaccheus was also a Jew. Therefore, the Jewish people thought he was a traitor.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

Who was a “son of Abraham”?

[19:9]

The words “son of Abraham” were used to talk about a descendant of Abraham. Abraham was the ancestor of all Jewish people.

See: Luke 3:7-9; 16:24

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, “Today salvation has come to this house”?

[19:9]

Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about a certain person within the house who was saved on that day. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking about Zacchaeus and his family being saved on that day.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

19:11-27

What was a parable?

[19:11]

See: [Parable](#)

What was a “nobleman”?

[19:12]

A “nobleman” was a man who had been born to a family people honored. Scholars think a nobleman would rule other people. Perhaps this particular nobleman was on his way to Rome to be made a king of Israel.

What was a “mina”?

[19:13]

A mina was a unit of money in the Greek money system. It had the value of 100 “drachmas”. One drachma was what someone was paid for one day’s work during this time. Therefore, it would have taken about four months to earn a mina.

See: [Denarius](#)

19:28-44

Why did Luke write he went up to Jerusalem?

[19:28]

Luke wrote he went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain.

See Map: Jerusalem

Where were Bethpage, and the hill that is called Olivet?

[19:29]

See Map: Bethpage; Mount of Olives (Olivet)

Why did Jesus send two of his disciples to go into the village and bring back a colt?

[19:30]

When Jesus asked for a colt upon which he would ride into Jerusalem, it fulfilled a prophecy (see: Zechariah 9:9). Scholars think the “colt” was a young donkey because of the words written by other gospel writers (see: Matthew 21:2-5; John 12:14-15). People thought the donkey was a symbol of humility and peace (see: 1 Kings 1:33-37).

See: [Symbol](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gospel](#); [Symbol](#)

Why did the disciples cry out, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord”?

[19:38]

Jesus spoke about those who would cry out “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” (see: Luke 13:35). Scholars think these people said that Jesus is the messiah.

See: Psalm 118:26-29

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is peace in heaven?

[19:38]

Some scholars think the peace in heaven spoken about in verse 38 is the peace between God and people. Other scholars think this was the salvation of God’s people. The peace of Jerusalem in verse 42 is the same kind of peace.

See: [People of God](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [People of God](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “the stones would cry out”?

[19:40]

Jesus said that the stones would cry out. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that it was no more possible for the disciples to be silent, than it would be possible for stones to cry out. Other scholars think that if the disciples were to keep silent, then the stones would be made to proclaim God’s mighty acts. That is, God would make the stones cry out to tell people about the things he does.

See: [Disciple](#)

How was there not “one stone upon another”?

[19:44]

There was not one stone upon another when a Roman army attacked Jerusalem and forced down almost all its walls in about forty years after Jesus died. Some scholars think that when Jesus spoke the words, “One stone upon another”, he was using hyperbole to say the Romans attacked every part of the city and almost nothing was left. The Roman army also destroyed the temple.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

19:45-48

Why did Jesus say the sellers made the temple a den of robbers?

[19:46]

Jesus said the sellers made the temple a den of robbers because they cheated people by selling animals and exchanging money. When they did this they made much money from people coming to the temple to worship God. Some scholars think Jesus was saying the same things the prophet Jeremiah wrote about when he spoke those words (see: Jeremiah 7:11). They did that because they were greedy. Isaiah prophesied God will make the temple a place for prayer and worship for all people in the future (see: Isaiah 56:7). However, at that time the Jews themselves did not use it for prayer.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Prophecy \(Prophesy\)](#) ; [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What did Luke mean when he said the leaders of the people wanted to kill Jesus?

[19:47] Scholars think the leaders were looking for a way to kill Jesus that would not upset the people. Many people would be angry if the Jewish leaders killed Jesus.

Why did the Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus?

[19:47] The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Some scholars think they did this because they thought Jesus was trying to rule the temple. Other scholars think they did not like what Jesus taught about the Law of Moses. Other scholars think they were afraid that Jesus was starting a revolution. That is, he was going to fight against the Roman Empire. They did not think he could defeat the Romans.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Chapter 20

¹ It came about one day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel that the chief priests and the scribes came to him with the elders. ² They spoke, saying to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is who gave you this authority."

³ He answered and said to them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell me. ⁴ The baptism of John: Was it from heaven or from men?"

⁵ They reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?' ⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." ⁷ So they answered that they did not know where it came from.

⁸ Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

⁹ He told the people this parable, "A man planted a vineyard, rented it out to vine growers, and went into another country for a long time. ¹⁰ At the appointed time he sent a servant to the vine growers, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vine growers beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹ He then sent yet another servant and they also beat him, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹² He also sent yet a third and they also wounded him, and threw him out. ¹³ So the lord of the vineyard said, 'What will I do? I will send my beloved son. Maybe they will respect him.'

¹⁴ "But when the vine growers saw him, they discussed among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' ¹⁵ They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the lord of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy these vine growers, and will give the vineyard to others."

When they heard it, they said, "May it never be!"

¹⁷ But Jesus looked at them, and said, "What is the meaning of that which is written:

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone'?

¹⁸ Every one who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed."

¹⁹ So the scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him in that very hour, for they knew that he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people. ²⁰ Watching him carefully, they sent out spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might find fault with his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor. ²¹ They asked him, saying, "Teacher, we know that you say and teach rightly, and are not partial to anyone, but you teach the truth about the way of God. ²² Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

²³ But Jesus understood their craftiness, and said to them, ²⁴ "Show me a denarius. Whose image and name is on it?"

They said, "Caesar's."

²⁵ He said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²⁶ They were not able to find fault with what he had said in front of the people, but marveling at his answer, they were silent.

²⁷ When some of the Sadducees came to him, the ones who say that there is no resurrection, ²⁸ they asked him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and being childless, the man should take the brother's wife, and raise up children for his brother. ²⁹ There were seven brothers and the first took a wife, and died childless, ³⁰ and the second as well. ³¹ The third took her, and in the same way the seven also left no children and died. ³² Afterward the woman also died. ³³ In the resurrection then, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as their wife."

³⁴ Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are regarded as worthy in that age to receive the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage. ³⁶ Neither can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷ But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the place concerning the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, because all live to him."

³⁹ Some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have answered well." ⁴⁰ For they did not dare ask him any more questions.

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "How do they say that the Christ is David's son? ⁴² For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,

The Lord said to my Lord,
'Sit at my right hand,
⁴³ until I make your enemies
your footstool.'

⁴⁴ David therefore calls the Christ 'Lord,' so how is he David's son?"

⁴⁵ In the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶ "Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes and love special greetings in the marketplaces and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at feasts. ⁴⁷ They also devour widows' houses, and for a show they make long prayers. Men like this will receive greater condemnation."

Luke 20

20:1-8

Why did the Jewish leaders ask Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did?

[20:2]

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus who gave him permission to do the things he did. Some scholars think the Jewish leaders were asking Jesus whether a person or God gave him permission to do these things. Other scholars think the Jewish leaders were asking Jesus to name the Jewish teacher who taught him. In ancient Israel, a teacher learned from another teacher.

See: [Rabbi](#)

What were "these things"?

[20:8]

The Jewish teachers asked "these things".

1. Some scholars think they asked about the things Jesus taught.
2. Some scholars think that they asked about when Jesus made people to leave the temple because they were selling things.
3. Some scholars think they asked about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a colt.
4. Some scholars think they asked about Jesus healing people in the temple (see: Matthew 21:14)

See: [Temple](#)

Why did Jesus not answer the Jewish leaders?

[20:8]

Jesus did not answer the Jewish leaders. Some scholars think that Jesus did not answer the question from the Jewish leaders because they would not answer his question to them. The Jewish leaders knew the answer to Jesus' question.

20:9-19

What was a parable?

[20:9]

See: [Parable](#)

Why did Jesus speak about the vine growers?

[20:10]

Jesus spoke about the vine growers. Scholars think Jesus told this parable to say that the Jewish leaders were just like the vine growers in the parable. When God sent prophets and apostles to the people of Israel, the prophets were killed, and they would soon be killing the apostles (see: Luke 11:47-51; Matthew 23:37-39).

See: [Apostle](#); [Prophet](#); [Apostle](#)

What was the "stone" about which Jesus spoke?

[20:17]

When Jesus spoke about the "stone" rejected by the builders, he was saying what was written in Psalm 118:22-23. This was a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about himself. That is, the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was the "cornerstone" about which Jesus spoke?

[20:17]

A "cornerstone" was spoken about in two ways in the days of Jesus. It was used to describe the large stone set in the ground that established the corner from which the foundation of a building was measured. It was also used to describe the stone at the top part of an arch. This stone held the arch together. Jesus used the word "cornerstone" as a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about himself. That is, Jesus himself is the foundation upon which the church, that is the body of Christ, is built. He holds all things together.

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Church](#); [Body of Christ](#)

How will people be broken or crushed by the stone about which Jesus spoke?

[20:18]

When Jesus spoke about people falling on the stone, he was speaking about the people who rejected Jesus. When they rejected him, they are forever broken. This was a metaphor. They cannot be at peace with God. When Jesus spoke about the stone crushing people, he meant that God will judge people who reject Jesus. They will be crushed, that is, they will live forever in hell.

See: Isaiah 8:14-15

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

20:20-26

How did the Jewish leaders try to trick Jesus?

[20:20]

When the Jewish leaders asked a question about paying taxes, they tried to trick Jesus. They wanted Jesus to say something that made people angry. If Jesus said that people needed to pay taxes, the Jewish people would be angry and stop following him. If Jesus said that people should not pay taxes, then the Romans would be angry with him.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

What were the things that belonged to Caesar?

[20:25]

Jesus spoke about things that belonged to Caesar. Some scholars think that because the name and face on the coin showed that it belonged to Caesar, then Caesar had the right to collect taxes from the people. Other scholars think Jesus was speaking very specifically about giving to Caesar what was due to him. That is, taxes and honor.

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#); [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

What are the things that belong to God?

[20:25]

Jesus spoke about things that belong to God. Scholars think that when Jesus spoke about the things that belong to God he was speaking about how people must worship, love, and obey God.

20:27-40

Who were the Sadducees?

[20:27]

See: [Sadducees](#)

What is the “resurrection”?

[20:27]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying that people who are resurrected will not “die anymore”?

[20:36]

The people who follow Jesus and are resurrected will never die again. That is, they will live together in God in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus say, “they are equal to angels”?

[20:36]

Jesus said that those who are resurrected are “equal to angels”. He wanted people to know that they will never die. Angels do not die.

Advice to Translators: People who are resurrected do not become angels, rather they are like the angels in that they do not die. The translation must be clear to make that distinction.

See: [Angel](#)

Why did Jesus use the words “sons of God” to describe those who are resurrected?

[20:36]

People who believe in Jesus are “sons of God.” They are not sons of God in the same way Jesus is the Son of God.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

Why did Jesus talk about Moses and the bush?

[20:37]

Jesus talked about Moses and the burning bush. Scholars think that because God revealed himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, these men are still alive in heaven. Jesus used the story of Moses and the bush so that people would know that there is a resurrection of the dead.

See: Exodus 3:6

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

20:41-44

Why did the ancient Jews believe the messiah is the Son of David?

[20:41]

The ancient Jews believed the messiah is the Son of David because it was written about in the Old Testament (see: Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5). Jesus also believed this.

See: Matthew 22:41-42; Mark 12:35

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Son of David](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “The Lord said to my Lord”?

[20:42]

The Hebrew used two words for “Lord” in Psalm 110:1. The first use of the word is also the name Yahweh, which is the name of the God of Israel. The second use of the word “Lord” is translated as Lord and master.

See: [Lord](#); [Lord](#)

How was Jesus both David’s Lord and his son?

[20:41, 20:42]

Jesus was David’s “Lord” because Jesus is God. However, Jesus was also David’s son because Jesus was a descendant of David.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Son of David](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

20:45-47

Who were the scribes?

[20:46]

See: [Scribe](#)

How did the scribes “devour widows’ houses”?

[20:47]

The scribes devour widows’ houses. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about widows who were wealthy and the scribes were taking a very large donations from those widows. Other scholars think the

scribes took the things the widows owned. Other scholars think the scribes, in helping widows, took more from the widows than what they should have taken for helping them.

See: [Scribe](#)

Why will the scribes “receive greater condemnation”?

[20:47]

The scribes will receive greater condemnation. Scholars think that God will punish the scribes more severely than other people who will be judged and punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Chapter 21

¹ Jesus looked up and saw the rich men who were putting their gifts into the treasury. ² He saw a certain poor widow putting in two mites. ³ So he said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them. ⁴ All of these gave gifts out of their abundance. But this widow, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on."

⁵ As some spoke of the temple, how it was decorated with beautiful stones and offerings, he said, ⁶ "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down." ⁷ So they asked him, saying, "Teacher, when will these things happen? What will be the sign when these things are about to happen?" ⁸ Jesus answered, "Be careful that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them. ⁹ When you hear of wars and riots, do not be terrified, for these things must happen first, but the end will not happen immediately."

¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues. There will be terrifying events and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all of these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you over to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. ¹⁴ Therefore resolve in your hearts not to prepare your defense ahead of time, ¹⁵ for I will give you words and wisdom that all your adversaries will not be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ But you will be given over also by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by everyone because of my name. ¹⁸ But not a hair from your head will perish. ¹⁹ In your endurance you will gain your lives.

²⁰ "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the city leave it, and those who are out in the country must not enter the city. ²² For these are days of vengeance, so that all the things that are written will be fulfilled. ²³ Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing in those days! For there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword, and they will be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and on the earth. The nations will be in distress, anxious because of the roar of the sea and waves. ²⁶ There will be men fainting from fear and from expectation of the things which are coming upon the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ But when these things begin to happen, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is coming near."

²⁹ Jesus told them a parable, "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout buds, you see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴ "But pay attention to yourselves, so that your hearts are not burdened with excessive drinking and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day does not close on you suddenly ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon everyone living on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ But be alert at all times, praying that you may be strong enough to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

³⁷ So during the days he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out and stayed on the mountain that is called Olives. ³⁸ All of the people came early in the morning to hear him in the temple.

Luke 21

21:1-4

What were mites?

[21:2]

Mites were a type of coin. They were tiny, copper coins that had very little value (see: Mark 12:42). In ancient times, a person would earn about 100 mites in a day.

See: [Denarius](#)

Why did Jesus say the widow gave more than other people?

[21:3]

Jesus said the widow gave more than other people. She did not give as much money as other people. However, Jesus said this because she gave everything she had. However, the rich only gave a small part of what they had.

21:5-38

Why did Jesus say, “not one stone will be left on another”?

[21:6]

Jesus said “not one stone will be left on another.” This was a metaphor. Jesus was speaking about the Romans destroying the temple and many of the walls in Jerusalem. This happened about forty years after Jesus died.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

What were the things which were about to happen?

[21:7]

Certain things were about to happen. Scholars think the disciples were asking when the temple would be destroyed.

See: Matthew 24:3

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why did Jesus say, “the end will not happen immediately”?

[21:9]

Jesus said, “the end will not happen immediately”. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about the Romans destroying the temple in Jerusalem, but he was also thinking about when he returns.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What are the “terrifying events” and the “great signs from heaven”?

[21:11]

Jesus spoke about “terrifying events” and “great signs from heaven.” Scholars think Jesus was speaking about things that happen in the sky. People have never seen these things before and it caused them to fear greatly. Perhaps they will affect the whole universe. They think Jesus was speaking about comets and meteors, such as have never been seen before.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus say, “they will lay their hands on you”?

[21:12]

Jesus told the disciples “they will lay their hands on you.” He wanted them to know that some of them will be arrested, imprisoned, and tortured.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#).

How will Jesus give “words and wisdom” to the disciples?

[21:15]

When Jesus told the disciples he would give them “words and wisdom,” he wanted them to know that the Holy Spirit would help the disciples know how to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did it mean to be “given over”?

[21:16]

Someone who is “given over” or “delivered up” is betrayed. People help the leaders to arrest them so they can be punished.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “not a hair of your head will perish”?

[21:18]

Jesus said, “not a hair of your head will perish.” Some scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to know that people could not harm the disciples without God giving them permission to do this. However, more scholars think Jesus was speaking about God protecting the disciples. They will live forever with God in heaven forever. God will not punish them, even if people punish them on earth.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Why did Jesus say, “In your endurance you will gain your lives”?

[21:19]

Jesus said, “In your endurance you will gain your lives” or “souls”. Scholars think Jesus wanted people to keep trusting in God when they were persecuted.

See: [Soul](#); [Soul](#)

Why did Jesus say woe to those who are pregnant or nursing in those days?

[21:23]

Jesus said, “woe”(ὠαί/g3759) to those who are pregnant or nursing in those days. The things Jesus spoke were going to happen suddenly. This will make it more difficult for a pregnant or nursing mother.

See: [Last Days](#); [Last Days](#)

What was “the times of the Gentiles”?

[21:24]

The words “time of the Gentiles” refer to a certain period of time when the Gentiles will do something.” Some scholars think it is a certain period of time when God will allow the Gentiles to destroy Jerusalem. Other scholars believe it is a certain period of time when Gentiles will be saved (see: Romans 11:25).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What were the signs in the sun, moon, and the stars?

[21:25]

Jesus spoke about the signs in the sun, moon, and the stars. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about changes in the sun, moon, and stars (see: Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24). These things looked different than they have always looked.

See: Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:30-31

See: [Last Days](#); [Last Days](#)

What was a parable?

[21:29]

See: [Parable](#)

What was a fig tree?

[21:29]

See: Luke 13:6

What was meant by the words, “the kingdom of God is near”?

[21:31]

Jesus said that the kingdom of God is near. Some scholars think Jesus was saying that the “kingdom of God” would begin soon. Other scholars think Jesus was saying the “kingdom of God” had already begun because God began ruling Christians in some way that he did not before.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What was “this generation”?

[21:32]

Jesus spoke about this “generation.”

1. Some scholars think a future generation will see Jesus return.
2. Some scholars think the generation was the generation who saw Jesus and the temple in Jerusalem destroyed about forty years after Jesus died.
3. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the Jewish people. There will still be Jews when Jesus returns.
4. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about evil people. There will always be evil people until Jesus returns (see: Luke 11:29-32, 50-51).

See: [Temple](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Temple](#)

Why did Jesus command people to be alert and pray at all times?

[21:36]

Jesus wanted people to be alert and pray at all times. Scholars think that Jesus wanted Christians to be ready for him to return at any moment. That is, they must not become tired of waiting and then start to sin again.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Who is the “Son of Man”?

[21:36]

See: [Son of Man](#)

Chapter 22

¹ Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread was approaching, which is called the Passover. ² The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they could put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

³ Then Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve. ⁴ Judas went to the chief priests and captains and discussed with them how he would betray Jesus to them. ⁵ They were glad and agreed to give him money. ⁶ He consented and looked for an opportunity to give him over to them away from the crowd.

⁷ Then came the day of unleavened bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸ So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare for us the Passover meal, so that we may eat it."

⁹ They said to him, "Where do you want us to make preparations?"

¹⁰ He answered them, "Look, when you have entered the city, a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he goes into. ¹¹ Then say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room, where I will eat the Passover with my disciples?"'" ¹² He will show you a large furnished upper room. Make the preparations there." ¹³ So they went, and found everything as he had said to them. Then they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁴ When the hour came, he sat down with the apostles. ¹⁵ Then he said to them, "I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I say to you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then Jesus took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, "Take this, and share it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ Then he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. ²¹ But pay attention. The hand of the one who betrays me is with me at the table. ²² For the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined. But woe to that man through whom he is betrayed!" ²³ They began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who would do this.

²⁴ Then there arose also a quarrel among them about which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵ He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles are lords over them, and the ones who have authority over them are called doers of good deeds. ²⁶ But it must not be like this with you. Instead, let the greatest among you become like the youngest and the one who leads like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who sits at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸ But you are the ones who have continued with me in my trials. ²⁹ I set you over a kingdom, even as my Father has set me over a kingdom, ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹ "Simon, Simon, be aware, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail. After you have turned back again, strengthen your brothers."

³³ Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."

³⁴ Jesus replied, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, before you deny three times that you know me."

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out without a purse, a bag of provisions, or sandals, did you lack anything?"

They answered, "Nothing."

³⁶ Then he said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse, let him take it, and likewise a bag of provisions. The one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷ For I say to you, what is written about me must be fulfilled, 'He was counted with the lawless ones.' For what is predicted about me is being fulfilled."

38 Then they said, "Lord, look! Here are two swords."

He said to them, "It is enough."

39 Jesus went, as he often did, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. **40** When they arrived, he said to them, "Pray that you do not enter into temptation." **41** He went away from them about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and prayed, **42** saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless not my will, but yours be done." **43** Then an angel from heaven appeared to him, strengthening him. **44** Being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. **45** When he rose up from his prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of their sorrow **46** and asked them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray, that you may not enter into temptation."

47 While he was still speaking, behold, a crowd appeared, with Judas, one of the twelve, leading them. He came near to Jesus to kiss him, **48** but Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

49 When those who were around Jesus saw what was happening, they said, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" **50** Then one of them struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 Jesus said, "That is enough!" He touched his ear, and healed him. **52** Jesus said to the chief priests, to the captains of the temple, and to elders who came against him, "Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? **53** When I was daily with you in the temple, you did not lay your hands on me. But this is your hour, and the authority of darkness."

54 Seizing him, they led him away and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed from a distance. **55** After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat in the midst of them. **56** A certain female servant saw him as he sat in the light of the fire and looked straight at him and said, "This man also was with him."

57 But Peter denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

58 After a little while someone else saw him, and said, "You are also one of them."

But Peter said, "Man, I am not."

59 After about an hour another man insisted and said, "Truly this man also was with him, for he is a Galilean."

60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." Immediately, while he was speaking, a rooster crowed. **61** Turning, the Lord looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, when he said to him, "Before a rooster crows today you will deny me three times." **62** Peter went outside and wept bitterly.

63 Then the men holding Jesus in custody mocked and beat him. **64** They put a cover over him and asked him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who hit you?" **65** They spoke many other things against Jesus, blaspheming him.

66 As soon as it was day, the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. They led him into the Council **67** and said, "If you are the Christ, tell us."

But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, **68** and if I ask you, you will not answer. **69** But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

70 They all said, "Then you are the Son of God?"

Jesus said to them, "You say that I am."

71 They said, "Why do we still need a witness? For we ourselves have heard from his own mouth."

Luke 22

22:1-6

What was the “festival of Unleavened Bread”?

[22:1]

See: [Passover](#); [Passover](#)

Why did the chief priests and the scribes discuss “how” to put Jesus to death?

[22:2]

The chief priests and scribes wanted to kill Jesus. Scholars think the chief priests and the scribes were talking about how to kill Jesus. They wanted to kill him in a way that was not against the law. They wanted to find something Jesus did that would make the Roman government kill him.

See: [Scribe](#); [Scribe](#)

Why were the Jewish leaders afraid of the people?

[22:2]

The Jewish leaders were afraid of the people. Some scholars think the Jewish leaders were afraid of the people because the people might be angry if they arrested Jesus for the wrong reasons. Perhaps the people would riot and cause great trouble. A riot would make the Romans angry (see: Acts 19:40).

Advice to translators: A riot is when a large group of people get angry and they destroy things.

How did Satan enter into Judas Iscariot?

[22:3]

Satan entered into Judas. That is, Satan began to control Judas’ thoughts and Judas began to obey Satan. Satan wanted Judas to betray Jesus (see: John 6:70-71; 13:2,27).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

22:7-13

Why did the Jews have the Passover lamb?

[22:7]

The Jews had the Passover lamb because it reminded them of when they left Egypt. At this time, they killed a lamb and painted its blood onto the two side doorposts and the tops of the door frames of the houses (see: Exodus 12:5-7). God saw the blood on the door and he passed over the house with the blood on the door and did not kill the firstborn in the house (see: Exodus 12:12-13).

See: [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Blood](#); [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to look for a man bearing a pitcher of water?

[22:10]

In ancient Israel, only the women carried pitchers of water. Scholars think that when Jesus wanted his disciples to look for a man carrying a pitcher of water because there would only be one man carrying a pitcher of water. Then they would know who they must follow.

22:14-23

How will the Passover be fulfilled in the kingdom of God?

[22:16]

The Passover will be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. At that time, people will not sin and things will not die. Scholars think there will be a great feast and Christians will celebrate and be with Jesus forever. This is sometimes called the wedding feast of the Lamb.

See: [Lamb of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Lamb of God](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said, "This is my body, which is given for you"?

[22:19]

Jesus said, "This is my body, which is given for you." He was speaking about dying so that people could be at peace with God.

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

Why did Jesus say, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood"?

[22:20]

See: [Blood](#); [New Covenant](#); [Blood](#)

How was the betrayal of Jesus "determined"?

[22{22]

God "determined" (ὁρίζω/g3724) that Judas would betray Jesus (see: Acts 2:23). That is, God knew that this would happen. However, Jesus said the person who betrayed him will answer to God. That is, even though God knew Jesus would be betrayed, God would punish Judas.

See: [Will of God](#); [Predestine \(Predestination\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Will of God](#)

22:24-30

Why did Jesus say, "let the one who is the greatest among you become like the youngest"?

[22:26]

In ancient times, the younger people typically served those who were older. They thought the older people were greater in some way and people should honor them. Jesus did not want his disciples to live as if they were greater than other people, rather he wanted them to serve other people.

When will Jesus give the disciples a kingdom?

[22:29]

Jesus will give his disciples a kingdom. That is, they will rule something. Some scholars say Jesus will give the disciples a kingdom after he returns to the earth. Fewer scholars think say Jesus gave them a kingdom when he said this. Jesus was a servant during his time on earth, so the disciples must also lead other people by serving them.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How will the disciples judge the twelve tribes of Israel?

[22:30]

The disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Some scholars say the disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel for accepting or rejecting the gospel. Other scholars say the disciples will rule the twelve tribes of Israel some day. Perhaps this will happen after Jesus returns to the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Gospel](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

22:31-34

Why did Jesus say “Simon, Simon”?

[22:31]

Jesus said “Simon, Simon” because he wanted Simon to listen closely to what Jesus was going to tell him. Perhaps Jesus addressed Peter as “Simon” to remind him that he needed help because he was about to be tested.

See: [Test](#)

Why did Jesus say, “that he might sift you as wheat”?

[22:31]

Jesus told Simon that Satan wanted to “sift” him as wheat is sifted. This was a metaphor. Sifting was the violent, shaking action taken to separate grain. It was separated into something people wanted and something people did not want. Jesus was telling Simon that Satan wanted him not to trust in Jesus.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Jesus say “the rooster will not crow this day” before Simon denied him three times?

[22:34]

In ancient Israel, the Jewish day started at sundown, that is, in the evening. The rooster generally crows just before sunrise. Jesus wanted Simon to know that he would deny him three times sometime during the night before the sunrise.

22:35-38

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to buy swords?

[22:36]

Jesus told his disciples to buy swords.

1. Some scholars think Jesus was warning his disciples that they may need to defend themselves. Traveling on the roads was often dangerous.
2. Some scholars think Jesus used a metaphor when he spoke about swords. That is, he was warning the disciples that they were going to be persecuted or people were going to try to hurt them.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

22:39-46

Where was the Mount of Olives?

[22:39]

See Map: Mount of Olives

What did it mean to “enter into temptation”?

[22:40]

When someone entered into temptation, they sinned when they were tempted. Jesus had already told the disciples that Satan will tempt them.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus say to God the Father, “If you are willing, remove this cup from me”?

[22:42]

Jesus asked God the Father to remove the cup from him if God the Father was willing to do this. The cup was a symbol. Jesus was speaking about the suffering he was about to endure. That is, Jesus was about to be tortured and then killed. Jesus was praying that God would rescue him from the suffering. However, he would do this if it was what God the Father wanted him to do.

See: [Symbol](#); [Will of God](#); [Symbol](#)

How did the angel from heaven strengthen Jesus?

[22:43]

The angel from heaven strengthened Jesus. Scholars think the angel helped Jesus to endure the pain he was having.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Luke say that Jesus’ “sweat became like great drops of blood”?

[22:44]

Luke said that Jesus’ “sweat became like great drops of blood”. Some scholars think Luke was saying that Jesus was sweating so much that sweat fell to the ground just as blood does when someone is bleeding. Other scholars think Luke was saying that Jesus’ sweat blood.

Why did Jesus say the disciples were “sleeping because of their sorrow”?

[22:45]

Jesus said the disciples were sleeping because they were sad. Some scholars think the disciples were exhausted because of the great “sorrow” (λύπη/g3077) they experienced being with Jesus that day. Other scholars say it was because they saw their Jesus in much pain.

22:47-53

Why did Jesus ask Judas if he was “betraying the Son of Man with a kiss”?

[22:48]

In ancient Israel, friends often greeted one another with a kiss of some kind. Some scholars think Jesus was sad that Judas was betraying him when he kissed Jesus. That is, Judas told people who Jesus was when he kissed Jesus. Judas was, in fact, handing Jesus over to his enemies, that is, to those who would crucify him.

See: [Son of Man](#)

What was the “authority of darkness”?

[22:53]

In the Bible, the “authority of darkness” was a symbol of Satan and every evil thing that served him. Jesus wanted people to know that the people who came out at night to arrest him were following Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

22:54-62

Why did the crowd take Jesus to the high priest?

[22:54]

The crowd took Jesus to the high priest. They wanted Jesus to answer the Jewish leaders who accused him of doing and saying evil things. The high priest could decide if Jesus was guilty of anything against the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus appear before Pilate and Herod?

Jesus appeared before Pilate because Rome controlled Israel (see: Matthew 27: 11-26; John 18:28-40). The Jewish leaders were not able to kill Jesus without getting permission from the Roman government. However, Pilate did not find Jesus guilty of any crime worthy of death. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because Jesus was from Galilee. Herod ruled over Galilee. The Romans gave him permission to do this.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

22:63-65

Why did the guards mock and beat Jesus?

[22:63]

The guards mocked and beat Jesus. They insulted him while they were striking him with their fists. The Romans often hit people they arrested. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would sufferer in many ways (see: Isaiah 53).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

22:66-71

Who were the elders?

[22:66]

See: [Elder](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders ask Jesus if he was the “Christ”?

[22:67]

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus if he was the “Christ” because they did not believe he was the Messiah. They believed that if Jesus said that he was the Messiah, they could charge him with blasphemy. Then they would kill Jesus.

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What was the “right hand of the power of God”?

[22:69]

In ancient times, when someone was seated at the “right hand” of the king, he was in the highest place of honor. Jesus wanted the Jewish leaders to know that he would soon be given the highest honor possible.

Why did Jesus answer the religious leaders’ question by saying, “You say that I am”?

[22:70]

Jesus said, "You say that I am". Scholars think Jesus was saying, "I am the Son of God just as your question is asking".

See: [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#)

Chapter 23

¹ The whole company of them rose up and brought Jesus before Pilate. ² They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

³ Pilate asked him, saying, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Jesus answered him and said, "You say so."

⁴ Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, "I find no guilt in this man."

⁵ But they were insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee even to this place." ⁶ So when Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷ When he learned that he was under Herod's authority, he sent Jesus to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem in those days.

⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, because he had wanted to see him for a long time. He had heard about him and he hoped to see some sign done by him. ⁹ Herod questioned Jesus in many words, but Jesus answered him nothing. ¹⁰ The chief priests and the scribes stood, vigorously accusing him. ¹¹ Herod with his soldiers showed Jesus contempt and they mocked him. Then they dressed him in splendid clothes and sent him back to Pilate. ¹² For Herod and Pilate had become friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been enemies with each other.

¹³ Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people ¹⁴ and said to them, "You brought to me this man like a man who is misleading the people, and see, I, having questioned him before you, find no guilt in this man concerning those things of which you accuse him. ¹⁵ No, nor does Herod, for he sent him back to us, and see, nothing worthy of death has been done by him. ¹⁶ I will therefore punish him and release him." ¹⁷^[1]¹⁸ But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas!" ¹⁹ Barabbas was a man who had been put into prison for a certain rebellion in the city and for murder. ²⁰ Pilate addressed them again, desiring to release Jesus. ²¹ But they shouted, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." ²² He said to them a third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found no guilt deserving death in him. Therefore after punishing him, I will release him." ²³ But they were insistent with loud voices, demanding for him to be crucified. Their voices convinced Pilate. ²⁴ So Pilate decided to grant their demand. ²⁵ He released the one they asked for who had been put in prison for rebellion and murder. But he delivered up Jesus to their will.

²⁶ As they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him to carry, following Jesus.

²⁷ A great crowd of the people, and of women who grieved and mourned for him, were following him. ²⁸ But turning to them, Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For see, the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that did not bear, and the breasts that did not nurse.'

³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains,

'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' ³¹ For if they do these things while the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

³² Other men, two criminals, were led away with him to be put to death.

³³ When they came to the place that is called "The Skull," there they crucified him and the criminals—one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Then they cast lots, dividing up his garments.

³⁵ The people stood watching while the rulers also were mocking him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, the chosen one."

³⁶ The soldiers also ridiculed him, approaching him, offering him vinegar, ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself." ³⁸ There was also a sign over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who was hanging there insulted him by saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us."

⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ We indeed are here justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds. But this man did nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

⁴³ Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour ⁴⁵ as the sun turned dark. Then the curtain of the temple was split in two. ⁴⁶ Crying with a loud voice, Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." Having said this, he died.

⁴⁷ When the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, "Surely this was a righteous man." ⁴⁸ When all the multitudes who came together to witness this sight saw the things that were done, they returned beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ But all those who knew him, and the women who followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

⁵⁰ Behold, there was a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council. He was a good and righteous man. ⁵¹ This man had not agreed with their plan and action. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man, approaching Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ He took it down, wrapped it in fine linen, and placed it in a tomb that was cut in stone, where no one had ever been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the Day of the Preparation, and the Sabbath was about to begin. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus out of Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶ They returned and prepared spices and ointments.

Then on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Footnotes

23:17 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have Luke 23:17,

Luke 23

23:1-7

Who was Pilate?

[23:1]

Pilate was the Roman ruler of Judah. While he was in Jerusalem for the holiday, his home was at Caesarea.

See Map: Jerusalem; Caesarea

Why did the religious leaders take Jesus to Pilate?

[23:1]

The Jewish leaders took Jesus to Pilate. This was because they needed the Roman ruler's permission to kill someone.

What did the leaders mean when they accused Jesus of perverting the nation?

[23:2]

The leaders accused Jesus of perverting the nation. Some scholars think they believed Jesus caused people to fight against their Roman rulers. Other scholars think these leaders believed Jesus caused the Jewish people to riot and fight against the Jewish leaders.

Who was Herod Antipas?

[23:7]

See: [King Herod](#)

Why was Jesus taken to Herod?

[23:7]

Jesus was taken to Herod. Some scholars think Pilate sent Jesus to Herod so Herod would have something to report to Pilate about Jesus. Other scholars think Herod asked to meet Jesus so Pilate sent Jesus to Herod. Other scholars think Pilate sent Jesus to Herod so that Herod could determine whether the things said about Jesus were true.

See: [King Herod](#)

23:8-12

Why did Jesus not answer Herod's questions?

[23:9]

Jesus did not answer Herod's questions. Some scholars think this was because he knew that he was going to die. He knew that he needed to die so that people could be at peace with God. Other scholars think Jesus did not answer Herod's questions because he knew Herod wanted to do something evil.

Advice to Translators: Jesus did not answer Herod's questions. This does not mean that Jesus was guilty.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the soldiers dress Jesus in elegant clothes?

[23:11]

The soldiers dressed Jesus in the type of robe that only kings wore. They did this to mock Jesus. They did not think he was a king. They wanted other people to think this also.

See: [Irony](#)

23:13-24

Did Luke write the words in verse 17?

[23:17]

Some ancient copies of Luke have the words in verse 17. More and older ancient copies of Luke do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words. However, Matthew and Mark wrote these words (see: Matthew 27:15; Mark 15:6).

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Who was Barabbas?

[23:18]

Barabbas was a criminal who was in prison. Luke said that Barabbas had been involved with a rebellion. Scholars think he was also a violent person who fought against the Roman empire. They think the Jewish people asked for Barabbas to be freed because Barabbas was a hero to some of them. He was a hero because he tried to free Israel from Roman rule.

See: [Rebel \(Rebellion\)](#)

23:26-31

Where was Cyrene?

[23:26]

See Map: Cyrene

How did soldiers make Simon carry Jesus' cross?

[23:26]

The soldiers grabbed Simon from the crowd and forced him to carry Jesus' cross. Some scholars think the soldiers had Simon carry one piece of the cross while Jesus carried the other piece. Other scholars think Simon was made to carry one piece and the other piece was at the place where Jesus was going to be crucified. Other scholars think Simon carried one end of the cross while Jesus carried the other end.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Who were the "daughters of Jerusalem"?

[23:28]

The "daughters of Jerusalem" were the women living in Jerusalem.

Why did Jesus tell the women not to weep for him?

[23:28]

Jesus told the women not to weep for him because God wanted Jesus to suffer and die. This was God's will. However, they needed to weep because the people of Jerusalem would soon experience great suffering. Scholars think Jesus was speaking about when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. This happened about forty years after Jesus died.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why will people "say to the mountains, 'fall on us' and the hills, 'cover us'"?

[23:30]

Luke wrote about people speaking to the mountains and hills. This was a metaphor. Scholars think that they were going to greatly suffer and because of this they would want to die quickly.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus talk about a green tree and a dry tree?

[23:31]

Jesus talked about a green tree and a dry tree because he warned the Jewish people they will suffer. The green tree was a metaphor for Jesus. When Jesus talked about the green tree, he wanted people to know that he was going to greatly suffer, but he did not do anything wrong. When Jesus talked about the dry tree, he was speaking about people who did the wrong things. These people will suffer more than Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#)

23:32-38

Why was the place they took Jesus to called "The Skull"?

[23:33]

Scholars think the place they took Jesus was called “the skull” because it was a hill that looked like a skull. Other scholars think the place was called the skull because the Romans had executed many people there. It was not because there were human skulls lying on the ground.

What was crucifixion?

[23:33]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

What did it mean to “cast lots”?

[23:34]

See: [Cast Lots](#)

Why did the soldiers offer Jesus vinegar to drink?

[23:36]

Scholars think different things about why the soldiers offered Jesus vinegar to drink.

1. Some scholars think this was to fulfill a prophecy in the Old Testament (see: Psalm 69:21). The soldiers did something evil.
2. Some scholars think that offering Jesus vinegar to drink was an act of compassion because the drink was thought to satisfy thirst better than water.
3. Some scholars think the soldiers offered Jesus vinegar to drink in order to mock him. That is, only the common people drank vinegar, or sour wine. A king would never be offered vinegar or sour wine to drink.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did they put a sign over Jesus?

[23:38]

Scholars think the soldiers put a sign over Jesus so people would know why he was crucified. Some scholars say Pilate wanted to mock Jesus with the sign. Other scholars think Pilate wanted to mock the Jewish leaders because they put their own king to death.

See: John 19:19-22

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

23:39-43

Why did the criminal ask Jesus to remember him?

[23:42]

The criminal asked Jesus to remember him because the criminal wanted to enter the kingdom of God. That is, he wanted Jesus to remember him when he returned to rule as the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was “paradise”?

[23:43]

“Paradise” is another name for “heaven.”

See: [Heaven](#)

23:44-49

What was the sixth hour?

[23:44]

The sixth hour was midday. The ancient Jews divided a day into twelve parts. The hours varied in length according to the time of the year so that midday was always the sixth hour. It was about noon.

What did it mean that the sun's light failed?

[23:44]

Luke wrote about the sun's light fading. Some scholars think God used a strong wind that caused large amounts of dust to blow up and block the light of the sun. Other scholars think God used a miracle to blocked the light of the sun.

See: [Miracle](#)

What was the curtain of the temple?

[23:45]

Scholars think the curtain of the temple was an inner curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. It was very thick. Nothing could tear this curtain except God.

See: [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Holy Place](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#)

Why was the curtain of the temple split in two?

[23:45]

Scholars think different things about why the curtain of the temple split in two.

1. Some scholars think this happened so people would know that God who tore the curtain.
2. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. When Jesus died, people could now go to God without needing a priest.
3. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. God stopped living in the temple in some way.
4. Some scholars think this was a warning of the coming destruction of the temple.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did it mean that Jesus committed his spirit to God the Father?

[23:46]

When Jesus said that he committed his spirit to God the Father, it meant that he completely trusted God.

See: Psalm 31:5

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did the people beat their breasts when they left?

[23:48]

Scholars think different things about why the people beat their breasts when they left.

1. They were greatly saddened because of the way Jesus died.
2. They felt guilt because Jesus died and they beat their breasts as a sign of repentance because of their part in his death.

3. They knew something terrible happened because darkness came.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

23:50-56

Who was Joseph?

[23:50]

This Joseph was a Jewish leader. Joseph was a popular name in ancient Israel.

Where was Arimathea?

[23:51]

See Map: Arimathea

What did it mean that Joseph was looking for the kingdom of God?

[23:51]

Joseph was looking for the kingdom of God. He was expecting the coming of the kingdom of God. Some scholars think Joseph may have believed that Jesus was the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was the Day of Preparation?

[23:54]

The Day of Preparation was the time to prepare for the Sabbath. It began on Thursday evening and lasted until Friday evening. People cleaned houses, bought supplies, and cooked food so that they did no work on the Sabbath.

See: [Sabbath](#)

Why did the women prepare spices and ointments?

[23:56]

The women prepared spices and ointments to put on the body of Jesus. The spices and ointments helped to hide the smell of a decaying body. It was also a sign of honor to anoint a body with spices and ointments, and was thought to preserve the body.

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Chapter 24

¹ Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³ They entered in, but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ It happened that, while they were confused about this, suddenly, two men stood by them in bright shining garments. ⁵ As the women were terrified and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said to the women, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." ⁸ The women remembered his words ⁹ and returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and all the rest. ¹⁰ Now Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them reported these things to the apostles. ¹¹ But this message seemed like idle talk to the apostles, and they did not believe the women. ¹² Yet Peter rose up and ran to the tomb, and, stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves. Peter then departed to his home, wondering what had happened.

¹³ Behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was sixty stadia from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They discussed with each other about all the things that had happened. ¹⁵ It happened that, while they discussed and questioned together, Jesus himself approached and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, "What are these matters you two are discussing as you walk?" They stood there looking sad.

¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only person in Jerusalem who does not know the things which have happened there these days?"

¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "What things?"

They answered him, "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Yes, and what is more, it is now the third day since all these things happened. ²² But also, some women of our company amazed us, having been at the tomb early in the morning. ²³ When they did not find his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some men who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said. But they did not see him."

²⁵ Jesus said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning from Moses and through all the prophets, Jesus interpreted to them the things concerning himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as though he were going further. ²⁹ But they compelled him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is almost over." So Jesus went in to stay with them. ³⁰ It happened that, when he had sat down with them to eat, he took the bread, blessed it, and breaking it, he gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight. ³² They said one to another, "Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke to us on the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?" ³³ They rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵ So they told the things that happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶ As they spoke these things, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace be to you." ³⁷ But they were terrified and filled with fear and thought that they were seeing a spirit. ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? Why do questions arise in your heart? ³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see me having." ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ They still could not believe it because of joy, and they were amazed. Jesus said to them, "Do you have anything to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of a broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it before them.

⁴⁴ He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you when I was with you, that all that was written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures. ⁴⁶ He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day. ⁴⁷ Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ See, I am sending you what my Father promised. But remain in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰ Then Jesus led them out until they were near Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ It happened that, while he was blessing them, he left them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² So they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ They were continually in the temple, blessing God.

Luke 24

24:1-12

When was the first day of the week?

[24:1]

The first day of the week was after the sabbath. The sabbath was Saturday for Jews and some Christians. The first day of the week was Sunday. The women went to the tomb likely brought the spices at sunrise on the first day of the week.

Why was there a stone?

[24:2]

The stone covered the entry point of the tomb. The stone kept grave robbers out of the tomb and it also kept animals from entering the tomb. The stone was too large for women to move.

Who were the two men?

[24:4]

Scholars think that the two men who suddenly stood by the women were angels.

See: [Angel](#)

Why did the angels asking the women, "Why do you seek the living among the dead"?

[24:5]

When the angels asked the women a question, they knew that Jesus was alive. Therefore, the women were not going to find Jesus in the tomb.

Who were the "sinful men" into whose hands Jesus was delivered?

[24:7]

Scholars think the "sinful men" spoke about Judas and the crowd of men he brought to arrest Jesus. Jesus himself said he was to be delivered into the hands of Gentiles (see: Luke 18:32). Gentiles were considered to be sinful people.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How many days was Jesus dead and in the tomb?

[24:7]

Jesus was dead and in the tomb three days. The first day was Friday, the second day was Saturday, and the third day was Sunday. The Jewish day began and ended when the sun went down.

What was “idle talk”?

[24:11]

Scholars think that “idle talk” was talk that was impossible to believe. That is, people who heard it did not understand it.

Why did Peter run to the tomb?

[24:12]

Some scholars think Peter ran to the tomb to see if the women were telling the truth about Jesus.

See: John 20:1-10

24:13-35

Where was Emmaus?

[24:13]

See Map: Emmaus

What was a “stadia”?

[24:13]

A stadia was about 190 meters.

What did it mean that two followers of Jesus were prevented from recognizing Jesus?

[24:16]

Scholars give several reasons why the two followers of Jesus were prevented from recognizing him.

1. They were not expecting to see Jesus alive again.
2. God did something so that the two men did not know it was Jesus.
3. The Holy Spirit waited until the right time for them to know that it was Jesus. This was when they sat close to Jesus to eat a meal.

Who was Cleopas?

[24:18]

Scholars do not know who Cleopas was. Some scholars say Cleopas as an uncle of Jesus. He was Joseph’s brother.

What was a Nazarene?

[24:19]

A Nazarene was a person who came from or lived in a town called Nazareth.

See Map: Nazareth

What were the scriptures to which Jesus referred?

[24:27]

The scriptures to which Jesus referred were the places in the Old Testament that told about the messiah before the messiah came.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean that Jesus “acted as though he were going further”?

[24:28]

Jesus “acted as though he were going further”. That is, it seemed that he was going to travel beyond the village. Scholars think Jesus would have continued on past the village if the two people had not asked him to stay with them.

How were the eyes of the two followers of Jesus opened?

[24:31]

Luke wrote that the eyes of the two people were opened. This was a metaphor. These people were able to recognize Jesus. Scholars think this happened when Jesus broke the bread and handed it to them.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was meant by the words, “our heart burning within us”?

[24:32]

The words “our heart burning within us” was a metaphor. It meant that their hearts and minds were filled with joy, a sense of awe, hope, and excitement. It described how they felt when Jesus explained the Old Testament to them.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

24:36-49

Why did Jesus give the greeting “peace be to you”?

[24:36]

In ancient times, people often greeted one another by saying, “peace be to you.” This was a way people asked for blessings for someone else.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why did Jesus say to the disciples, “See my hands and my feet”?

[24:39]

Jesus said to the disciples, “See my hands and my feet”. Scholars think Jesus wanted them to look at his hands and feet because they showed the scars of his crucifixion (see: John 20:25-27).

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “a spirit does not have flesh and bones”?

[24:39]

Some scholars think that when Jesus said a “spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) does not have flesh and bones, he was telling the disciples he was not a ghost. That is, a ghost does not have a real physical body.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

What did Luke mean when he wrote, “They still could not believe it because of joy”?

[24:41]

Luke wrote, "They still could not believe." Scholars think the disciples thought it was too good to be true, that Jesus was really alive again. This was because they were overcome with amazement.

What was meant by the words, "he opened their minds"?

[24:45]

When Jesus "opened their minds," he caused his disciples to be able to understand all that was written in the Old Testament about the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#).

What was "repentance"?

[24:47]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What did it mean to preach "in his name"?

[24:47]

Some scholars think that to preach in the name of Jesus happened when Jesus gave someone permission to preach. Other scholars think that someone preached in Jesus' name when they preached about the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What were "these things" of which the disciples were witnesses?

[24:48]

When Jesus spoke about "these things" he was referring to his suffering, death, and resurrection, all of which the disciples were witnesses.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, "I am sending you what my Father promised"?

[24:49]

Jesus said, "I am sending you what my Father promised." This is the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Advice to Translators: It may be more clear to state that Jesus said "I am going to send you what my Father promised".

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What did it mean to be "clothed with power from on high"?

[24:49]

To be "clothed with power from on high" was a metaphor. God gave power to the disciples. Scholars think God did this soon after Jesus returned to heaven (see: Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).

See: [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#)

24:50-53

What did it mean that Jesus "blessed" his disciples?

[24:50]

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why was Jesus carried up into heaven?

[24:51]

Jesus had completed his work and returned to heaven. Jesus said this was necessary so that the Holy Spirit could come to people in a new way (see: John 16:7-11).

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did the followers of Jesus “worship” Jesus?

[24:52]

Some scholars think people worshipped Jesus by bow down before him, or to lay face-down on the ground before him.

See: [Worship](#)

Why did the followers of Jesus have “great joy” after Jesus went to heaven?

[24:52]

Scholars give several reasons the followers of Jesus had “great joy”(χαρά/g5479) after Jesus went to heaven.

1. Jesus is Lord in heaven and he reigns over everything.
2. They were no longer afraid of dying because they would also go to heaven.
3. They had no more doubts. They knew Jesus was the Messiah.
4. They believed they will complete the things Jesus wanted them to do.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean that the disciples were “continually in the temple”?

[24:53]

Scholars think Luke meant that the disciples were in the temple very often, likely every day. When in the temple, they were continually worshipping God and giving him thanks.

Book: John

Introduction to the Gospel of John

All four gospels record many of the same things that Jesus did and said. However, John explained more about why Jesus did these things. He wanted people to understand things about God. John also wanted people to know that God came to earth as a man named Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Who wrote this book?

John, the disciple of Jesus, wrote this book. He did not write that he wrote this gospel. The author wrote about being with Jesus and the other disciples when John was there. The author wrote that he was someone who Jesus loved.

See: Luke 9:54; Galatians 2:9

See: [Disciple](#); [Gospel](#)

Who did John write to?

John wrote his gospel for all people. He wrote it especially for Gentiles. John translated Jewish names into Greek. He also explained how the Jews lived, what they believed, and how they worshiped God. This helped the Gentiles to understand the things he wrote about in his gospel.

However, John also wanted the Jews to learn about Jesus and to trust in him. He wrote about the Old Testament so that Jews would understand that Jesus is the messiah. However, when John wrote his gospel, many Jews had already rejected Jesus.

John's gospel has helped Christians understand that Jesus is God. It has also helped them to know that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gentile](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Trinity](#)

What did John write about in this book?

In John's gospel, there are seven times when someone asks Jesus who he is, and he answers, "I am." This is the name of God. God told this to Moses (see: Exodus 3). When Jesus said this, the Jews knew that Jesus said that he is God.

John also wrote more about the Holy Spirit than any other book in the Bible (see: John 14 and 16). He wanted people to know that the Holy Spirit works in new and different ways after Jesus died.

See: Yahweh (I am); [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did John write this book?

In John 20:21, John explained that he wrote his gospel in order to help people trust in Jesus. Some scholars think John wanted non-Christians to believe in Jesus and to be at peace with God. Fewer scholars think John wanted Christians to trust in Jesus more.

Outline of the Gospel of John

1. Introduction about who Jesus is (1:1-18)
2. Jesus is baptized, and he chooses twelve disciples (1:19-51)
3. Jesus preaches, teaches, and heals people (2-11)
4. The seven days before Jesus' death (12-19)
 1. Mary anoints the feet of Jesus (12:1-11)
 2. Jesus rides into Jerusalem (12:12-19)
 3. Some Greek men want to see Jesus (12:20-36)

4. The Jewish leaders reject Jesus (12:37-50)
5. Jesus teaches his disciples (13-17)
6. Jesus is arrested and undergoes trial (18:1-19:15)
7. Jesus is crucified and buried (19:16-42)
5. Jesus rises from the dead (20:1-29)
6. John says why he wrote his gospel (20:30-31)
7. Jesus meets with the disciples (21)

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Gospel](#)

John

Chapter 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² This one was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him there was not one thing made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to all men, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own did not receive him. ¹² But to as many as received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ These were not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, glory as of the one and only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ John testified about him and cried out, saying, "This was the one of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is greater than I am, for he was before me.'" ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received grace after grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made God known.

¹⁹ This is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites to him from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed—he did not deny, but confessed—"I am not the Christ." ²¹ So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." They said, "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am a voice, crying in the wilderness: 'Make the way of the Lord straight,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

²⁴ Now some from the Pharisees were sent, ²⁵ and they asked him and said to him, "Why do you baptize then if you are not the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water. But among you stands someone you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ These things were done in Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Look, there is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is the one of whom I said, 'The one who comes after me is more than me, for he was before me.' ³¹ I did not know him, but it was so that he could be revealed to Israel that I came baptizing with water." ³² John testified, saying, "I saw the Spirit coming down like a dove from heaven, and it stayed upon him. ³³ I did not recognize him, but he who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ I have both seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

³⁵ Again, the next day, as John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ they saw Jesus walking by, and John said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ His two disciples heard him say this and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They replied, "Rabbi" (which is translated "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." Then they came and saw where he was staying; they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and then followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.

⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated "Christ"). ⁴² He brought him to Jesus, and Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated "Peter").

⁴³ The next day, when Jesus wanted to leave to go to Galilee, he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."

⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, "He of whom Moses wrote in the law, and the prophets, we have found him: Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth." ⁴⁶ Nathaniel said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him and said about him, "See, a true Israelite, in whom is no deceit!" ⁴⁸ Nathaniel said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹ Nathaniel replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰ Jesus replied and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you underneath the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than this." ⁵¹ Then he said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

John 1 Commentary

1: 1-5

How did John use "word"?

[1:1]

John said that Jesus is the "word" (λόγος/g3056). All scholars think these first verses are about Jesus. However, John did not say Jesus' name. When John wrote these things, people knew that the "word" was the thing that created plants, animals, and human beings. In the same way they understood "word," John wanted his readers to understand that Jesus is this "word." That is, Jesus holds everything in the universe together. He makes everything and give it permission to exist.

How is Jesus both with God and God himself?

John said that Jesus is both God and with God. This is because he is God. He is not partly God, but is fully or completely God. However, he is a different person from God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. God is three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), but they are only one God. That is, Jesus is different from God the Father and the Holy Spirit. John says he is "with" (μετά /g3326) God.

These verses show that Jesus is God. Jesus is God the Son, so he is fully God. John says that the "Word" (λόγος/g3056). That is, Jesus, created everything. Only God can do that.

Advice to Translators: In English, scholars talk about Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit as being different "persons" of God. This is because there is not a good way to describe how Jesus, the Son of God, is different than God the Father or God the Holy Spirit. People cannot fully know how this is true. The Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are not people. When scholars say they are different "persons," they mean they are distinct even though they always want the same things, they are equal to one another, and they cannot be separated. There is only one God. God is one, he is not three different gods. The Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are all one. They are all the same God, but not the same "person." Jesus is completely God. But Jesus is not the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is not the Father. Also, the Father is completely God, but the Father is not Jesus or the Holy Spirit either. Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit are not three smaller parts of one larger God. Also, God does not have three separate faces, that is, three separate sides. God also does not change into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at different times. God is always Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why does John use the metaphor of light?

[1:4, 1:5]

John said Jesus is light to tell his readers three things about Jesus: 1. Jesus is light because he makes all Christians live forever with God. That is, they will be lit by the light of Jesus in their life. 1. Also, Jesus' light makes it so that people can see things. That is, Jesus causes a Christian to truly know God. Scriptures often use light as a metaphor to talk about knowing true things about God. 1. John wanted his readers to know that Jesus' light makes people happy. That is, when people do good things, they are in the light and they are happy. So when John says that some people are in light, he means that Jesus makes them happy. 1. Also, John wanted his readers to know Jesus' light makes people act more like Jesus if they stay in his light.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why does John use the metaphor of darkness?

[1:5]

In the same way John used the metaphor of light to talk about Jesus, John used the metaphor of darkness to talk about Satan and the things Satan does. That is, John wanted to say that Satan, people who sin and do evil, and evil things all happen because of sin.

John said darkness cannot stop the light from shining. John wanted people to know that nothing can stop Jesus from making those who believe in him live forever with God. Even Satan cannot stop him. John also wanted to say that Jesus will punish everyone who does not believe in him because they sin. They will be punished forever in hell.

Jesus is stronger than Satan and those who do not stop sinning. This is why John said that the darkness cannot stop the light from shining.

See: [Hell](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Sin](#); [Hell](#)

1:6-8

Who is John?

[1:6]

These verses talk about John the Baptist. John the Baptist told people that the Messiah was coming. That is, John got people ready for the Messiah to come (See: 1:23). He got the people ready to believe in the Messiah when the Messiah came. The prophets in the Old Testament told about this Messiah coming (See: Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1).

John the Baptist and the author of this Gospel are not the same person. The apostle John wrote this book. He did not call himself "John" in his book. He called himself "the one whom Jesus loved" (See: 13:23).

See: [Apostle](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Apostle](#)

1: 9-13

What does it mean to be born of God?

[1:13]

Those who believe in Jesus are born of God and become part of God's family. John calls these people children of God. Before this, people were called "children of wrath" (See: Ephesians 2:3) and "children of the devil" (John 8:4; 1 John 3:10). Believing in Jesus makes a person different than they were before. Scripture calls this a new or second birth from God. In English, this is called regeneration.

This section is a group of prophecies about the Messiah. John said that the world was going to reject Jesus. Even most of the Jews rejected him (See: Isaiah 40:3).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Children of God](#); [Wrath](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

1: 14-19

How did the Word became flesh?

[1:14]

John says that the “Word”(λόγος/g3056) became “flesh”(σῆμαίνω/g4591). That is, Jesus became a human.

When Jesus became a human, he continued to be God. So when people saw Jesus, they saw God. He was not just a man representing God in the same way a photograph represents a person. Also, they saw a real human, not something that only looked like a human.

This is why Christians know that Jesus is both God and a human.

See: Philippians 2:5-11

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

What does “grace upon grace” mean?

[1:16]

John said “grace upon grace.” Many scholars think that John wanted to say God sent two gifts of “grace”(χάρις/5484). First, God gave the gift of the Law of Moses. Later, he sent another gift. This second gift of grace was that he forgave the sins of those who believe in Jesus. This second gift of grace is a free gift. It showed humans who God truly is (see: 1: 14). God gave people this second gift through Jesus.

In ancient Israel, the Law of Moses showed the people of Israel their need of God’s mercy. Also, the Law taught the people of God that they needed Jesus. The second gift was still to come. In ancient Israel, the Law of Moses helped people know how to please God and live their lives. After Jesus came, God’s grace and mercy alone helped people to know how to live in a way that pleases God.

While some scholars think the new law replaced the old law, other scholars think that John wanted to say that God sent the second gift to combine it with the first gift, not to replace it. If this is what John meant, then Jesus brings to Christians the second gift in order to finish the work of the first gift. That is, the Law of Moses.

See: [Mercy](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#); [Israel](#); [Mercy](#)

How did Jesus live with people who did not honor God?

[1:15]

John said Jesus “lived”(σκηνώω/g4637) with people who did not honor God. John wanted to say that when Jesus came to earth, he was where people did not think he was going to be. That is, he was with the sinners and people who did not honor God in the things that they lived.

The Old Testament says God “lived”(σκηνώω/g4637) with the people of Israel.

See:: Leviticus 26:11-12; Ezekiel 37:27; Zechariah 2:10-11; Revelation 21:3

Who is the one and only God?

[1:18]

Many Greek manuscripts call Jesus “the one and only God.” Not every Greek manuscript contains the same words in 1:18. Both are good ways to talk about Jesus. However, scholars think John wrote “the one and only God.” Fewer scholars think John wrote “one and only Son,” but a few English translations use these words.

John thinks that his readers will understand that “one and only” means God the Son. He helps them understand that by adding the words, “who is at the side of Father.”

1:19-23

Who were the Jews?

[1:19]

John called the Jewish religious leaders “the Jews.” For John however, “The Jews” did not mean that John spoke about all Jews. Instead, he called the religious leaders “the Jews” because they represented all of the Jews.

How is John the Baptist the prophet Elijah?

[1:21]

Jesus said that John the Baptist was the prophet Elijah who the Old Testament said was to come before the Messiah. The book of Malachi said that the prophet Elijah will return to earth immediately before the Messiah came (See: Malachi 4:5-6). Jesus told his disciples that this person was not actually be Elijah, but someone with his same prophetic power.

Malachi said that he will make the way for the Messiah to come. It is for this reason that Malachi said that Elijah will come again. The Jews waited for the Messiah to come to them. But, they also thought the prophet Elijah was to come back to them from the dead before the Messiah came.

See: Matthew 11:14

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

1:29-42

What are the different ways to baptize?

[1:31]

John said people are baptized in three ways: 1. First, John the Baptist “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) Jews. He baptized them to show that they repented for sinning. He did this to get the people ready for the Messiah. That is, ready to believe in him when he came. 1. Second, John baptized Jesus. Jesus needed to be baptized before he began to serve and preach to the people. When John baptized Jesus, the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus. This showed that God chose him to do his work. 1. Third, Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit. John said that Jesus will baptize those who believe in him with the Holy Spirit. Jesus does this to help Christians be obedient to God.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the Son of God?

[1:34]

John called Jesus the Son of God to show how God adopts all Christians into his family. That is, he makes them his sons and daughters. But, only Jesus is the “one and only or unique”(μονογενής/g3439) Son of God. Jesus is God. At the same time, he is the “one and only” or “unique”(μονογενής/g3439) Son of God (See: 1: 18).

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#); [Children of God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the Lamb of God?

[1:36]

See: [Lamb of God](#)

1:43-51

What did the Jews think about the town of Nazareth?

[1:46]

In ancient Israel, Nazareth was not a large town. It is not known why Nathaniel did not speak good about the town. Some scholars think Nathaniel did not like anyone who thought that the people of Nazareth did good things. Other scholars think that there was trouble between the people of Nazareth and the people of Cana. Nathaniel was from Cana. Also, it is possible that Nathaniel did not think that any great men came from a town so close to his own home. Later, people called Christians “people of Nazareth” to insult them. (See: Acts 24:5).

See Map: Nazareth

How did John show that the disciples began to believe in Jesus?

[1:49]

John said the disciples stopped what they did and followed Jesus. They did this even though they did not know very much about him. John showed later in his gospel that these men still misunderstood who Jesus really was. They began to believe in him, but not completely. It took time for them to truly know Jesus. But, they began to follow Jesus even though they did not fully understand what following him meant for them.

Why did John write that Jesus said, “Truly, truly I say to you”?

[1:51]

John said that Jesus said “‘Truly’(ἀμήν/g0281), truly I say to you” thirty-five times in this book. Jesus used the word “truly” in order to strongly express certainty, belief, or faith. When Jesus said these words, he gave courage to those who heard him. He gave them courage to believe what he was saying.

Why did Jesus call himself the Son of Man?

[1:51]

See: [Son of Man](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Three days later, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why do you come to me? My time has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Whatever he says to you, do it."

⁶ Now there were six stone water pots there used for the Jewish ceremonial washing, each containing two to three metretres. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." So they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ Then he told the servants, "Take some out now and take it to the head waiter." So they did.

⁹ The head waiter tasted the water that had become wine, but he did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew). Then he called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first and then the cheaper wine when they are drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." ¹¹ This first sign Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. ¹² After this Jesus, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples went down to Capernaum and they stayed there for a few days.

¹³ Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ He found sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons in the temple, and the money changers were sitting there. ¹⁵ So he made a whip of cords and drove all of them out from the temple, including both the sheep and the cattle. He scattered the coins of the money changers and turned their tables over. ¹⁶ To the pigeon sellers he said, "Take these things away from here. Stop making the house of my Father a marketplace." ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

¹⁸ Then the Jewish authorities responded and said to him, "What sign will you show us, since you are doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ Then the Jewish authorities said, "This temple was built in forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" ²¹ However, he was speaking about the temple of his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the scripture and this statement that Jesus had spoken.

²³ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover festival, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he did. ²⁴ But Jesus did not trust in them because he knew them all, ²⁵ because he did not need anyone to testify to him about man, for he knew what was in man.

John 2

2:1-12

Why was Mary worried about the wine running out?

[2:3]

In ancient Israel, if the food and wine ran out at a wedding, the man's family was shamed or was embarrassed. In Israel, the man getting married and his family needed to make sure that everyone got plenty of food and drinks. His family gave a feast. These wedding feasts often lasted for several days. Because the man's family was going to be shamed when the wine ran out, Mary felt bad for the man and his family.

See: [Wedding](#); [Wedding](#)

Why did Jesus say "My time has not yet come"?

[2:4]

John wrote the word "time" (ὥρα/g5610) when he wrote about someone doing something great. Here, Jesus said that he was not ready to show everyone that he was the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did John write about Jesus turning water into wine at Cana?

[2:9]

Some scholars think John wrote about Jesus turning water into wine at Cana because he wanted to talk about the church. The Bible called the church the bride of Christ. That is, Jesus loves the church in the same way a man loves his bride. Also, a wedding feast was a metaphor for the people rejoicing with God forever.

Also, John said that this was Jesus' first miracle.

See: John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20

See: [Miracle](#); [Church](#); [Bride of Christ](#); [Wedding](#); [Miracle](#)

See Map: Cana

What is a "sign" (σημείον/g4592)?

[2:11]

See: [Sign](#)

Who were Jesus' brothers?

[2:12]

See: [Family of Jesus](#)

2:13-25

What is the Jewish Passover?

[2:13]

See: [Passover](#)

Why did John say Jesus went "up" to Jerusalem?

[2:13]

John said Jesus went "up" to Jerusalem because the city was on Mount Moriah. Mount Moriah is about 800 meters above sea level.

See Map: Jerusalem; Mount Moriah

Why were merchants selling animals and changing money in the temple?

[2:14]

Most people traveling to Jerusalem were not able to bring animals with them to sacrifice at the temple. Instead, they bought animals for their sacrifice in Jerusalem or at the temple. Merchants made a profit by selling animals at the temple.

God commanded the Jewish priests to sacrifice an animal every morning and every evening at the temple. During some festivals, such as Passover, they sacrificed many more animals. Also, God commanded the Jewish people to sacrifice animals at the temple for many different reasons.

These merchants accepted only coins that the Jews made for their own country. When people brought other coins, they exchanged them for Jewish coins. The merchants made a profit when they changed money into Jewish coins. Therefore, they used the temple, a place to worship God, to make money.

See: [Worship](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Worship](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

Why did Jesus force the merchants to leave temple?

[2:15]

Jesus forced the merchants out of the temple because he was angry. He was angry because merchants were making money from people coming to worship God at the temple. Jesus told the people that the temple was for people to pray there. Also, it was for people to come there from all nations (see: Isaiah 56:7; Luke 19:46)

Advice to translators: In English, anger is used when talking about a strong emotion that dishonors God. Here, anger does not mean this. It is a strong emotion, but it does not dishonor God. Instead, it honors God because it is against something that God does not like.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Worship](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders ask Jesus for a sign?

[2:18]

The Jewish leaders said that Jesus needed to give them a sign because they wanted to know that God gave him permission to do and say what he did and said. They did not think that God gave this permission to Jesus..

See: [Sign](#)

Which temple was Jesus talking about?

[2:19]

When Jesus said to destroy the temple and he was going to rebuild it in three days, he spoke about his body. Instead of giving the Jewish leaders a sign, Jesus made them a promise. They thought he spoke to them about the temple building. But, John said Jesus spoke about his own body. Jesus knew he was going to be crucified and three days later he was going to be alive again.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Sign](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why was destroying the Jewish temple significant to the Jews?

[2:19, 2:20]

The Jews honored the temple in Jerusalem because the presence of God was in the temple. The presence of God was directly connected to the presence of the temple among his people. After a time of rebellion by the Jewish people, God punished the Jews and allowed the Babylonians to destroy the temple. The Persians later conquered the Babylonians. The Persians later allowed the temple to be rebuilt. The original temple was far bigger and more elaborate than the rebuilt temple. Herod the Great later enlarged the temple and made it more elaborate than the original temple. When Jesus spoke, the temple was very large.

After the Jews rejected Jesus, God punished the Jews by having the the Roman army destroy the temple. No one rebuilt the temple after this.

Advice to Translators: The “presence of God” in the temple means that God was in the temple in a special way. The Old Testament said that God lived in the temple. This is not the only place where God is. He is everywhere. Despite this, he was in the temple in a special way.

See: [King Herod](#); [People of God](#); [King Herod](#)

Why did Jesus say the temple was going to be destroyed and rebuilt in three days?

[2:21, 2:22]

When Jesus spoke about the temple being destroyed and rebuilt in three days, he spoke about his body. He did not speak about the actual temple building. The Jews thought Jesus spoke about the huge temple building in Jerusalem where they were they sold and offered sacrifices. When Jesus said the temple was to be raised in three days after it was destroyed, Jesus was saying that his body was to be brought back to life again. Three days after Jesus died on a Roman cross, he resurrected from the dead.

See: [Temple](#) ; [Temple](#)

Did Jesus know everything?

[2:24, 2:25]

Jesus knows everything. Jesus knows everything because he is God. He is not only part God. He is completely God. Jesus does not simply know about people, he knows them completely on the inside. That is, he knows their inner thoughts and knows why and how they do the things they do. He knows them better than they know themselves. He knew if the people around him truly believed in him or if his words and the things he did simply amazed them, and they followed him because they thought he was a great teacher and did miraculous things.

See: [Jesus is God](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader. ² This man came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher that came from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus replied to him, "Truly, truly, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" ⁵ Jesus replied, "Truly, truly, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹ Nicodemus replied and said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen. Yet you do not accept our testimony. ¹² If I told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that all who believe in him may have eternal life."

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world in order to condemn the world, but in order to save the world through him. ¹⁸ He who believes in him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is already condemned because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ This is the reason for the judgment: The light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that his deeds will not be exposed. ²¹ However, he who practices the truth comes to the light so that it may be plainly seen that his deeds have been done in God."

²² After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the land of Judea. There he spent some time with them and baptized. ²³ Now John was also baptizing in Aenon near to Salim because there was much water there. People were coming to him and were being baptized, ²⁴ for John had not yet been thrown in prison.

²⁵ Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and a Jew about ceremonial washing. ²⁶ They went to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan River, about whom you have testified, look, he is baptizing, and they are all going to him."

²⁷ John replied, "A man cannot receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but instead, 'I have been sent before him.' ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. Now the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom. This, then, is my joy made complete. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease."

³¹ "He who comes from above is above all. He who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks about the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. ³³ He who has received his testimony has confirmed that God is true. ³⁴ For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God. For he does not give the Spirit by measure. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God stays on him."

John 3

3: 1-15

Did Nicodemus think Jesus to be God's Son?

[3:2]

Scholars do not know if Nicodemus thought Jesus to be God's son. However, the miraculous things Jesus did amazed Nicodemus. These things showed him Jesus came from God. Jesus' words greatly affected Nicodemus. Nicodemus spoke well of Jesus to the other Jewish leaders at the Festival of Shelters (see: John 7:40-52). He also helped Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus' body after Jesus died (see: John 19:38-40). Some scholars think Nicodemus was a priest who became Christian (see: Acts 6:7). Other scholars do not think he really believed in Jesus.

If Nicodemus later believed in Jesus, it was not easy for him. That is, if he believed in Jesus, the Jews would have rejected him as a teacher. These scholars think that Nicodemus stopped thinking he entered heaven because of the good things he did. Nicodemus now understood that he needed to humble himself. He needed Jesus to forgive him for sinning. Perhaps this is why John wrote that Jesus' words amazed Nicodemus.

See: [Festival of Shelters](#); [Festival of Shelters](#)

How can someone be "born again"?

[3:3]

Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be "born again" (ἄνωθεν/g0509). That is, he needed to be born a second time from God. This is a metaphor for what happens to the life of a person when they believe in Jesus. God makes a Christian a new person in some way. This confused Nicodemus. He thought that Jesus was saying that his mother needed to give birth to him again. Nicodemus knew a woman was unable to do this. However, Jesus meant that people needed to be born a second time to be able to live with God forever. It is the Holy Spirit who does this. That is, without the Holy Spirit gives some a second birth, the person cannot live together with God forever in heaven. A sinner must be made into a new person to be with God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How is one born from water and the Spirit?

[3:5]

To be born "from the Spirit" means to be born from above. That is, born from God through the Holy Spirit (see: 3:5). When he does this, the Holy Spirit makes the sinner into a new person in some way.

There are different ways to understand what it means when someone is born from water.

1. Some scholars think being born from water means that someone is born again. Perhaps John thought that when this happens they are baptized with water. Or perhaps John thought that when this happens God makes them clean from sin. He washes away their sin (see: 1 John 1:7). God promised to clean Israel with clean water from their sins and idols (see: Ezekiel 3:25-27). He said that when this happened, he made people different in some way. He said he did this by putting his Spirit in them (see: Numbers 19:17; Psalm 51:9-10; Isaiah 32:15;44:3-5; Jeremiah 2:13;17:13; Joel 2:28-29).
2. Other scholars think John was thinking about a baby born from his mother (see: 3:6). There is water in the mother's womb around a baby before it is born. However, this was not a metaphor that was used very often.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sin](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus say Nicodemus did not understand the earthly things of which he spoke?

[3:10]

Jesus said Nicodemus did not understand “earthly(ἐπίγειος/g1919)” things because he did not understand Jesus’ metaphors of childbirth and the wind. If Nicodemus was unable to understand when Jesus used earthly metaphors, he was unable to understand if Jesus spoke to him about God. Jesus tried to help Nicodemus understand. He did this by comparing the new life Christians have with babies having life on earth because of their mothers. He also compared the Holy Spirit to the blowing wind. However, Nicodemus was still unable to understand.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Metaphor](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

3:16-21

Why did John talk about the “world” κόσμος/g2889)?

[3:16]

Here, when John spoke about the “world(κόσμος/g2889)”, he was talking about all of the people living in the world. John talked about all of these people because it is all people whom God calls to believe in his Son Jesus. However, often when John wrote “the world,” he sometimes was talking about something different. In 1 John 2:15, he wrote “world” as a metaphor for how Satan does evil and how people sin. This is because Satan was given permission over everyone who sins. This is why God commands Christians not to love the evil things in this world. This is also why John says that God loved them by giving his only Son to die for them. He loves all people very, very much.

See: [Sin](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Sin](#)

Did Jesus die for the sins of the whole world?

[3:16]

Some scholars think that Jesus died for all people. That is, those who believe in him and those who do not believe in him. Here John calls all people “the world.” God caused Jesus to die. In this way, he caused Jesus to suffer for everyone who sins (see: 1 John 2:2). But, this does not save the people who reject Jesus.

Other scholars think that Jesus died only for the sins of the people who believe in him. That is, Jesus died for people all over the world. People who believe in him can come from any tribe of people and can speak any language.

3:17-21

Does Jesus judge the world?

[3:17]

According to John 5:22, God gave gave permission to Jesus to judge everything and everyone. In John 3:17-18, John wrote that God did not send Jesus into the world to judge people. When God sent Jesus to earth, it was not to condemn or judge people. Jesus came as the promised Messiah. That is, he came to save people from their sins. However, Jesus is coming again to judge the world. He will judge those who are not Christians. People who believe in Jesus is the Son of God are not judged. Their sins are forgiven. They are one of God’s children.

See: [Children of God](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Children of God](#)

Who is the light?

[2:19]

Jesus is the light. Light is often a metaphor in Scripture.

See: John 8:12

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is darkness?

[2:19]

Sin, evil, and everything that is against Jesus is spoke about as if it were darkness. This is a common metaphor in Scripture. When people sin, they stay in the dark. They stay away from the light. That is they stay far from Jesus. They even hide from him. But those who live in a way that honors God are not afraid of God. They do not need to hide from him.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

3: 22-30**Why did John baptize people?**

[3:22]

John baptized people as a sign that they repented of their sins (see: Acts 19:4). Some Jews who wanted to honor God came to him to be baptized. They wanted to be clean from their sins. John did this to help make them ready for the coming of the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Sign](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did God send John the Baptist to do?

[3:27, 3:28]

God sent John to tell the people about the Messiah. John showed the people who was the Messiah. That is, he showed them Jesus (see: John 1:29).

John used a metaphor to say how he was a friend to Jesus. In the same way the man getting married is greater than his friends at his wedding, so Jesus was greater than John. His friends help him and rejoice for him. In the same way, John helped Jesus and rejoiced because Jesus came. Also, John knew that he must soon stop working when Jesus began his own work.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

3: 31-36**How does someone disobey the son?**

[3:36]

John talked about “disobeying”(ἀπειθέω/g0544) the son. John was talking about refusing to believe in Jesus. This is how they disobeyed the Jesus, the Son of God. They reject Jesus because they do not think he is who he says he is. Or they refuse to believe because they do not want to believe in him.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Who speaks in John 3?

There are parts of John 3 where it is not clear who is speaking. These places are 3:16 and 3:31. In many languages, writers use quotation marks to show who is speaking. However, John did not originally do this.

Some scholars think that Jesus continued speaking in 3:16-21. But, other scholars think that it is John who spoke in these verses.

Some scholars think John the Baptist continued speaking in 3:31-36. But other scholars think that it is the Apostle John who spoke in this passage.

See: [Apostle](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Now when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were), ³ he left Judea and went back again to Galilee. ⁴ But it was necessary for him to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria, called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ The well of Jacob was there. Jesus was tired from his journey and sat by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." ⁸ For his disciples had gone away into the town to buy food.

⁹ Then the Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, being a Jew, are asking me, being a Samaritan woman, for something to drink?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, "If you had known the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

¹¹ The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not have a bucket and the well is deep. Where then do you have the living water?" ¹² You are not greater, are you, than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock?"

¹³ Jesus replied and said to her, "Everyone who drinks from this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will not ever be thirsty again. Instead, the water that I will give him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up to eternal life."

¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I may not become thirsty and not have to come here to draw water."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back here."

¹⁷ The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband."

Jesus replied, "You have said correctly, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

¹⁹ The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that Jerusalem is the place where people have to worship."

²¹ Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, that an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ However, the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to be his worshipers. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming (the one called Christ). When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one speaking to you."

²⁷ At that moment his disciples returned. Now they were wondering why he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you speaking with her?"

²⁸ So the woman left her water pot, went back to the town, and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything that I have ever done. This could not be the Christ, could it?" ³⁰ They left the town and came to him.

³¹ In the meantime, the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." ³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³ So the disciples said to each other, "No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?"

³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are four more months and then the harvest comes'? I am saying to you, look up and see the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest! ³⁶ He who is harvesting receives wages and gathers fruit for everlasting life, so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this the saying, 'One sows, and another reaps,' is true. ³⁸ I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans in that city believed in him because of the report of the woman who was testifying, "He told me everything that I have done." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ Many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard, and we know that this one is indeed the Savior of the world."

⁴³ After those two days, he departed from there for Galilee. ⁴⁴ For Jesus himself declared that a prophet has no honor in his own country. ⁴⁵ When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all the things that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival, for they had also gone to the festival.

⁴⁶ Now he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. There was a certain royal official whose son in Capernaum was ill. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to Jesus and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was about to die. ⁴⁸ Jesus then said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe." ⁴⁹ The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Go. Your son lives." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went away. ⁵¹ While he was going down, his servants met him, saying that his son was living. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to improve. They replied to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." ⁵³ Then the father realized that it was at that hour that Jesus had said to him, "Your son lives." So he himself and his whole household believed. ⁵⁴ This was the second sign that Jesus did when he came out of Judea to Galilee.

John 4

4: 1-4

Who were the Samaritans?

[4:4]

The Samaritans were the people who lived in the region of Samaria. Long before this time, Israel was one nation and it was divided into two nations, the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. In the Old Testament, the northern kingdom, Israel, did not honor God. God punished them and they were conquered by Assyria. After this happened, the people of this Israel married gentiles. They were no longer true Israelites. The Jews who honored God hated the Samaritans. They knew that the Samaritans often married Gentile women, something that the Law of Moses did not allow them to do. They said they obeyed God, but they did not. They worshipped him in the wrong ways and they also worshipped idols and other gods. Therefore, God rejected the Samaritans and he did not consider them to be his people.

See: John 4:22

See: [People of God](#); [Israel \(Northern Kingdom\)](#) ; [Judah \(Southern Kingdom\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Worship](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [False gods](#); [People of God](#)

Map: Samaria

Why did many Jews not travel through Samaria?

[4:4]

The land of Samaria was between Judea and Galilee. When Jews wanted to travel from Jerusalem to Galilee, the shortest way was to go through Samaria.

However, the Jews hated the Samaritans. Many Jews who wanted to honor God often went around Samaria, even though this took much longer because of their hate for these people. Perhaps they thought the people would make them unclean. But, most Jews traveled through it because that way took less time.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

See Map: Samaria, Judea, Galilee

4:5-6

What was the city of Sychar in the Old Testament?

[4:5]

Some scholars think that the city of Sychar and Shechem in the Old Testament are the same city. Other scholars think these are two different cities. They think that Sychar is the town of Askar that exists today. Both of these places were near a well that Jacob dug and the place where the Joseph from the Old Testament was buried.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

See Map: Sychar, Shechem, Askar

4: 7-12

What did Jesus say he was able to give to the Samaritan woman?

[4:10]

Jesus says he was able to give the Samaritan woman “the gift of God.” He wanted to say that God was able to allow her to live with God forever in heaven (see: Romans 6:23). The Jews were amazed when Jesus told her this. They thought the Samaritans rejected God and did not want to honor God.

The Samaritan woman married six times. Many Jews thought she was very sinful. This is because it was uncommon for the Jews to get married more than once. However, Jesus offered to forgive her.

John also speaks about “living” (ζῶω/g2198) water as a metaphor. “Living water” can mean running water or fresh water. It can also mean water that makes plants and people live. Jesus wanted to say that people were able to live forever with God if they believe in him.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Samaria](#); [Sin](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

4:13-21

How did the Samaritans try to honor God differently from the Jews?

[4:20]

The Jews worshiped God in the temple in Jerusalem, but the Samaritans worshiped God in a temple in Samaria on Mount Gerizim. Because God commanded the Jews to worship him in Jerusalem, the Samaritans sinned in their worship.

Also, the Samaritans only thought in part of the Old Testament was from God and rejected the rest of the Old Testament. They also possessed their own priests. These priests were not part of the tribe of Levi. The Law of Moses said that the priests must be from the tribe of Levi.

However, both the Samaritans and the Jews waited for God to send the Messiah to them.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Worship](#); [Temple](#); [Sin](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Law of Moses](#)

See Map: Jerusalem, Samaria, and Mount Gerizim

What future time did Jesus speak about to the woman?

[4:21]

When Jesus spoke with the woman, he thought about what was going to happen in the future. The Romans were going to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem. The Christians were going to worship God anywhere. They did not need to go to Jerusalem to worship anymore.

See: [Worship](#); [Temple](#); [Worship](#)

4:22-26**What does it mean that “salvation” is from the Jews?**

[4:22]

Jesus said that “salvation”(σωτηρία/g4991) is from the Jews. Jesus taught the woman that God worked to save mankind, and that he did this through the Jews, not through the Samaritans. While Jesus did not agree with what the Samaritans thought about God, Jesus was kind to the woman. Jesus was the Messiah and he was a Jew and not a Samaritan.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Samaria](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What does it mean for people to worship God in “Spirit” and in “truth”?

[4:24]

People worship God in “Spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) when they worship him anywhere, not only in the temple or other building (see: acts 17:24-26). That is, because they now worship him by the Holy Spirit’s power.

God gave Christians a new way to worship him. This new way is in “truth”(ἀλήθεια/g0225). That is, because they now know who God truly is, they can worship him in the right way. This also means that they know that Jesus is God. When they worship Jesus, they know that they are worshiping God (see: John 14:6). People who worship God in this way praise and honor him because they know the truth about him.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Temple](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

4:27-42**Why were the disciples shocked that Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman?**

[4:27]

Some Jewish men never spoke with a woman unless she was his wife. They thought that it was wrong to speak to other woman. Also, many Jews did not speak with Samaritans. Jews thought Samaritans were unclean.

But, Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. He asked her for a drink of water. Usually, the Jews refused to drink or eat with Samaritans because they thought they were unclean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did the disciples not ask Jesus why he talked with the woman?

[4:27]

The disciples never thought Jesus was going to speak to a Samaritan woman. They thought, in the same way most Jews did, that the Samaritans were unclean, and they were people whom God did not accept. They thought that Jesus, their teacher, did wrong by talking with the woman. They were too ashamed to ask him why he was talking with her.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What happened to the people of Sychar?

[4:29, 4:30]

Many of the people of Sychar began to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They did this even though Jesus had told the woman that her people did not know God, whom they said they worshiped.

No one thought the Samaritans were going to believe in Jesus. But many did believe in Jesus. Also, the disciples thought that the Jews were going to accept their Messiah, but most of the Jews rejected him.

See: [Disciple](#); [Worship](#); [Samaria](#); [Disciple](#)

See Map: Sychar

Can Samaritans live with God forever?

[4:29]

The Jews did not think the people of Sychar were going to call Jesus the “Savior of the world.” This means that they were still learning about Jesus, yet they believed in him. Later, Jesus commanded his disciples to be witnesses for him in Samaria (see: Acts 1:8).

The Samaritans did not worship God in the right way, and they only thought the first five books of the Old Testament were from God. They did not believe that God did anything for Israel after Moses died.

The title “the Savior of the world” is in the New Testament only here and in 1 John 4:14.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Samaria](#); [Worship](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

See Map: Sychar, Samaria

What does the metaphor about doing the harvest mean in the New Testament?

[4:35]

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

4:43-45**Why did John have the proverb about a prophet in his hometown?**

[4:44]

John said that Jesus left Sychar after only two days, because the people reject a prophet in the prophet’s hometown never. But, the people of Sychar believed in Jesus. Sychar was not Jesus’ hometown. Therefore, scholars do not agree about what John meant.

Some scholars think John meant that Galilee was Jesus’ home region. The people of Galilee did not believe Jesus when he arrived there (see: 4:45). Later, they rejected him (see: Mark 6:1-6).

Other scholars think that John meant that all Israel was Jesus’ home region, and that most of the Jews were going to reject him.

Still other scholars think that John was talking about Sychar. Many of the people of that town believed in Jesus, yet he left after only two days. John gives the proverb to explain why he left (see: 4:44). Jesus went to teach the Jews and the Samaritans. He never stayed for very long in one place. Perhaps John wanted to say that if Jesus stayed anywhere, this place became his hometown. If the people did not welcome him, Jesus kept on traveling.

See: [Samaria](#); [Prophet](#); [Samaria](#)

See Map: Sychar, Galilee

4:46-54

Why did the official's whole family believe in Jesus?

[4:53]

The official's whole family believed in Jesus. In many places, all of the people in a family or household usually think in the way in which the leader of that family thinks. The family of the official probably trusted him to think in the right ways. When he began to believe in Jesus, all his family also believed in Jesus..

In other places, people in families are more free to think in the way each person wishes to think. These people may not understand why the official's family believed in Jesus at the same time.

Why did John count the number of "signs" that Jesus did in Galilee?

[4:54]

John called the miracle he did a "sign"(σημεῖον/g4592)." He also did this with the first miraculous thing he did, which was changing water into wine. He means that both of these things showed the people that God truly sent Jesus to them to be the Messiah he promised to send.

See: [Wine \(Winepress\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Wine \(Winepress\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ After this there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now in Jerusalem by the sheep gate there is a pool, which in the Aramaic language is called Bethesda, and it has five roofed porches. ³ A large number of people who were sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed were lying there. [¹][⁴][²]⁵ A certain man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there, and after he realized that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healthy?" ⁷ The sick man replied, "Sir, I do not have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. When I come, another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." ⁹ Immediately the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was a Sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to him who was healed, "It is the Sabbath and you are not permitted to carry your mat." ¹¹ He replied, "He who made me healthy said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man that said to you, 'Pick it up and walk?'" ¹³ However, the one who was healed did not know who it was because Jesus had gone away secretly, for there was a crowd in the place.

¹⁴ Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have become healthy! Do not sin anymore, so that something worse will not happen to you." ¹⁵ The man went away and reported to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him healthy.

¹⁶ Now because of these things the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath.

¹⁷ Jesus replied to them, "My Father is working even now, and I, too, am working." ¹⁸ Because of this, the Jews sought even more to kill him because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, the Son can do nothing of himself, except only what he sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father is doing, the Son does in the same way. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and he shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to anyone he wishes. ²² For the Father judges no one, but he has given all judgment to the Son ²³ so that everyone will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned, but he has passed from death to life.

²⁵ "Truly, truly, I tell you the time is coming, and is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has also given to the Son so that he has life in himself, ²⁷ and the Father has given the Son authority to carry out judgment because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not be amazed at this, for there is a time coming in which everyone who is in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and will come out: those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

³⁰ "I can do nothing from myself. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is righteous because I am not seeking my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³¹ If I should testify about myself, my testimony would not be true. ³² There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony that he gives about me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified the truth. ³⁴ But the testimony that I receive is not from man. I say these things that you might be saved. ³⁵ John was a lamp that was burning and shining, and you were willing to rejoice in his light for a while. ³⁶ Yet the testimony that I have is greater than that of John, for the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, testify about me that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ The Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You have neither heard his voice nor seen his form at any time. ³⁸ You do not have his word remaining in you, for you are not believing in the one whom he has sent. ³⁹ You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and these same scriptures testify about me, ⁴⁰ and you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men, ⁴² but I know that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another should come in his own name, you would receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, you who accept glory from one another but are not seeking the glory that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do

not think that I myself will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have hoped. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ If you do not believe his writings, how are you going to believe my words?"

Footnotes

5:3 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have the phrase,

5:4 ^[2]The best ancient copies do not have verse 4,

John 5

5:1-9

Which feast did John talk about?

[5:1]

John did not say which feast was happening at this time. However, there were several Jewish feast in Jerusalem every year..

See: [Festival of Shelters](#); [Festival of Shelters](#)

What was the pool of Bethsaida?

[5:2]

The people thought the pool in Bethsaida healed people when the waters “stirred”(ταράσσω/g5015). Because of this, sick people and those with physical problems laid down by the pool and waited for the water to move. When the water moved, they tried to be the first person to get into the pool to be healed.

Some scholars think it is possible that an underground spring flowed into the pool of Bethsaida and sometimes caused the water in the pool to move. Other scholars think that the pool’s water contained minerals that healed the body.

See Map: Bethsaida

What did John originally write in 5:4?

[5:4]

The oldest and best copies of the Greek New Testament do not include verse 4. However, some translation may include verse 4. Although John probably did not write this verse, it describes what people thought about how the pool of Bethsaida healed people. Some people believed that an angel stirred the waters and then healed the first person who got into the pool. Perhaps, this verse was added by someone in order to explain this to people reading this chapter.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Why was the man sick and why did he need help into the pool?

[5:7]

The sick man was probably paralyzed. He told Jesus that he needed another person to help him get into the pool because the man could not stand or walk. Jesus’ question about whether he wanted to be healed surprised the man. He laid by the pool for such a long time and no one ever helped him into the pool. He probably did not think that he was ever going to be healed. John does not say if the man believed in Jesus before Jesus healed him. Also, John does not say if the man ever believed in Jesus at any time.

Advice to Translators: Someone who is paralyzed cannot move their legs or cannot move their arms and legs.

5:10-15**Who were the Jews who questioned the man Jesus healed?**

[5:10]

Some Jews asked the man Jesus healed certain questions. The Jews were Jewish leaders known as scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

See: [Sadducees](#); [Pharisees](#); [Sadducees](#)

Why did the Jewish leaders not want Jesus to heal this man on the Sabbath day?

[5:10]

The Jewish leaders became angry when Jesus healed the man on a Sabbath day because their Law of Moses did not allow a person to do any work on the Sabbath day (see: Exodus 20:10; Jeremiah 17:21-22). These leaders thought that when someone healed another person, they were working. Also, the Jewish leaders thought that carrying a bed was work. When the man picked up his bed and walked, they thought that he broke the Law of Moses and disobeyed God. However, they thought the wrong thing about the Law of Moses. Neither Jesus nor the man disobeyed the Law of Moses. The Jewish leaders cared more about obeying the things they believed about the Law of Moses than about doing good things on the Sabbath. They thought that Jesus did something evil by healing this man. Because of this, the Jewish leaders thought Jesus was a false teacher and began to persecute him (see: 5:16,18).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell the healed man to stop sinning?

[5:14]

Scholars give three reasons why Jesus told the healed man to stop sinning:

Jesus knew the healed man needed to believe in him. It is a sin to not believe in Jesus. John never says this healed man believed in Jesus, even though Jesus healed him. The man told the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him on the Sabbath. Those who did not believe in Jesus often told the Pharisees what Jesus did. (see: John 11:44-46) Some scholars think that this man was paralyzed because he sinned. However, John does not say what was that sin. Sometimes sin may cause someone to be sick or have physical problems. Perhaps Jesus chose this man from the people waiting at the pool because of a specific sin in his life.

Advice to Translators: Someone who is paralyzed cannot move their legs or cannot move their arms and legs.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Sabbath](#); [Pharisees](#)

5:16-24**Why were the Jewish leaders angry with Jesus when he said that God is his father?**

[5:17, 5:18]

The Jewish leaders became very angry with Jesus when he said that God is his father and that both he and his father continued working. The Jewish leaders opposed Jesus for working on the Sabbath day. Jesus said that his father is still working. That is, God rested on the seventh day from working to create the world, but he never stopped working to care for the world. When Jesus says that he is working with his father, the Jewish leaders knew he said that he was doing what only God did. So Jesus said he was God. According to the Law of Moses, if someone said they were God, they were to be punished. They needed to die. That is, they would be punished if they were not God.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Law of Moses](#)

In what way is the Father “working even now”?

[5:17]

The Jewish teachers knew that God the Father not only created the world, he also sustains the world (see: Jeremiah 10:12-13). In the Book of Colossians, Paul spoke also about Jesus sustaining the world (see: Colossians 1:16-17). The writer of the Book of Hebrews spoke about Jesus sustaining all things by his word (see: Hebrews 1:3).

See: [God the Father](#)

How is God the Father Jesus’ father?

[5:19, 5:20]

See: [Trinity](#); [Son of God](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus need to be able to do the things only God can do (raise and give life to the dead, pass judgment, receive the same honor)?

[5:21, 5:22, 5:23]

Jesus needed to be able to do the things only God can do because Jesus is God. Everything God the Father can do, Jesus, God the son can do also. God the Father raises the dead. Soon, the Father will raise the Son from the dead (see: John 20). Then the Son will also give life to whomever he wants to give life (see: 1 Corinthians 5). God the Father gave Jesus permission to judge everything. Jesus, God the Son, also receives the same honor that God the Father receives. If someone rejects Jesus, they also reject God the Father. Everyone who believes in Jesus will live together with God in heaven forever.

See; [Heaven](#) ; [Jesus is God](#); [Trinity](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#)

In what ways did Jesus show that he was equal to the Father?

[5:23]

Jesus said God the Father “raises the dead” and Jesus also raised the dead (see: Luke 7:11-15; John 11:43-44). Although God the Father is the only one who can perfectly judge people, he gives Jesus permission to judge people because Jesus can also perfectly judge people (see: 5:22; Psalm 50:6). Jesus said that whatever he sees the Father doing, this is what he does also. This shows that Jesus and God the Father both want the same things to happen.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#) ; [God the Father](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

5:25-30**What does it mean that the Father and the Son have life in themselves?**

[5:26]

John said that God The Father and God the Son have life in themselves. That is, they live because they have always live and because they want to live. They do not need anyone or anything to live. The Father and the Son have always and will always live. Those who believe in Jesus are also given eternal life (see: 5:24; 1 John 1:1-3). That is, they will live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Son of God](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#)

What judgment did the Father give the Son to carry out?

[5:27]

Scholars think God gave Jesus permission to judge people in future when Jesus returns to earth to begin his kingdom (see: Daniel 7:13-14). However, these scholars also think that Jesus began judging the world

when he came to the earth before. Jesus judged men because they rejected Jesus. When John spoke about this he chose to speak using the metaphor of light and dark.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is the “resurrection of life”?

[5:29]

Jesus resurrects all people. Those who loved the light, that is they believed in Jesus, will live together with God in heaven forever. Also, they will be given new bodies (see: 1 Corinthians 15:42-45).

See: [Heaven](#) ; [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Heaven](#)

What is the “resurrection of judgment”?

[5:29]

Again, Jesus resurrects all people. But, those who loved the darkness, that is they rejected Jesus, will be punished forever (see: Revelation 14:9-11).

See: [Hell](#) ; [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Hell](#)

Why does Jesus judge people perfectly?

[5:30]

Jesus judges people perfectly because he listens to God. He judges in the same way God the Father judges.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

5:31-38

Who is Jesus talking about when he says, “there is another who bears witness of me”?

[5:32] Jesus spoke about God the Father when he said, “there is another who bears witness of me.” Another time, Jesus said that he did not speak his own words. However, he only spoke what God the Father told him to speak (see: 12:49-50).

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

How did John the Baptist witness about Jesus?

[5:33]

John boldly spoke to the crowds that Jesus was the light that came into the world (see: 1:6-7). John said the Jewish leaders that there was one coming who was greater than himself (see: 1:19-28). Also, John told people that Jesus was the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (see: 1:29-34).

See: [Sin](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Sin](#)

What is the testimony greater than John’s testimony?

[5:36]

Jesus said that the things he did were a greater witness than what John said about him. That is, they proved that he was God and the Messiah more than the things John said. This is because God the Father gave him these things to do (see: 5:19-21). Perhaps Jesus did the same things that God the Father did and this caused people to know that God sent Jesus.

See: [God the Father](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [God the Father](#)

5:39-47

Why did the Jewish leaders not know Jesus was the one who gave them peace with God?

[5:39, 5:40]

The Jewish leaders studied the Old Testament because they believed that they had found about how to have peace with God. However, they did not believe the right things. They did not understand that the Old Testament talked about Jesus, the Messiah. Only by believing in Jesus can someone be at peace with God.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus say he did not “receive praise from men”?

[5:41]

Jesus did many things and taught the disciples how to live as Christians in order to glorify God the Father. Jesus did none of these things so that people would honor him. There were people who honored Jesus for the things he did, but Jesus honored God.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

How did the Jewish leaders show they did not truly love God?

[5:42]

The Jewish leaders showed they did not truly love God because they rejected Jesus. Although God sent Jesus, they did not believe in him. John said Jesus is the light that came into the world. However, the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus as the light and chose to love darkness. That is, they chose to love the things they believed instead of the things God taught. Jesus told the Jews they were going to listen to false teachers, and they were going to welcome those false teachers. Perhaps Jesus spoke these words to warn the Jewish leaders (see: Matthew 24:4-5).

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Teacher](#)

In what way did Moses write about Jesus?

[5:46]

Moses wrote in the Law about a prophet who was going to come in the future. This prophet was going to be greater than even Moses. The Jews put all their trust in Moses and the Law of Moses. Even though Moses wrote about a prophet to come, the Jews did not see Jesus as this promised prophet (see: Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

Jesus said the Jews did not believe the writings of Moses because they did not understand what Moses wrote (see: Luke 16:31).

See: Matthew 5:17-18

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Chapter 6

¹ After these things, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A great crowd was following him because they saw the signs that he was doing on those who were sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and there he sat down with his disciples. ⁴ (Now the Passover, the Jewish festival, was near.) ⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where are we going to buy bread so that these may eat?" ⁶ (But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do.) ⁷ Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be sufficient for each one to have even a little." ⁸ One of the disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Jesus, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two fish, but what are these among so many?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves and after giving thanks, he gave it to those who were sitting. He did the same with the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When the people were filled, he said to his disciples, "Gather up the broken pieces which remain, so that nothing will be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Then, when the people saw this sign that he did, they said, "This truly is the prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵ When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain by himself.

¹⁶ When it became evening, his disciples went down to the sea. ¹⁷ They got into a boat, and were going over the sea to Capernaum. It was dark by this time, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ A strong wind was blowing, and the sea was getting rough. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty stadia, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were afraid. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I! Do not be afraid." ²¹ Then they were willing to receive him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land where they were going.

²² The next day, the crowd that had been standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there except the one, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples but that his disciples had gone away alone. ²³ However, there were some boats that came from Tiberias close to the place where they had eaten the bread loaves after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ When the crowd discovered that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus. ²⁵ After they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶ Jesus replied to them, saying, "Truly, truly, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate some of the bread loaves and were filled. ²⁷ Do not labor for the food that perishes, but labor for the food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give you, for God the Father has set his seal on him." ²⁸ Then they said to him, "What must we do, so that we may do the works of God?" ²⁹ Jesus replied and said to them, "This is the work of God: That you believe in the one whom he has sent." ³⁰ So they said to him, "What sign then will you do, so that we may see and believe you? What will you do?" ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Then Jesus replied to them, "Truly, truly, it was not Moses who gave you the bread out of heaven, but it is my Father who is giving you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." ³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But I told you that indeed you have seen me, and you do not believe. ³⁷ Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and he who comes to me I will certainly not throw out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ This is the will of him who sent me, that I would lose not one of all those whom he has given me, but will raise them up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him would have eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day."

⁴¹ Then the Jews grumbled about him because he had said, "I am the bread that has come down from heaven." ⁴² They said, "Is not this Jesus son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" ⁴³ Jesus replied and said to them, "Stop grumbling among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, 'Everyone will be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard

and learned from the Father comes to me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father, except he who is from God—he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person may eat some of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats some of this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

⁵² The Jews became angry among themselves and began to argue, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he will also live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that has come down from heaven, not as the fathers ate and died. He who eats this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹ But Jesus said these things in the synagogue while he was teaching in Capernaum.

⁶⁰ Then many of his disciples who heard this said, "This is a difficult saying; who can hear it?" ⁶¹ Jesus, because he knew in himself that his disciples were grumbling at this, said to them, "Does this offend you?" ⁶² Then what if you should see the Son of Man going up to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who makes alive; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones that would not believe and who it was who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He said, "It is because of this that I said to you that no one can come to me unless it is granted to him by the Father."

⁶⁶ Because of this, many of his disciples went away and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have words of eternal life, ⁶⁹ and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God." ⁷⁰ Jesus said to them, "Did not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" ⁷¹ Now he spoke of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for it was he, one of the twelve, who would betray Jesus.

Footnotes

6:69 ^[1]The phrase

John 6

6:1-15

What is the Passover?

[6:4]

Passover is a feast that Jews celebrated. They held this feast in Jerusalem. John said that the feast of the Passover "neared" (ἐγγύς/g1451). He did not say when this would happen (see: 2:13).

See: [Passover](#)

Why did Jesus "test" Philip?

[6:5]

Some scholars think Jesus "tested" (πειράζω/g3985) Philip to teach him something. Jesus taught this way often. Other scholars think Jesus showed Philip that he was truly the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How did Philip and Andrew respond to Jesus' question about buying bread?

[6:7]

Philip said 200 denarii was not enough money to buy bread for all the people. This was a very large crowd because this was a large amount of money. Usually, it would take someone about 200 days to make 200 denarii. Andrew said he found a boy with five loaves of bread and two fish. However, this was not enough to feed this large crowd.

See: [Denarius](#)

How many people were in this crowd?

[6:10]

John said 5000 men sat in the crowd of people. Perhaps, this was only the number of men. There were also women and children in the crowd (see: Matthew 14:21). Therefore, there were more than 5000 people in the crowd.

What did Jesus do with the bread and the fish?

[6:11]

John said that Jesus "gave thanks" (εὐχαριστέω/g2168). Some scholars think that Jesus "gave thanks" for the food. They think his giving thanks caused the miracle to happen. Other scholars think Jesus "gave thanks" to God, because God gave them the food. Jesus gave the food to the disciples for them to give to the people (see: Matthew 14:19).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

How did the crowds respond to Jesus' miracle?

[6:14]

Because people saw the "sign" (σημεῖον/g4592) Jesus did for them, they said he was a prophet. The people thought a prophet was coming into the world (see: Deuteronomy 18:15-19). Jesus knew the crowds wanted to make him their king. Some scholars think Jesus knew this even though no one said this because he was God and knew what people thought. John said that Jesus went away from the crowds and went up the mountain (see: Matthew 14:22-23).

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Sign](#); [Prophet](#); [Jesus is God](#)

6:16-25**Why did the disciples leave on a boat to Capernaum without Jesus?**

[6:17]

The book of Matthew said that Jesus told his disciples to get into the boat and go to Capernaum without him (see: Matthew 14:22). The disciples did what Jesus told them to do.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Capernaum

When did the disciples see Jesus again?

[6:19]

After the disciples went about five kilometers in the boat, Jesus came to the boat. Jesus walked on the water. Jesus told them not to be afraid because "it is I" because he frightened the disciples. Some scholars think Jesus simply told the disciples that it was just him who was walking on the water. Other scholars think Jesus declared that he is God. This is because "it is I" can also be translated as "I am." This is the same thing God said when he told Moses his name (see: Exodus 3:14).

See: [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#)

How did they get to Capernaum?

[6:21]

When Jesus stepped into the disciple's boat, John said they made it to where they were going immediately. Some scholars think this was another miracle. Other scholars think John meant that nothing stopped them from getting to the other side of the lake.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

See Map: Capernaum

What did the crowd call Jesus?

[6:25]

The crowd called Jesus "rabbi" (ῥαββί/g4461). People called a teacher who was qualified to speak about the Law of Moses and how to live by the Law of Moses a "Rabbi."

See: [Law of Moses](#)

6:26-40

What is the food that endures to living forever?

[6:27]

John said that certain food endures to living forever. Scholars disagree about what John was thinking about when he said this.

1. Some scholars think John was thinking about Jesus. That is, Jesus allows people to live together with God in heaven forever. John also said Jesus was the bread who gave people life (see: 6: 50-51).
2. Some scholars think John was speaking about doing the things God wanted them to do.
3. Some scholars think John was speaking about living together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#)

How does Jesus have the seal of God on him?

[6:27]

Some scholars think that the "seal of God" and the image of God are the same (see: Colossians 1:15). More scholars think that the "seal of God" is a metaphor for God saying that Jesus is the only one who has the power to give food that endures to living forever.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Image](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Jesus describe the "work of God?"

[6:29]

Jesus said that the "work of God" is the same as to "believing" (πιστεύω/g4100) in the person God sent to the world. That is, it is the same as believing in Jesus. This means that people need to trust Jesus as the one who gives people the ability to live together with God in heaven forever (see: 6:27; Acts 4:10-12).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What kind of sign did the people think was coming?

[6:30]

Because the people spoke about the miracle of “manna”(μάννα/g3131) in the wilderness, scholars think they looked for a “sign”(σημεῖον/g4592) far greater than the one given during the time of Moses.

See: [Manna](#); [Miracle](#); [Manna](#)

What did Jesus tell the people about the “true bread” from heaven?

[6:32]

Jesus said the Father gives the “true(ἀληθινός/g0228) bread” that comes from heaven. This bread gives life, but it is a certain type of life. It is living together with God in heaven forever. Also, Jesus told the people that God the Father gave the bread from heaven during the days of Moses. That bread was food that fed the people physically in the wilderness. Jesus used the phrase “true bread” to speak about himself. That is, he makes it so that people can live together with God in heaven forever. Jesus clearly said, “I Am the bread of life.” Jesus told the people that to have the bread of life, they needed to come to him and believe in him.

See: [Wilderness](#); [God the Father](#); [Wilderness](#)

What is the “will of the Father?”

[6:40]

See: [Will of God](#)

6:41-65

How does God the Father “draw”(ἐλκύνω/g1670) people to Jesus?

[6:44]

Some scholars think that all people are born rejecting God and not wanting to believe in Jesus. They think that someone cannot believe in Jesus without God first doing something. That is, they cannot believe in Jesus unless God uses the Holy Spirit to convince them or make them believe in Jesus. Other scholars think God “draws”(ἐλκύνω/g1670) people by showing himself in the world he has made. They think the world shows God’s power and also his great love and concern for mankind. These scholars think God also showed people his love by dying for their sins. This draws people to believe in Jesus.

See: [Sin](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Sin](#)

How is Jesus the “bread of life?”

[6:51]

Jesus said he was the “bread of life.” He wanted to say that he would die so that people would live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars think Jesus is saying that he not only makes it so that people can live together with God in heaven, he also makes things last forever. This is the opposite of the manna given in the wilderness. That is, this bread only gave life for a short time.

See: [Wilderness](#); [Manna](#); [Wilderness](#)

How does a person eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man?

[6:53]

Jesus used the metaphor of eating his flesh and drinking his blood to show what a person must do to live together with God in heaven forever. When someone believes in Jesus, they do so “inside” of them, they make Jesus part of them in some way. When a person eats bread or drinks water, the food and drink becomes part of that person. It gives him energy for living. Jesus gave his actual flesh when he died on the cross. His blood was actually spilled out on the cross. When a person believes in Jesus, he is believing in the flesh and blood of Jesus being given as a sacrifice on the cross.

See: [Blood](#); [Heaven](#); [Cross](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Blood](#)

How did Jesus' followers react when Jesus described himself as the "bread of life"?

[6:60]

Many disciples thought that the words of Jesus were difficult to understand. Perhaps they did not really understand what he was saying to them.

See: [Disciple](#)

How did Jesus explain the meaning of his words to the disciples?

[6:63]

Both the Jewish leaders and the disciples of Jesus did not understand the words Jesus spoke. Jesus explained that the things he said came from the Spirit of God, therefore they could only be understood by the Spirit. The Jewish leaders and the disciples were trying to understand the words of Jesus through their own wisdom.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What did the twelve disciples say about Jesus?

[6:68]

Peter spoke for the twelve disciples and said to Jesus, "you have the words of eternal life"(see: 6:67). They also knew that Jesus was the "Holy One"(ἅγιος/g0040) of God. This means they believed that Jesus was the Messiah that God promised from long ago.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 7

¹ After these things Jesus traveled about in Galilee, for he did not want to go into Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill him. ² Now the Jewish Festival of Shelters was near. ³ His brothers therefore said to him, "Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples also may see the works that you do. ⁴ No one does anything in secret if he himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." ⁵ For even his brothers did not believe in him. ⁶ Jesus therefore said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. ⁸ You go up to the festival; I am not going to this festival because my time has not yet been fulfilled." ⁹ After he said these things to them, he stayed in Galilee.

¹⁰ But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not publicly but in secret. ¹¹ The Jews were looking for him at the festival and said, "Where is he?" ¹² There was much discussion among the crowds about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others said, "No, he leads the crowds astray." ¹³ Yet no one spoke openly about him for fear of the Jews.

¹⁴ When the festival was already half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. ¹⁵ Then the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this man know so much? He has never been educated." ¹⁶ Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not mine, but is of him who sent me. ¹⁷ If anyone wishes to do his will, he will know about this teaching, whether it comes from God, or whether I speak from myself. ¹⁸ Whoever speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but whoever seeks the glory of him who sent him, that person is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him. ¹⁹ Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" ²⁰ The crowd answered, "You have a demon. Who seeks to kill you?" ²¹ Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel because of it. ²² Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the ancestors), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. ²³ If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses is not broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath? ²⁴ Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteously."

²⁵ Some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is not this the one they seek to kill? ²⁶ See, he speaks openly, and they say nothing to him. It cannot be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ, can it? ²⁷ Yet we know where this one is from. But when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from." ²⁸ Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know me and know where I come from. I have not come of myself, but he who sent me is true, and you do not know him. ²⁹ I know him because I come from him and he sent me." ³⁰ They were trying to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not yet come. ³¹ But many in the crowd believed in him, and they said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more signs than what this one has done?" ³² The Pharisees heard the crowds whispering these things about Jesus, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. ³³ Jesus then said, "I am still with you for a short amount of time, and then I go to him who sent me. ³⁴ You will seek me but you will not find me; where I go, you will not be able to come." ³⁵ The Jews therefore said among themselves, "Where will this man go that we will not be able to find him? Will he go to the dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What is this word that he said, 'You will seek me but will not find me; where I go, you will not be able to come'?"

³⁷ Now on the last, great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in me, just as the scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his belly." ³⁹ But he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him would receive; the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified. ⁴⁰ Some of the crowd, when they heard these words, said, "This is indeed the prophet." ⁴¹ Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Does the Christ come from Galilee? ⁴² Have the scriptures not said that the Christ will come from the descendants of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" ⁴³ So there arose a division in the crowds because of him. ⁴⁴ Some of them would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him.

⁴⁵ Then the officers came back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" ⁴⁶ The officers answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this." ⁴⁷ So the Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers believed in him, or any of the Pharisees?"

49 But this crowd that does not know the law, they are cursed." **50** Nicodemus (one of the Pharisees, who came to him earlier) said to them, **51** "Does our law judge a man before hearing from him and knowing what he does?" **52** They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and see that no prophet comes from Galilee."

53^[1] [Then everyone went to his own house.

Footnotes

7:53 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have John 7:53-8:11.

John 7

7:1-5

Which “Jews” wanted to kill Jesus?

[7:1]

John spoke about certain Jews who wanted to kill Jesus. When John said this, he was speaking about some of the Jewish leaders who wanted to kill Jesus at previous times (see: 5:18).

What is the Feast of Shelters?

[7:2]

The Festival of “Shelters”(σκηνοπηγία/g4634) was one of three great feasts for the people of Israel. Jews celebrated every year because of God’s command (see: Leviticus 23:33-43). The people built shelters from palm branches. This is what gave the festival its name. They lived in these shelters during the feast. This festival celebrated God’s faithfulness during Israel’s wandering in the wilderness (see: Exodus 12-40). During this time, Israel lived in temporary shelters. The festival celebrated the fall harvest and had seven days of sacrifices. On the eighth day, they rested and gave more offerings and all the people came together.

See: [Festival of Shelters](#)

7:6-9

What did Jesus mean by saying, “my time has not yet come”?

[7:6]

Some scholars think Jesus’ used the word “time”(καιρός/2540) to speak about the moment which Jesus revealed himself to be the messiah. Some scholars think Jesus was thinking that it was not yet time for him to die. Other scholars think Jesus was simply waiting for the best time to go to the festival. The best time was after the crowds gathered for the feast.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why does the “world” hate Jesus?

[7"7]

When Jesus spoke about the “world”(κόσμος/2889), he spoke about all the things that opposed God in every way. That is, the world is opposed to God because God gave the Devil permission to rule the world. And the Devil hates that Jesus speaks the truth about God. The Jewish religious leaders also hated Jesus because he spoke the truth about God.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “I am not going up to the feast”?

[7:8]

Some ancient copies of the Bible said “I am not going up to this feast.” This means that Jesus was not going to the feast at any time. Other ancient copies of the Bible said “I am not yet going up to the feast.” This means that Jesus was going to the feast, but he was not going to the feast yet. They both mean that it was not the right time for Jesus to go up to the feast.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

7:10-13**Why did the people fear the Jewish leaders?**

[7:13]

Though many of the people at the feast knew Jesus to be a good man and that he did many miracles, they feared speaking about Jesus because the Jewish leaders punished those who spoke well of Jesus. Perhaps the Jewish leaders believed Jesus did not speak the truth about God.

See: [Miracle](#)

7:14-15**Why did the Jewish leaders say Jesus never studied the scriptures?**

[7:15]

Jesus taught the scriptures in a way the Jewish leaders did not know. People living in that time period only studied the scriptures when they were taught by a rabbi. When someone taught, the Jewish leaders knew which rabbi was their teacher. The Jewish leaders did not know who taught Jesus. Therefore, they said that Jesus never studied the scriptures.

See: [Rabbi](#)

7:16-18**How is a person willing to do what God wants?**

[7:17]

When a person is “willing”(θέλω/g2309) to do what God wants, it means he makes a choice to learn what God wants him to do and wants to do the things God wants him to do. He can do this by going through and learning the scriptures to see what they say about God and the things God wants.

What are the benefits for the person who is willing to do what God wants?

[7:17. 7:18]

A person who is willing to do what God wants, will be able to know if someone is teaching the truth about God. That is, because a person learns about what God wants by reading and studying the scriptures, he will know what is the truth about God.

7:19-24**How did circumcision come from the fathers?**

[7:22]

The Law of Moses told the Jews to circumcise their male children. God commanded Abraham to use circumcision. This was before the birth of Moses (see: Genesis 17:9-14). The Jews circumcised each male child eight days after birth. If the eighth day was a Sabbath, they circumcised the baby on the Sabbath.

See: [Sabbath](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Sabbath](#)

How did the Jewish leaders not observe the sabbath correctly?

[7:23]

The sabbath laws did not forbid people from doing good on the sabbath day. However, the Jewish leaders avoided doing any kind of work. This made it seem that they obeyed the sabbath laws in the Law of Moses. Jesus challenged the thinking of the Jewish leaders with doing good things on the sabbath (see: Matthew 12:11-12; Luke 13:14-17). Once again, Jesus told the Jewish leaders to judge by what is “right”(δίκαιος/g1342) and good.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

7:25-32

Why did some people in Jerusalem not believe Jesus was the Messiah?

[7:26, 7:27]

Some people thought that Jesus cannot be the Messiah. They knew Jesus grew up in Nazareth. They thought the Messiah came through a miracle and when no one thought he would come. Malachi said that the Lord will suddenly come to His temple (see: Malachi 3:1). Therefore, some people thought no one would know from where the Messiah comes.

See: [Temple](#); [Miracle](#), [Temple](#)

Why did some people in Jerusalem believe Jesus was the Messiah?

[7:31]

These Jews believed Jesus was the messiah because they knew when the true messiah came to Israel, he was not going to do more miraculous signs than Jesus already did.

See: [Sign](#); [Miracle](#); [Sign](#)

Why were the Jewish leaders not able to arrest Jesus?

[7:30]

The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus, but it was not his “hour.” That is, it was not the time he knew that he would be killed and wanted to die so that people could have peace with God (see: 8:20; 12:23-27; 13:1; 17:1). Jesus was not able to be arrested until God allowed it to happen.

7:32-36

Where was Jesus going that others were unable to come?

[7:34]

Many scholars think Jesus spoke about going to the cross to die for sin, rising from the dead, and then going to the Father in heaven. The Jewish leaders did not know that Jesus spoke about returning to heaven. That is, from where he came. They thought Jesus spoke about going to one of the Gentile nations.

See: [Gentile](#); [Sin](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [Gentile](#)

7:37-39

How do people come to Jesus to drink?

[7:37]

Many scholars think that in the same way God gave water from a rock in the wilderness to provide the physical needs of the people of Israel, “drinking” from Jesus provided their spiritual needs (see: Numbers

20:1-13). This was a metaphor. People come to Jesus and drink by believing in him. The Bible speaks of this. Jesus said that for those people who believe in him, there will be living water flowing from them. The living water is a metaphor for the Spirit of God who comes to live in those who believe in Jesus Christ (see: Ephesians 1:13-14).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

7: 40-52

Why did Jesus' words divide the people?

[7:43]

John wrote five different ways the things Jesus said divided the people. 1. Some people thought Jesus was the Messiah. They even said this. 1. Other people did not think he was the Messiah. They thought the Messiah to come from Bethlehem. They did not know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He moved to Galilee and grew up in that area. 1. Some people wanted Jesus arrested because he made them angry. 1. He confused many officials because they never heard anyone speak in the way he spoke. 1. The Jewish leaders began to question whether any of the officials believed in Jesus. They set out to prove that no prophet came from Galilee.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

See Map: Bethlehem, Galilee

Chapter 8

¹^[1] Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Early in the morning he came to the temple again, and all the people came; he sat down and taught them. ³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery. They placed her in the middle. ⁴ Then they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such people; what do you say about her?" ⁶ They said this in order to trap him so that they might have something to accuse him about, but Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they continued asking him questions, he stood up and said to them, "The one among you who has no sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ Again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground with his finger. ⁹ When they heard it, they left one by one, beginning with the oldest. Finally Jesus was left alone, with the woman who had been in the middle. ¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are your accusers? Did no one condemn you?" ¹¹ She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."]
[2]

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." ¹³ The Pharisees said to him, "You testify about yourself; your testimony is not true." ¹⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true. I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I came from or where I am going. ¹⁵ You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. ¹⁶ Yet if I judge, my judgment is true because I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent me. ¹⁷ Yes, and in your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ I am he who testifies about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me." ¹⁹ They said to him, "Where is your father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father; if you had known me, you would have known my Father also." ²⁰ He said these words in the treasury as he taught in the temple, and no one arrested him because his hour had not yet come.

²¹ So again he said to them, "I am going away; you will seek me and will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come." ²² The Jews said, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I am going you cannot come'?" ²³ Jesus said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins." ²⁵ They said therefore to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "What I have said to you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have many things to speak and to judge about you. However, he who sent me is true; and the things that I heard from him, these things I say to the world." ²⁷ They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸ Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then will you know that I AM, and that I do nothing of myself. As the Father taught me, I speak these things. ²⁹ He who sent me is with me, and he has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him." ³⁰ As Jesus was saying these things, many believed in him.

³¹ Jesus said to those Jews who had believed him, "If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples; ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone; how can you say, 'You will be set free'?" ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ Therefore, if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free. ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham's descendants; you seek to kill me because my word has no place in you. ³⁸ I say what I have seen with my Father, and you also do what you heard from your father." ³⁹ They answered and said to him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰ Yet, now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. ⁴¹ You do the works of your father." They said to him, "We were not born in sexual immorality; we have one Father: God." ⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and am here; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand my words? It is because you cannot hear my words. ⁴⁴ You are of your father, the devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature because he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ Yet, because I speak the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I speak the truth, why

do you not believe me? ⁴⁷ He who is of God hears the words of God; you do not hear them because you are not of God." ⁴⁸ The Jews answered and said to him, "Do we not truly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ I do not seek my glory; there is one seeking and judging. ⁵¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." ⁵² The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; but you say, 'If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.' ⁵³ You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are you? The prophets also died. Who do you make yourself out to be?" ⁵⁴ Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me—about whom you say that he is your God. ⁵⁵ You have not known him, but I know him. If I would say, 'I do not know him,' I would be like you, a liar. However, I know him and keep his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced at seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." ⁵⁷ The Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." ⁵⁹ Then they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

Footnotes

8:1 ^[1]See the note on John 7:53.

8:11 ^[2]See the note on John 7:53.

John 8

8:1-6

Why is John 7:53-8:11 not inside of all Bibles?

[8:1]

Many ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have John 7:53-8:11. Many Bible translations do not have these verses because some scholars do not think John wrote these verses when he wrote this book. However, some Bible translations have the verses because other scholars think John wrote these words even though some old copies of the Greek New Testament are missing these verses. Some English bibles place these verses in brackets: []. The brackets tell the translators that scholars do not know whether John wrote these verses. Overall, the oldest copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these verses, but many old copies of the Greek New Testament have these verses.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

What is the Mount of Olives?

[8:1]

See: [Mount of Olives](#)

See Map: Mount of Olives

Where was the Jewish Temple?

[8:2]

See: [Temple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

Why did the scribes and Pharisees bring a woman adultery before Jesus?

[8:4]

The Pharisees brought the adulterous woman to Jesus because they wanted to trap him with questions about the Law of Moses. They asked Jesus whether he thought the woman needed to be killed. The Law of Moses said that adulterers were to be stoned to death (see: Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22). If Jesus told the Pharisees to kill the woman, this was against the law of the Roman Empire. That is, the law of the Roman Empire said that only the Roman government was able to put people to death for their crimes (see: 18:31). If Jesus told the Pharisees to let the woman go free, then he broke the Law of Moses.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Scribe](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#)[Scribe](#), [Pharisees](#), [Law of Moses](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Why did Jesus write on the ground with his finger?

[8:6]

Scholar's do not know why Jesus wrote on the ground with his finger. Some scholars think that Jesus' bending down and writing on the ground meant that he ignored the Pharisees and that they accused the women. Other scholars think he did this to show that Jesus was not going to judge the woman. Still other scholars think Jesus drew a picture to show the message spoken by the prophet Jeremiah. That is, what happens to those who forsake God (see: Jeremiah 17:13).

See: [Prophet](#)

8:7-9

How did Jesus challenge the Scribes and Pharisees?

[8:7]

Jesus challenged the scribes and pharisees when he got the crowd to focus on the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees instead of the woman's sins. Some Pharisees thought they obeyed the Law of Moses. While they did obey some of the Law of Moses, they did not obey the whole Law of Moses. This is because they did not understand the Law of Moses. The Pharisees knew they sinned. They knew they could not judge the woman because they were sinners also.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Pharisees](#); [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Sin](#); [Law of Moses](#)

8:12

Why did Jesus call himself the "light of the world"?

[8:12]

Jesus said "I am the light of the world" so that people would know that he is God (see: 1 John 1:5; Isaiah 42:5-6). This is the second time Jesus said "I am" statement made by Jesus about which John has written (see: 6:35). Many scholars think Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" toward the end of the Festival of Shelters. Part of this celebration included the lighting of many oil lamps and candles within the temple. This feast is still celebrated by the Jewish people today around the world. However, they are no longer able to celebrate in the temple because it was destroyed. The lighting of the oil lamps reminded the people of how God appeared as a column of fire when he led the people of Israel through the wilderness (see: Exodus 13:18-22).

See: [Wilderness](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Festival of Shelters](#); [Temple](#); [Wilderness](#)

8:13-20

How did Jesus respond when the Pharisees' accused the woman?

[8:14]

Jesus said the Pharisees were wrong to accuse the woman. The Law of Moses said they needed two witnesses to prove an accusation true (see: Deuteronomy 19:15). Jesus said he two witnesses, God the Father and himself. Jesus explained why his witness was true. That is, he knew everything. The Pharisees did not know this because they only saw things and heard things. They did not know things about heaven (see: 7:27-28; 9:29). John the Baptist also said that Jesus was the light of the world (see:1:8-9).

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did the Pharisees ask Jesus about his father?

[8:19]

Some scholars think the Pharisees knew Jesus spoke about God being his father. However, they did not allow a witness who could not be seen. Therefore, they asked where was his father.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

8:21-24

What did Jesus mean when he said, “I am going away”?

[8:21]

Jesus said, “I am going away.” Perhaps Jesus spoke of going to God the Father. That is, he went to the cross to die, he resurrected, and then he went to God the Father in heaven (see: 7:33-36).

See: [Heaven](#); [Cross](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus tell the Jews they were going to die in their sin?

[8:21]

Jesus told the Jews they were going to die in their sin because they did not believe God the Father sent Jesus to the earth. The Jews believed obeying the Law of Moses and doing good things gave them peace with God. However, scripture teaches that no one can be at peace with God because they do good things (see: Galatians 2:16). They needed to believe in God and that God the Father sent Jesus to the earth.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [God the Father](#); [Law of Moses](#)

8:25-30

Why did the Pharisees question Jesus about who he was?

[8:25]

Because Jesus said “I am” the Jews began to question Jesus. These were the words God used when he told Moses his name (see: Exodus 3:14). Therefore, the Jews knew when Jesus said “I am,” he was saying that he is God. Jews did not even say the name “I am” when talking about God. They feared they might not say it correctly. They thought saying God’s name wrong dishonored God. Therefore, the Jews did not want to listen to Jesus about who he said he was. They thought he dishonored God both by saying God’s name.

See: [Yahweh \(I am\)](#)

What does it mean that the Son of Man will be lifted up?

[8:28]

John said that the Son of Man will be lifted up. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the time when he would be nailed to and lifted up on the cross to die. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about his being lifted up on the cross and being lifted up into heaven. That is, he went to heaven after he was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did Jesus mean by saying, “then you will know”?

[8:28]

Jesus said that “you will know.” Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the time that came after his resurrection when he showed proof to people that he is God. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a

time in the future when the temple was going to be destroyed in the same way Jesus prophesied. The Pharisees were going to know because of the words Jesus spoke, not because the Holy Spirit helped them to believe Jesus.

See: [Holy Spirit](#) ; [Temple](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Pharisees](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

8:31-41

How do Christians remain in Jesus' words?

[8:31]

Some scholars think that to "remain"([μένω/g3306](#)) in Jesus' words is to continue following his teaching. That is, to obey the words he taught. Other scholars think Jesus was talking about Jesus' words helping to change someone.

Jesus said that those who remain in his word will "know"([γινώσκω/g1097](#)) the truth. That is, they will know that the things said in Scripture are true and that they will live in the right way. The truth rules the Christian's life. Jesus said this truth set a person "free"([ἐλευθερώω/g1659](#)). That is, Christians will know that sin no longer rules their lives.

See: [Free \(Freedom\)](#)

How did the people respond to Jesus' statement about truth setting them free?

[8:32]

John wrote that the people responded "against him"([πρός/g4314](#); [αὐτός/g0846](#)) when he said the truth will set them free. Some scholars think these people were those that did believe the words of Jesus (see: 8:31) at one time. Other scholars think these people were the Jews that never believed Jesus' words. The people against Jesus thought they were free because they were descendants of Abraham.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

How did Jesus respond to the Jews' claim of Abraham as their father?

[8:41]

Jesus agreed the Jews were physical descendants of Abraham. However, Jesus told the Jews they followed a different father. That is, because they did not do the things that Abraham did, they were not his true descendants. Jesus told the Jews they did not receive his "word" ([λόγος/g3056](#)) because they followed a different father. But, the Jews then told Jesus that God was their father. Perhaps Jesus was saying that they were acting like another father, Satan (see: 1 John 3:10).

See: [Children of God](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Children of God](#)

8:42-47

How did Jesus respond to the Jews' claim of God being their father?

[8:42]

Jesus told the Jews if God was their father, then they needed to love Jesus. That is, Jesus is from God (see: 5:19-24; 1 John 5:1). And those who loved God their Father also loved God's Son, Jesus. Jesus tells the Jews they belong to the devil. He said the devil was their father, not God. This is because the Jews did not understand the truth of Jesus' words.

See: 1 John 3:10

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Children of God](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the Jews not believe the words of Jesus?

[8:45, 8:46]

Jesus said “because”(ὅτι/g3754) he speaks the truth, the Jews did not believe him. What proved that a person was a child of God was that he loved the truth. Because Jesus is the truth, they were going to believe in him if they were really God’s children. The children of the devil did not accept the truth. The devil is the father of lies. That is, he was the first liar. Jesus told the Jews they did not “hear”(ἀκούω/g0191) the words of God because they did not truly belong to God.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

8:48-53**Why did the Jews say that Jesus was possessed by a demon?**

[8:48]

Some scholars think because Jesus accused the Jews of following a different father than that of Abraham or even God, the Jews said Jesus was possessed by a demon. These scholars think the Jews thought Jesus’ claim to come from God was an insult to God. The Jews said said that this proved that a demon possessed Jesus. They also called Jesus a Samaritan. The Jews hated Samaritans and thought they did not believe in the true God.

See: [Samaria](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Samaria](#)

In what way did the Jews dishonor Jesus?

[8:49]

The Jews dishonored Jesus by accusing him of many things that were not true. Not only did they accuse Jesus of having a demon, but they accused him of being a Samaritan. They also accused him of disobeying what the Law of Moses said about the sabbath (see: 5:18). They also dishonored Jesus because they did not believe in him when he said he was equal with God. Jesus said earlier in the Book of John that whoever did not honor the Son also did not honor the Father (see: 5:22-23). Jesus also honored the Father by stating he does not want the people to honor him.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Samaria](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Son of God](#); [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#)

In what way will a person who keeps Jesus’ word never die?

[8:51]

When a person “keeps”(τηρέω/g5083) the word of Jesus, they obey the things Jesus told them to do. Then people know that Jesus has given him a new type of life and that he will live together with God in heaven. That is, he heard the thin things Jesus said to do and did the things Jesus said to do. Because this person believes in Jesus and does what honors him, John wanted to say that he will never be “die,” that is he will never be separated from God. This is what the scriptures call the “second death.” The Jews were only thinking about the first death by saying that Abraham died. They did not know who Jesus is. They did not understand the things that he said.

See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#); [Die \(Death\)](#)

8:54-56**What did Jesus mean by saying “my glory is nothing?”**

[8:54]

By saying “my glory is nothing” Jesus said that he completely obeyed God the Father. It is the Father who honors Jesus. Perhaps Jesus spoke about the glory that was going to follow his death his resurrection, and his return to God Father (see: 17:5).

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [God the Father](#)

In what way did the Jews not know God?

[8:55]

Jesus told the Jews they did not “know”(γινώσκω/g1097) God because those who know God also do what he told them to do. Jesus said he knows God and does what God the Father tells him to do. The Jews did not know God because they did not honor God the Son whom God sent (see: 5:37-47).

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

In what way did Abraham see Jesus’ day?

[8:56]

Some scholars think Abraham saw Jesus’ day when his son Isaac was born. God promised Abraham a son, and he said he was going to bless the whole world through this son. Other scholars think Abraham saw Jesus’ day when Abraham walked up the mountain to sacrifice his son Isaac. There Abraham saw God give the “lamb” for the sacrifice. In place of Isaac, God sent a ram to be sacrificed to him. This ram was a symbol of Jesus coming to be sacrificed for people’s sins (See: Genesis 22; Exodus 12; John 1:29). He is the “lamb of God.” These scholars think when God gave the ram for the sacrifice, He showed Abraham about the Messiah’s coming.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Symbol](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

8:57-59

Who did Jesus say he is?

[8:58]

Jesus told the Jews he is the “I Am.” Jesus was saying that he is God. This is how he knew Abraham. The Jews thought Jesus insulted God by saying this. They began to pick up stones to throw at Jesus. The Law of Moses said to stone someone who insulted God (see: Leviticus 24:16).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Chapter 9

¹ Now as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, so that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, but so that the works of God would be revealed in him. ⁴ We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one will be able to work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ After Jesus said these things, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on his eyes. ⁷ He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated "Sent"). So the man went away, washed, and came back seeing. ⁸ Then the man's neighbors and those who had seen him previously as a beggar were saying, "Is not this the man that used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." But he said, "It is me." ¹⁰ They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made mud and smeared it on my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received my sight." ¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" He replied, "I do not know."

¹³ They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ Now it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then again the Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I now can see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" So there was a division among them. ¹⁷ So they asked the blind man again, "What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?" The blind man said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ Now the Jews still did not believe about him that he was blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. ¹⁹ They asked the parents, "Is this your son whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ So his parents answered them, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ How he now sees, we do not know, and who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him, he is an adult. He can speak for himself." ²² His parents said these things, because they were afraid of the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed that if anyone would confess him to be the Christ, he would be thrown out of the synagogue. ²³ Because of this, his parents said, "He is an adult, ask him." ²⁴ So for a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ Then that man replied, "I do not know if he is a sinner. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see." ²⁶ Then they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered, "I have told you already, and you did not listen! Why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become his disciples too, do you?" ²⁸ They insulted him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "This is remarkable, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if someone worships God and does his will, he listens to him. ³² Since the world began it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and you are teaching us?" Then they threw him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out of the synagogue. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He replied and said, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is the one who is speaking with you." ³⁸ The man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world so that those who do not see may see and so that those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "Are we also blind?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin, but now you say, 'We see,' so your sin remains."

John 9

9:1-5

Why did the disciples ask Jesus, “who sinned?”

[9:2]

Some Jews thought a parent’s sin caused their children to suffer or be ill. Here, Jesus said sin did not cause this man’s blindness. This man was born blind to serve God in some way. Because he was blind, this allowed God to work in a special way in the man’s life. That is, God used this man’s problem to tell people about God.

See: [Serve](#); [Serve](#)

Why did Jesus say he needed to work “while it was day”?

[9:4]

Some scholars think Jesus said he needed to work while it was day to say he needed to do the work of God while he was on the earth with his disciples. Other scholars think when Jesus said work must be done while it is day, he spoke about the amount of time God allowed for the gospel to be preached.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “Night is coming”?

[9:4]

Jesus said, “Night is coming.” Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the disciples who were going to suffer after he died. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about when God will judge people. This is because night is dark. John also said that God is light. Perhaps John wanted to warn people that there will be a time when those who reject God will not be separated from God forever.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “As long as I am in the world”?

[9:5]

Jesus said, “as long as I am in the world.” Some scholars think Jesus spoke about his time on earth before he died. He did not live for very long, therefore he needed to work quickly. Other scholars think Jesus said he will always be in the world, even after he died. Jesus continues to live on the earth in some way through the Holy Spirit even after Jesus died.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

How is Jesus the light of the world?

[9:5]

John said that Jesus is the “light of the world.” This is a type of metaphor. One reason Jesus is the light of the world is because he is life. That is, he creates all people and makes them new and different after they believe in Jesus. John said Jesus is life, and the life was the “light of men” (see: 1:4-5). Jesus said that people who follow him will be given this light, that is, they will live forever with God in heaven (see: 8:12).

People can also see things because of light. Another reason Jesus is the light of the world is because he made the world in a way that everyone can see that there is a God who created the world (see: 1:9; Romans 1:19-20). Because God gave light for all people to know, it means all people are able to know and believe in God. But, many people did not believe (see: 1:10-11; Romans 1:18-23).

Jesus showed another reason he is the light of the world. He opened the eyes of a man born blind. Before Jesus, all the man could not see any light. Therefore, Jesus made it so that people could see light.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

9:6-7

Why did Jesus rub mud over the man's eyes?

[9:6]

Some scholars think Jesus rubbed mud over the man's eyes to show that he could do certain things that only God could do. In the same way God created man from the dust on the ground, Jesus used dust to create eyes that were able to see (see: Genesis 2:7). Some scholars think the man did not possess eyes at all. Others scholars think he possessed eyes, but that he was blind. Whether he had eyes or not, Jesus healed the man.

Why did Jesus send the blind man to the pool of Siloam?

[9:7]

Jesus sent the blind man to the pool of "Siloam" because people thought its waters were sacred. The Siloam pool is still inside the wall of ancient Jerusalem. A spring flows into it through a long tunnel cut through rock during the lifetime of King Hezekiah (see: 2 Kings 20:20). Some scholars think Jesus sent the man to the pool of Siloam to tell them that in the same way the Jews rejected the waters of "Shiloah" in the Old Testament, so they rejected Jesus in the New Testament (see: Isaiah 8:6).

See: [New Testament](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [New Testament](#)

Map: Siloam

9:8-16

What did the man's neighbors say about him?

[9:8]

Some of the man's neighbors talked about how he was the man who used to sit and beg. Others said it must be a different man, someone who looked like the beggar. Scholars think the miracle performed on the man was so amazing, some of the people were unable to think it was the same beggar who was healed.

See: [Miracle](#)

Why was the man brought to the Pharisees after he was healed?

[9:13]

The man was brought to the Pharisees after he was healed. This is because no one ever saw a miracle of someone being given back their sight. The people brought the man to the Pharisees after he was healed so that they could hear how this kind of miracle happened.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

How did the Pharisees respond to the healing of the blind man?

[9:16]

Because Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath, some of the Pharisees thought God did not send Jesus. They thought it was wrong to heal someone on the sabbath. This is because they thought that it was work, which was against the Law of Moses. It was not against the Law of Moses. Other Pharisees thought Jesus was a sinner because of this, and they thought that no sinner ever healed a blind man before. This miracle caused a division between the members of the Pharisees.

See: [Miracle](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Miracle](#)

9:17-18**Jesus healed a man. Who did he think Jesus was?**

[9:17]

The healed man told the Pharisees that he thought that Jesus was a prophet. When the man's neighbors asked him about who healed him, he said, "the man called Jesus." Some scholars think when the man told the Pharisees that Jesus is a prophet, and he thought people should respect Jesus. However, some of the Pharisees refused to believe Jesus came from God. They thought Jesus was someone who sinned because he did not obey the Sabbath and the Law of Moses in the way they thought it needed to be obeyed.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Prophet](#); [Sin](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did the Jews ask to speak with the parents of the man he healed?

[9:18]

After Jesus healed the man, the Jews wanted to speak to the man's parents because they did not believe he was born blind. Some scholars think the Jews did not believe the words of the man's neighbors. That is, that they did not think that the man was truly born blind. They also did not believe the witness of the healed man himself.

9:19-23**Why did the parents say their son was "of age"?**

[9:21]

The parents said that their son was "of age." Some scholars think the parents simply said their son was no longer a child. That is, he was a man and he was able to answer the Jews' questions for himself. Other scholars think the parents said their son was of the certain age, according to the Jewish law, to give his own answers. According to Jewish laws, a person to give a testimony needed to be thirteen years old. In either case, the parents did not give a direct answer to the Jews who asked them questions.

Advice to Translators: Here, "Jewish law" does not refer to the Law of Moses. Instead, it refers to the laws the Jewish leaders made.

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

Why did John write that the parents "feared the Jews"?

[9:22]

The parents feared the Jews because they said that anyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah was no longer able to go to the synagogue. By this time in the life of Jesus, the leaders of the Jews opposed him and the things he taught. These Jews scared the people in a way that the people did not say anything about Jesus, and they gave no answers to direct questions about Jesus (see: 7:13). This caused the parents to have the Jews question their son. The parents did not want to have the Jewish leadership against them.

See: [Synagogue](#); [Synagogue](#)

9:24-34**Why did the Pharisees tell the healed man to "give glory to God"?**

[9:24]

The Pharisees told the man Jesus healed to "give glory to God" to tell the man that he needed to agree with them that Jesus was a sinner (see: Joshua 7:19). The Pharisees wanted to hear that Jesus was a sinner. They already decided that he was a sinner because he was against the false things they taught.

The man told the Pharisees he did not know if Jesus was a sinner. However, he did know that Jesus healed him, and he knew Jesus healed him.

See: [Sin](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the Pharisees continue asking the man about his healing?

[9:26]

Some scholars think the Pharisees continued asking the healed man about his healing because they wanted to find out that the man was lying. In this way, they wanted to say the healing and the fact that Jesus did the healing was not true. Some scholars think the man mocked the Pharisees with his answer because he asked them if they wanted to follow Jesus too.

See: [Pharisees](#)

How did the Pharisees respond to the man who was healed?

[9:28]

Scholars think an argument began between the Pharisees and the man Jesus healed. They argued about which prophet they followed. The Pharisees did not think that God spoke to Jesus. They chose only to believe in Moses. They did think God spoke to Moses. They said they did not know from where Jesus came.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did the man Jesus healed think the Pharisees' answer was amazing?

[9:30]

The man Jesus healed thought the question of the Pharisees was amazing because never before has anyone given sight to someone who was blind from birth. The man thought that being healed was enough proof that Jesus came from God. He also knew that God did not listen to sinners. But the Pharisees thought they were right about Jesus, because they thought that he was a sinner. They did not accept the truth about the man's healing. The Pharisees mocked him. Then they sent him out from the synagogue. That is, the man was unable to be a part of the synagogue meetings and activities anymore. The Pharisees already decided they were going to remove anyone from the synagogue who said Jesus was the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Synagogue](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

9:35-38

Who did Jesus say he was to the man he healed?

[9:35, 9:37]

Jesus told the healed man that the "Son of Man" spoke to him at that time. The Gospel of John uses the phrase "Son of Man" many times when speaking about Jesus (see: 1:49-51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 8:28).

See: Daniel 7:13

See: [Son of Man](#)

9:39-41

What is the "judgment" for which Jesus came into the world?

[9:39]

Jesus spoke earlier about how judgment came into the world (see: 3:17-21). Those who do not believe in Jesus are judged already. Jesus brought good news from God to all people who believe in him. Some Jews believed that they could be at peace with God by following the Law of Moses, they rejected Jesus. The Law of Moses "judged already" those who did not believe in Jesus because the Law of Moses spoke about the coming of another prophet, the Messiah. By rejecting Jesus, they disobeyed the Law of Moses (see: 5:46-47). Jesus told the Pharisees they were guilty because they following the Law of Moses and were sinners would be judged.

See: [Guilty](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Pharisees](#); [Guilty](#) .

Chapter 10

¹ "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter through the gate into the sheep pen, but climbs up some other way, that man is a thief and a robber. ² He who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens for him. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger but instead they will avoid him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what these things were that he was saying to them.

⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the gate of the sheep. ⁸ Everyone who came before me is a thief and a robber, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. If anyone enters in through me, he will be saved; he will go in and out and will find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they will have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired servant is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep. He sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and escapes, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He runs away because he is a hired servant and does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me. ¹⁵ The Father knows me, and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice so that there will be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ This is why the Father loves me: I lay down my life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

¹⁹ A division again occurred among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them said, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to him?" ²¹ Others said, "These are not the words of a demon-possessed man. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

²² Then it was time for the Festival of the Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple in the porch of Solomon. ²⁴ Then the Jews surrounded him and said to him, "How long will you hold us doubting? If you are the Christ, tell us openly." ²⁵ Jesus replied to them, "I told you, but you do not believe. The works that I do in the name of my Father, these testify concerning me. ²⁶ Yet you do not believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life; they will never die, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all others, and no one is able to snatch them out of the hand of the Father. ³⁰ I and the Father are one." ³¹ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. ³² Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of those works are you stoning me?" ³³ The Jews answered him, "We are not stoning you for any good work, but for blasphemy, because you, a man, are making yourself God." ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"?' ³⁵ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), ³⁶ do you say to him whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. ³⁸ But if I am doing them, even if you do not believe me, believe in the works so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and that I am in the Father." ³⁹ They tried to seize him again, but he went away out of their hand.

⁴⁰ He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John had first been baptizing, and he stayed there. ⁴¹ Many people came to him and they said, "John indeed did no signs, but all the things that John has said about this man are true." ⁴² Many people believed in him there.

John 10

10:1-6

Why did Jesus teach about sheep and the sheep pen?

[10:1]

Jesus spoke about sheep and a sheep pen. Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about the leaders of the Jews, because they were supposed to be the shepherds of Israel (see: Ezekiel 34:1-10). They think Jesus was speaking about how the Jewish leaders treated the blind man who had been healed. They rejected the work of God through Jesus, and they rejected the things the man said and expelled him from the synagogue. Jesus spoke about the Jewish leaders being the thieves and robbers when he taught. In the same way sheep follow the shepherd when he spoke, so Christians follow the things Jesus said. When they did this, they obeyed God. In the same way the thief and robber avoided the door when they tried to get into the sheep pen, the Jewish leaders tried to get to God in some other way than by Jesus. John said Jesus is the door in this passage.

In scripture, when someone does not understand, it is said that they cannot see. This is a type of metaphor. They pharisees did not understand the things Jesus taught, therefore John said they could not see (see: 9:40-41).

See: [Pharisees](#); [Synagogue](#); [Metaphor](#); [Pharisees](#)

Advice to Translators: A pen is a place where animals live. In this passage, a door can also be translated as gate.

10:7-13

What did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the gate of the sheep"?

[10:7]

As the shepherd (see: 10:1-5), Jesus led his sheep out to pasture. As the gate of the sheep, scholars think Jesus spoke that he protected the sheep. John wanted to say that those who believe in Jesus will live together with God in heaven forever. This is the only way for someone to be at peace with God (see: 14:6).

Advice to Translators: In this passage, a gate is often translated door. A pasture is a field where animals eat.

See: [Heaven](#); [Door \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Who were the thieves and robbers "who came before"?

[10:8]

Scholars think Jesus was speaking about false prophets and teachers who said that someone could be at peace with God by obeying the Law of Moses. The false teachers only served themselves, and they did not serve God (see: Luke 11:39-46). They rejected the things Jesus taught.

See: [Serve](#); [False Teacher](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Serve](#)

Why did Jesus state "I am the gate" a second time?

[10:9]

Jesus was stating very clearly that he is the only way for his sheep to enter into a place of safety, and the only way they could go out to feed in the pastures. This was a metaphor. John wanted to say that Jesus was the only way that someone could be at peace with God and live with Jesus in heaven forever.

Advice to Translators: In this passage, a gate is often translated door. A pasture is a field where animals eat.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What did it mean to have life abundantly?

[10:10]

Jesus said that those who believe in Jesus have life abundantly. He wanted to say that those who believe in Jesus more than just that people will have safety and enough to eat and drink. They will also live together with God in heaven forever.

How was Jesus the “good shepherd”?

[10:11]

Some scholars think Jesus contrasted himself with people who were hired to care for the sheep. They think Jesus was saying the “good shepherd” loved the sheep in a different way than people hired to care for sheep. Those who were hired would run from danger, but the “good shepherd” stayed to defend and care for the sheep (see: 1 Samuel 17:34-36). Those who owned the sheep loved them, while those who worked for other people did not love the sheep.

Other scholars think Jesus was the “good shepherd” because he was the shepherd who had come from God. Jesus, the good shepherd died for his sheep. This was a metaphor about people who believe in Jesus getting to live together with God in heaven (see: 1 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 13:20).

See: [Metaphor](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

10:14-18**Why did Jesus say, “I am the good shepherd” a second time?**

[10:14]

When Jesus spoke of himself as the “good shepherd” the second time, he spoke about how close he was to his sheep. That is, Jesus was close to all those who believe in him and they know him (see: 17:9-10).

See: [Shepherd](#)

Who were the sheep that were from a different sheep pen?

[10:16]

Scholars think Jesus was telling the Jews that there were also sheep to be gathered from the Gentile nations (see: 11:51-52; Romans 1:16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-22). People from all nations were to be gathered under one shepherd, Jesus.

See: [Shepherd](#); [Shepherd](#)

What did Jesus mean, when speaking about laying down his life, that he would “take it again”?

[10:17]

When Jesus said, “I lay down my life so that I may take it again” he was telling people that he would die. He also said that he would be resurrected. This was what he planned. He also said that the Holy Spirit would begin to do things in a new way (see: 7:37-39; 17:5; Acts 2:1-4).

Jesus also told people that God gave him permission to lay down his life and to take it up again. Everything that happened to Jesus was part of God’s plan. Even though Jesus was beaten and nailed to the cross by men, none of it happened outside of God’s plan (see: Acts 2:22-24)

See: [Will of God](#) ; [Holy Spirit](#); [Cross](#); [Will of God](#)

10:19-21**Why were the Jewish leaders divided?**

[10:19]

Some of the Jewish leaders decided to reject everything about Jesus and who he said he was. Other leaders were not so quick to reject him, because no one had ever done the miracles Jesus did. Those leaders could not accept that a man doing the kind of miracles Jesus performed could be possessed by a demon.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

10:22-30

What was the Festival of Dedication?

[10:22]

See: [Festival of Dedication](#)

Why did the Jews want Jesus to speak “openly” about who he is?

[10:24]

The Jews wanted Jesus to speak openly about who he is. Scholars think the Jewish leaders were attempting to trap Jesus into saying something for which they could accuse him, and therefore further reject him. Perhaps the Jewish leaders were afraid of losing their positions as religious leaders (see: 11:48).

What did Jesus mean when he told the Pharisees, “You are not among my sheep”?

[10:26]

When Jesus told the Pharisees they were not his sheep, he was saying that God had not chosen them to be Jesus’ sheep, that is to be Christians (see: 6:44; 12:37). The sheep that belonged to Jesus showed that they belonged by obeying him. Most of the Jewish leaders only rejected Jesus, the things he taught, and that he was God.

See: [Shepherd](#); [Shepherd](#)

What are the great promises Jesus gave to those who were his sheep?

[10:28]

Jesus promised something to those who were his sheep, that those who believe in Jesus. He promised that they would live together with God in heaven forever (see: 3:16; 17:3). He also told those who believed in him that no one could ever “snatch” (ἀρπάξω/g0726) them out of the Father’s hand. This was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think that he wanted to say that Christians did not need to fear being mocked or accused by the Jewish leaders because they believe in Jesus.
2. Other scholars think that he wanted to say that once someone believes in Jesus, nothing can stop them from living together with God in heaven forever. This promise was certain and could not be changed (see: 6:37-40).
3. Other scholars think John wanted to say that God protects people. They think the only thing that can stop a Christian from living together with God in heaven forever is a Christian choosing to reject God and not wanting to live with God forever.

When Jesus said this, everyone knew that Jesus taught people that he is God.

See: [Eternal Security](#); [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Eternal Security](#)

What did it mean that the Father and the Son are one?

[10:30]

God the Father and God the Son are the same. Some scholars think they are perfectly “one” in the sense that they do the same types of things. The things God the Father did, Jesus did too (see: 5:19). This did not mean that God the Father and God the Son were one person. Other scholars think John

wanted to say that God the Father and Jesus wanted the same things to happen or that they were both perfectly good (see: 1:1-2).

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Son of God](#); [Trinity](#); [Jesus is God](#)

10:31-39

Why did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of saying that he is God?

[10:33]

The Pharisees knew that Jesus was claiming to be God. Because they rejected Jesus, they accused him of blasphemy. According to the Law of Moses, when someone blasphemed, that person was to be punished and killed.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus use the words from scripture which say, “you are gods”?

[10:34]

Jesus used the words from scripture which say, “you are gods” to show that human leaders, such as kings and judges, could be called gods (see: Psalm 82:1-8). They were not God, but perhaps John wanted to say that they did something that only God could do, judge people. Or perhaps they did things for God.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What did it mean that “scripture cannot be broken”?

[10:35]

John said that “scripture cannot be broken.” This was a type of metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus was saying the scriptures are always right because God wrote. Because of this, the scripture cannot be wrong or change. Jesus did not reject the Law of Moses (see: Matthew 5:17-18).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Jesus tell the Jewish leaders to “believe the works”?

[10:38]

Jesus did not expect the Jewish leaders to believe when he told them who he is. For this reason, Jesus told the leaders of the Jews to “believe the works.” That is, they should believe him because of the things he did. He did things that only God could do and he did things that honored God.

Why did Jesus leave the area and go back across the Jordan?

[10:40]

Jesus left and went back across the Jordan River. Perhaps he did this because people were trying to attack Jesus. Therefore, he went back across the Jordan River where John baptized people (see: 5:18; 8:37; 10:31).

See Map: Jordan River

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Chapter 11

¹ Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. ³ The sisters then sent for Jesus, saying, "Lord, see, he whom you love is sick." ⁴ When Jesus heard it, he said, "This sickness is not to death, but instead it is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus stayed two more days in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this, he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, right now the Jews are trying to stone you, and you are going back there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of light in a day? If someone walks in the daytime, he will not stumble, because he sees by the light of this world. ¹⁰ However, if he walks at night, he will stumble because the light is not in him." ¹¹ He said these things, and after these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going so that I may wake him out of sleep." ¹² The disciples therefore said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he was speaking about the sleep of resting. ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there so that you may believe. Let us go to him." ¹⁶ Thomas, who was called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go so that we may die with Jesus."

¹⁷ When Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia away. ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them about their brother. ²⁰ Then Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹ Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² Even now, I know that whatever you ask from God, he will give to you." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, even if he dies, will live; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." ²⁸ When she had said this, she went away and called her sister Mary privately. She said, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." ²⁹ When she heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ So when the Jews, who were with her in the house and who were comforting her, saw Mary getting up quickly and going out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³² When Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and was troubled; ³⁴ he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, "See how much he loved Lazarus!" ³⁷ But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of a blind man, also have made this man not die?" ³⁸ Then Jesus again, being deeply moved in himself, went to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of Lazarus, the one who had died, said to Jesus, "Lord, by this time the body will be decaying, for he has been dead for four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that, if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you listened to me. ⁴² I knew that you always listen to me, but it is because of the crowd that is standing around me that I said this, so that they may believe that you have sent me." ⁴³ After he had said this, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out; his feet and hands were bound with cloths, and his face was bound about with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews who came to Mary and saw what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things that Jesus had done.

⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council together and said, "What will we do? This man does many signs. ⁴⁸ If we leave him alone like this, all will believe in him; the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." ⁴⁹ However, a certain man among them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing. ⁵⁰ You do not consider that it is better for you

that one man dies for the people than that the whole nation perishes." ⁵¹ Now this he said not from himself. Instead, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; ⁵² and not only for the nation, but so that the children of God who are scattered would be gathered together into one. ⁵³ So from that day onward they planned how to put Jesus to death.

⁵⁴ No longer did Jesus walk openly among the Jews, but he departed from there into the country near to the wilderness into a town called Ephraim. There he stayed with the disciples. ⁵⁵ Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ They were looking for Jesus, and speaking one with another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? That he will not come to the festival?" ⁵⁷ Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given an order that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might seize him.

John 11

11:1-16

Who were Lazarus, Mary, and Martha?

[11:1]

Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were Jesus' close friends. Both John and Luke wrote about their friendship (See: 11:1-12:11; Luke 10:38-42).

See Map: Bethany

Why did Jesus say, "This illness does not lead to death"?

[11:4]

Jesus said, "This illness does not lead to death." Jesus was not saying that Lazarus will not die from his sickness. In fact, he did die. He was dead for four days. He meant that Lazarus would not remain dead. How did the death of Lazarus glorify God?

Scholars think Lazarus died so that God could show his glory to people. God made his power known to people by bringing Lazarus back to life after he died. God made his love and compassion known to people by doing this. God glorified Jesus through this miracle.

See: [Miracle](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Love](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus wait two days before travelling to visit Mary and Martha?

[11:6]

Jesus waited for two days before traveling to visit Mary and Martha for two reasons. Jesus wanted to give time for people to know Lazarus was dead. Perhaps Jesus wanted to make it known that he had the power to bring Lazarus back to life. He controlled what happens after people die. He wanted everyone to know that the miracle did not have any other possible reasons for occurring. Jesus wanted Mary and Martha to know he loved them very much. He wanted to help them to trust him.

See: [Miracle](#)

Why did Jesus use the metaphors of day and night?

[11:9, 11:10]

Many scholars think Jesus used the metaphor of the day to speak of his ministry on the earth. These scholars think Jesus told his disciples he was safe because he did the things his Father wanted him to do. John spoke about Jesus being the "light of the world" (see: 9:5). These scholars think Jesus used the metaphor of the night to speak of when Jesus returned to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#); [God the Father](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus say, “Lazarus has fallen asleep”?

[11:11]

The New Testament uses the metaphor of sleep to mean someone died (see: Matthew 9:24; Acts 7:60; 1 Thessalonians 4:13). This was a common metaphor during the time of the New Testament but not during the time of the Old Testament and for the Jewish people. This is why the disciples did not know Jesus said that Lazarus was dead when the disciple said he was sleeping.

See: [Disciple](#); [Metaphor](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Thomas say, “that we may die with him”?

[11:16]

When Thomas said “let us also go that we may die with him,” people knew that he was being courageous and devoted to Jesus. He knew the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Perhaps Thomas thought the disciples would be killed with Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

11:17-37**Why does John say Lazarus was in the tomb for four days?**

[11:17]

John said that Lazarus was in the tomb for four days so that people would know that Lazarus was dead and not just sick. At this time, the Jews thought the soul of a dead person remained near a grave for three days. It did this hoping to return to the body. The body began to decay after four days, and the soul no longer remained with the body. Some scholars think Jesus did not go immediately to Bethany because he wanted to bring more honor to God. They think Jesus wanted people to know that he could make the dead live and that he could stop decay and remove uncleanness.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Martha say, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died”?

[11:21]

Martha said, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” She knew that Jesus could have saved her brother and she was very sad because he died. Martha’s also knew God would do whatever Jesus asked him to do. Perhaps she thought good things would happen because Lazarus died. Martha knew Lazarus would live again at the last day.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, “I am the resurrection and the life”?

[11:25]

Jesus said “I am.” Jesus wanted people to know that they could not come back to life after they died without him. Only by believing in Jesus can someone be at peace with God and live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars think Jesus spoke these words to Martha because he wanted her to trust him completely. They think Jesus spoke these things so that Martha would know that he had the ability to do these things.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Martha say, “Yes, Lord”?

[11:27]

Martha said, “Yes, Lord” so that people would know that she knew Jesus was the messiah.

See: John 20:30-31; Matthew 16:16

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why was Jesus “deeply moved”?

[11:33]

When Jesus was “deeply moved”(ἐμβριμάομαι/g1690), he was angered. Some scholars think Jesus was angered because of the problems sin caused in the world. That is, it caused sickness, disease, and death which causes great sorrow. Other scholars think the people grieving caused Jesus to be angry because they did not have hope. They did not believe in Jesus because if they did, they would know that they would live together with God in heaven forever. They would have hope.

See: [Heaven](#); [Hope](#); [Heaven](#)

In what way had “Jesus wept”?

[11:35]

John said that Jesus wept. Scholars think Jesus wept silently, but he was very sad. His tears made known his genuine sympathy. This was unlike certain people in ancient Israel who were paid to cry after people died. They think Jesus felt sympathy for both Mary and Martha for their great loss. The Jews at the tomb thought Jesus wept because of his great love for Lazarus.

Advice to Translators: Sympathy means that someone feels sorrow for someone else because something bad has happened to them.

11:38-44

How did Martha see the “glory of God”?

[11:40]

Martha saw the power of God when Jesus made Lazarus alive again. Scholars think whenever Jesus made known the power of God, it was to glorify God. Scholars also think that all those seeing Lazarus made alive again saw a miracle. Also, those who believed in Jesus saw the miracle in the same way as the glory of God was made known to them.

See: [Miracle](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Miracle](#)

What did Jesus’ public prayer make known to the crowd?

[11:41, 11:42]

Scholars think that Jesus’ prayer made the crowd know that he was sent by God the Father and that he all the things that God the Father told him to do. They think Jesus’ wanted some of the crowd to see him pray and believe that God truly sent Jesus into the world.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

How did Jesus make Lazarus alive again?

[11:43]

Jesus made Lazarus alive again by calling his name. He commanded Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Some scholars think the command of Jesus to Lazarus will be the same command given for all those who die believing in Jesus. Jesus will call their name and command them to come out of their graves on the last day (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#) ; [Tomb](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Lazarus have clothes on his hands and feet?

[11:44]

In ancient Israel, a dead body was wrapped in a large sheet of cloth before being buried. They tied the feet together at the ankles with another cloth. And they tied the arms to the body with linen strips. These wrappings made it difficult for Lazarus to move and walk.

11:45-57**Why did John say that Caiaphas was high priest for “that year”?**

[11:49]

When John said that Caiaphas was the high priest for “that year,” he meant that Caiaphas was high priest during this specific year. That is, the year of Jesus’ death and resurrection. It did not mean Caiaphas was high priest for only one year (see: 18:12-14).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did Caiaphas prophecy that Jesus would die?

[11:50]

John wrote that Caiaphas said that one man should die for the nation was a prophecy. John meant that God gave Caiaphas those words to speak. Caiaphas did not know he prophesied about Jesus dying. They think Caiaphas was only worried that Jesus or his followers might threaten the Sadducees in some way. Caiaphas did not want this because he thought this would cause the nation to “perish” (ἀπόλλυμι/g0622). The Romans allowed the Jews to have the temple and worship God. However, the Jews could not cause any problems for the Romans. Caiaphas thought that Jesus or his followers might cause fighting among the Jews. This would cause problems for the Romans, and they would destroy the Jewish temple and nation for this.

See: [Worship](#) ; [Sadducees](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Temple](#); [Worship](#)

What did the words, “the children of God who are scattered would be gathered together into one” mean?

[11:52]

At that time John wrote, there were many Jews who believed that Jesus was the messiah. The persecution of Christians caused them to go to other countries. God promised that he will bring them back together (see: Isaiah 43:5-7; Ezekiel 34:11-12). Some scholars think John also spoke about the Gentiles as well as the Jews (see: 12:32; Ephesians 2:11-18).

See: [Gentile](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Gentile](#)

Where was the town of Ephraim?

[11:54]

See map: Ephraim

What was the “Passover of the Jews”?

[11:55]

See: [Passover](#)

Why did John write that they needed “to purify themselves”?

[[11:55]

The Law of Moses has instructions for Jews who were unclean. It took seven days for someone to become clean. At the end of the seven days, the one who was unclean was pronounced clean. So, many Jews went up to Jerusalem early so they might be made clean before the Passover began (see: Numbers 9:6-12; 19:11-12).

See: [Passover](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Passover](#)

Chapter 12

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² So they made him a dinner there, and Martha was serving, but Lazarus was one of those who were lying down at the table with Jesus. ³ Then Mary took a litre of perfume made of very precious pure nard, anointed the feet of Jesus with it, and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, the one who would betray him, said, ⁵ "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ Now he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief. He had the moneybag and would steal from what was put in it. ⁷ Jesus said, "Allow her to keep what she has for the day of my burial." ⁸ You will always have the poor with you. But you will not always have me."

⁹ Now a large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, and they came, not only for Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ The chief priests conspired together so that they might also put Lazarus to death; ¹¹ for it was because of him that many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

¹² On the next day a great crowd came to the festival. When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet him and cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel."

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it was written,

¹⁵ "Do not fear, daughter of Zion;
see, your King is coming,
sitting on the colt of a donkey."

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him. ¹⁷ Now the crowd testified that they had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him up from the dead. ¹⁸ It was also for this reason that the crowd went out to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign. ¹⁹ The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "Look, you can do nothing good; see, the world has gone after him."

²⁰ Now certain Greeks were among those who were going up to worship at the festival. ²¹ These went to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." ²² Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip, and they told Jesus. ²³ Jesus answered them and said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it will bear much fruit. ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it; but he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there will my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. ²⁷ Now my soul is troubled and what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven and said, "I have glorified it and I will glorify it again." ²⁹ Then the crowd that stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." ³⁰ Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for me, but for you. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world: Now will the ruler of this world be thrown out. ³² When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." ³³ He said this to indicate what kind of death he would die. ³⁴ The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ will stay forever. How can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" ³⁵ Jesus then said to them, "The light will still be with you for a short amount of time. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness does not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may be sons of light."

Jesus said these things and then departed and hid from them. ³⁷ Although Jesus had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him ³⁸ so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled, in which he said:

"Lord, who has believed our report,

and to whom has the arm
of the Lord been revealed?"

³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah had also said,

⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes,
and he has hardened their heart,
otherwise they would see with their eyes
and understand with their hearts,
and turn, and I would heal them."

⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw the glory of Jesus and spoke of him. ⁴² But despite that, many of the rulers believed in Jesus; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess it so that they would not be banned from the synagogue. ⁴³ They loved the glory that comes from people more than the glory that comes from God.

⁴⁴ Jesus cried out and said, "The one who believes in me, believes not only in me but also in him who sent me, ⁴⁵ and the one who sees me sees him who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come as a light into the world, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in the darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and who does not receive my words, has one who judges him. The word I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I did not speak for myself, but it is the Father who sent me, who has given me the command about what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰ I know that his command is eternal life, so that is what I say—just as the Father has spoken to me, so I speak."

John 12

12:1-11

Why did Lazarus, Martha, and Mary give this dinner for Jesus?

[12:2]

Lazarus, Martha, and Mary gave Jesus dinner at their home. Jesus made Lazarus alive again, so they wanted to honor him. Perhaps they also did this because Passover began in six days. This was Jesus' final Passover while on earth.

Scholars think this was the dinner Matthew, Mark and Luke about (See: Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, and Luke 7:36-38).

See: [Passover](#)

See Map: Bethany (showing how close it is to Jerusalem)

What perfume did Mary pour on Jesus?

[12:3]

Mary poured nard on Jesus. This was very expensive. It was a sweet smelling oil. It was made from the roots of a plant. Mary used a "litra" of the perfume. That is, she used about half a litre. What did Jesus want his disciples to think about his being anointed (12:7-8)? Jesus wanted his disciples to think of how he was going to die soon. He knew he was going to die. But he also knew that his disciples did not know this.

Jesus told them not to sell the perfume. Jesus did not say this because he did not want his disciples to help the poor people. Instead, he wanted them to listen to him while he was still on earth. They could worship God in person while he was on the earth. This was not something everyone could do. They could help the poor after he was gone.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

Why did many Jewish leaders want to kill Lazarus?

[12:10, 12:11]

Many Jewish leaders wanted to kill Lazarus because of Jesus. Jesus made Lazarus alive again. This caused many people to follow Jesus. They believed he was the Messiah. But the Jewish leaders did not believe Jesus was the Messiah, and they did not want other people to believe in him. So they thought that if they killed Lazarus, people will stop believing in Jesus.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

12:12-19

Did Matthew, Mark and Luke write about Jesus' "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem?

[12:12, 12:13]

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all speak of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem before his crucifixion. He entered into the city in the same way a king would enter into a city after a great victory. Because all four of these men wrote about this happening, scholars think they really wanted people to know about it.

See: Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, and Luke 19:29-38

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did many people come to see Jesus ?

[12:18]

Many people came to see Jesus because they wanted to see his miracles. The people who saw Jesus make Lazarus alive again (See: 12:17) told other people that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem from Bethany. So, many people went to see him. They wanted to see the man who made Lazarus alive again. They wanted to hear what he said. They wanted to see if the Pharisees would arrest him.

Jesus was honored in Jerusalem in the same way a powerful man was honor. In ancient times, after a general or king defeated their enemies, they rode into their capital city. Their soldiers and the men they captured followed them to give them honor. Many people came to welcome them.

See: [Pharisees; Pharisees](#)

Why did the people wave palm branches?

[12:13]

The people waved palm branches to honor Jesus. They did this while he entered the city. They cut these branches from date palm trees. These were on the side of the road leading to Jerusalem.

What did the people shout?

[12:13]

The people who came to greet Jesus shouted words that honored him. "Hosanna" is an Aramaic word. People used this to honor someone. They wanted to say "We praise you!" They also shouted words from Scripture to honor Jesus (See: Psalm 118:25-26). They called him a man coming to speak for God. They called him a king.

Why did Jesus ride into Jerusalem on a donkey?

[12:14]

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to fulfill a prophecy (See: Zechariah 9:9). In ancient Israel, leaders rode on horses when they fought against each other. However, they rode on donkeys when there was peace. Jesus rode on a donkey. He wanted the people to think of a gentle king.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did the Pharisees say, "the world has gone after him"?

[12:19]

The Pharisees said, "the world has gone after him" because all the people welcomed Jesus. This worried them. They worried that people might stop listening to them. Instead, they would listen to Jesus. This caused them to begin planning to kill Jesus.

See: [Pharisees](#)

12:20-50

Why did John write about the "Greeks"?

[12:20]

John wrote about "Greeks." These people were not Jewish. John was a Jew. When John was alive, Jewish people said "Greek" to speak of a non-Jewish person. That is, John wrote of Gentiles coming to the Passover festival.

See: [Passover](#); [Passover](#)

Why did John write that Philip was from Bethsaida in Galilee?

[12:21]

John wrote that Philip was from Bethsaida in Galilee. Many "Greeks" or Gentiles lived in this town. Therefore, Philip knew how to talk to them. Perhaps he knew some of the people who came to talk to him. He also knew Jesus. So, he was the person to tell these people about Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Bethsaida and Galilee

Why did Philip talk to Andrew?

[12:22]

Philip talked to Andrew because Andrew was good at telling people about Jesus. Andrew was Peter's brother. He brought Peter to meet Jesus (See: 1:41). He also took Jesus to heal their mother (See: Mark 1:29-30). So, Philip wanted Andrew to help get Jesus to speak with these Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#)

12:23-26

Why did Jesus say, "the hour has come"?

[12:23]

Jesus said "the hour has come." He wanted to make known that something was happening that they needed to pay attention to. He did not mean a specific time. Instead, he meant that people were ready for this thing to happen.

Why did Jesus say, "Son of Man"?

[12:23]

Jesus called himself "Son of Man." He wanted people to think about him in a special way. The Old Testament used the words "Son of Man" to speak of the messiah. Therefore, Jesus wanted people to know he was the messiah spoken of in the Old Testament.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about wheat?

[12:24]

Jesus told a parable about wheat. This was a metaphor. He used it to talk about when he would die. He wanted people to know that he would be made alive again after he died. He wanted people to think about how one grain of wheat becomes a living plant after it is placed in the ground.

Also, he spoke of how one grain of wheat grows a plant that has many more grains of wheat on it. So, Jesus wanted to say that many people would believe in him after he died.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

12:27-29

Why did Jesus talk about the "hour"?

[12:27]

Jesus talked about the "hour." That is, he would soon suffer and die on the cross. He was not speaking about a certain time of the day. Instead, he wanted to say that something would soon happen. This was his crucifixion.

See: [Cross](#); [Cross](#)

Why did Jesus say, "Father, glorify your name"?

[12:28]

Jesus said "Father, glorify your name." Jesus wanted to honor God when he died. Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God. This honored God.

See: [Name](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Name](#)

What was the voice that "came from heaven"?

12:28]

God the Father was the voice that "came from heaven." The Father answered Jesus' prayer.

God said "I have glorified it and will glorify it again." He said that Jesus' death fulfilled the Father's plan for the world. He made it so that people could be at peace with God. By doing this, he honored God. God also said that Jesus' dying and being made alive again honored the Father in the present time and in a future time.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, "judgment of this world" and "ruler of this world"?

[12:31]

Jesus wanted people to think of God and the wrong things they did when he said "judgment of this world." God will judge everyone because everyone does wrong things. He wanted people to think about Satan when he said "ruler of this world." God gave some permission to Satan to "rule" the world for a while. However, God will judge Satan. God will "throw him out" of the world forever (See: 1 Peter 5:8, Romans 16:20, Revelation 2:13, 12:9, 20:7-10).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [World](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus say he would be "lifted up"?

[12:32]

Jesus said he would be "lifted up from the earth." That is, he would be crucified. People were tied and nailed to crosses during crucifixion. Then the cross was lifted up with the person on it. This was above the ground so people could see them. So Jesus was physically "lifted up" when he was crucified.

Normally, a crucified person was shamed. However, Jesus was not shamed, he was honored because he died for people.

Jesus also wanted people to believe in him. He said people will believe in him after he died.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the people ask Jesus about the "Son of Man"?

[12:34]

People did not understand Jesus when he spoke about the "Son of Man." So they asked him what this meant. The Jewish people thought the messiah was going to make Israel a great nation again. They thought he was going to live forever and rule them forever (See: Psalms 72:17, 89:35-37, Isaiah 9:7, and Ezekiel 37:25). "Son of Man" was a title for this messiah (See: Daniel 7:13-14).

Some of the people believed Jesus was the messiah. However, they did not understand him when he said he was going to die. They did not understand how the "Son of Man" could die. So they asked Jesus to make known what he was saying.

Advice to Translators: A title is a specific name someone is given because of a particular position they hold. For example, mother is a title given to a child's female parent. These titles always have special meaning. The title itself gives specific information about the person with the title. We know the title "mother" means that woman has at least one child. In the same way, "Son of Man" gives us specific information about the messiah and how he fulfilled prophecy.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus talk about the "light"?

[12:35, 12:36]

Jesus used the metaphor of light to speak of himself. He wanted to say that he was not merely a man. He is God. "Light" meant good and pure. God is the best and purest of all things. So Jesus used this metaphor to say he is God.

However, he also wanted people to know that he was not going to live on earth much longer. So he said they will only have the "light" for "a short amount of time." He also used the metaphor of walking. He wanted people to think about how they should believe in him and do the things that he did. He wanted them to believe and do the things he did while he was still on earth.

See: [Walk](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Walk](#)

Why did some people not believe in Jesus?

[12:37, 12:39]

Many of the Jewish people did not believe in Jesus. The Jewish leaders taught them wrong things about the messiah. Also, many people did not understand the things taught in Scripture. Because of these things, they did not want to believe in Jesus. So, God "hardened their hearts." That is, he allowed them to not believe. He gave them what they wanted. The prophet Isaiah said this will happen (See: Isaiah 53:1, 6:10).

See: [Prophet](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Prophet](#)

How did Isaiah see "the glory of Jesus"?

[12:41]

Isaiah saw "the glory of Jesus" in a vision from God (See: Isaiah 6: 1-4) Isaiah lived before Jesus was on earth. But Jesus is God. So Jesus was with God the Father in heaven before he was born. Jesus shares God's glory. Therefore, Isaiah saw Jesus when he saw the glory of God.

See: [Heaven](#); [Vision](#); [Jesus is God](#); [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#)

What did John want to say about some of the rulers?

[12:42]

John wrote "some of the rulers." because not all the Jewish leaders were against Jesus. Some of them believed in him. However, they did not tell others that they believed in him because they were afraid of the Pharisees. If they said they believed in Jesus, the Pharisees would not allow them to worship in the Jewish synagogues.

See: [Synagogue](#); [Worship](#); [Synagogue](#)

Why did Jesus "cry out"?

[12:44]

Jesus cried out to say several things: 1. He wanted to speak of "the one who sent me." That is, God the Father. 1. He wanted to say that people needed to believe in him. He said that when people believe in him, they also believe in God. This is because Jesus and the Father are both God. 1. He wanted to speak about himself in a metaphor of light (See: 12:34-36). He used the metaphor of darkness. He wanted people to think about their sins. He saves people in the same way that light shines and removes darkness. 1. He wanted to say that God will judge people. He will punish people who do not believe in Jesus. 1. He wanted to say that he only spoke the things God told him to speak. 1. He wanted to say everyone who believe in Jesus will live together with God in heaven forever.

Advice to Translators: Crying out means to speak in a very loud voice.

See: [Heaven](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Chapter 13

¹ Now it was before the Festival of the Passover. Jesus knew that his hour had come to go out of this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² Now the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray Jesus. So during dinner, ³ Jesus—who knew that the Father had given everything over into his hands and that he had come from God and was going back to God—⁴ got up from dinner and took off his outer clothing. Then he took a towel and wrapped it around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and dry them with the towel that he had put around himself. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will understand this later." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, do not only wash my feet, but also my hands and my head." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet, but he is completely clean; you are clean, but not everyone." ¹¹ (For Jesus knew who would betray him; that is why he said, "Not all of you are clean.")

¹² So when Jesus had washed their feet and taken his garments and sat down again, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you?" ¹³ You call me 'teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are speaking correctly, because so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash the feet of one another. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example so that you should also do just as I did for you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is a messenger greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking about all of you; I know those whom I have chosen—but this is so that the scripture will be fulfilled: 'He who eats my bread lifted up his heel against me.' ¹⁹ I tell you this now before it happens so that when it happens, you may believe that I AM. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

²¹ When Jesus said this, he was troubled in spirit. He testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you that one of you will betray me." ²² The disciples looked at each other, wondering of whom he was speaking. ²³ One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was lying down at the table against Jesus' side. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him who he is speaking about." ²⁵ So he leaned back against the side of Jesus and said to him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Then Jesus answered, "It is the one for whom I will dip the piece of bread and give it him." So when he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ Then after the bread, Satan entered into him, so Jesus said to him, "What you are doing, do it quickly." ²⁸ Now no one who was lying down at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹ Some thought that, since Judas had the moneybag, Jesus said to him, "Buy what we need to have for the festival," or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ After Judas received the bread, he went out immediately. It was night.

³¹ When Judas was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify the Son in himself, and he will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you for still a short amount of time. You will seek me, and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' Now I also say this to you. ³⁴ I am giving you a new commandment, that you should love one another; as I have loved you, so also you should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later." ³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." ³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow before you have denied me three times."

John 13

13:1-17

Why did John write that Jesus "knew his hour had come"?

[13:1]

John wrote that Jesus "knew his hour had come." That is, Jesus knew he was going to die soon. The metaphor of an "hour" was about a certain time, which was the end of Jesus's life.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did John write that the devil "put it into the heart" of Judas Iscariot?

[13:2]

John wrote that the devil "put it into the heart" of Judas Iscariot. That is, Judas wanted to help the people who wanted to kill Jesus. John wrote that the devil gave Judas these thoughts. He wanted his readers to know this was an evil idea.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did John write, "the Father had given everything over into Jesus hands"?

[13:3]

John wrote, "the Father had given everything over into Jesus' hands." He wanted to say that God the Father gave Jesus power over everything that happened. Some scholars think God gave Jesus permission to choose when and how he would die. They think this because John also wrote that Jesus "had come from God and was going back to God" (13:3). Other scholars think God gave Jesus power over the whole world. They think this because many other verses talk about this (see: Mark 5:30, Acts 10:38, Romans 1:4, Colossians 1:15-18, 2 Peter 1:16). Other scholars think that John wanted to say both of these things.

See: [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?

[13:5]

Jesus washed his disciples' feet for two reasons: 1. He did this to clean their feet. The roads in Palestine were made of dirt. People walked everywhere. So their feet had dirt on them. 1. He did this so that they would know that they needed to serve other people (See: 13:14-16). Only servants or slaves washed people's feet. When Jesus lived, it was shameful to wash someone else's feet. But Jesus washed his disciples' feet. He is the Son of God and not a servant or slave. He rules over everything, yet he served others. He wanted people to serve other people.

See: [Son of God](#); [Serve](#); [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#); [Son of God](#)

What did Peter want to say to Jesus?

[13:6]

Peter told Jesus he did not want Jesus to wash his feet. He thought that washing feet was a shameful thing to do. First, he asked this as a question. Then, he said, "Lord, you will never wash my feet." But Jesus said he must wash him. Then, Peter wanted Jesus to wash his hands and head. He wanted to have Jesus wash all of him. Some scholars think Peter thought this was less shameful than washing only Peter's feet. Other scholars think Peter was saying that he really wanted to follow Jesus.

See: [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#)

What did Jesus want to say to Peter?

[13:7, 13:10]

Jesus wanted to say that it honors God when Christians help other people. This is true even when someone serves others by doing something others think is shameful. Jesus wanted his disciples to honor God. So he wanted them to help other people (See: 13:14-15). He wanted them to do things that help other people, even if they feel shame while they are doing it.

See: [Disciple](#); [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#); [Disciple](#)

13:18-30

Who was Jesus speaking of in 13:18?

[13:18]

Jesus spoke of Judas Iscariot in 13:18. Jesus knew Judas was going to help the Jewish leaders to find Jesus. Jesus wanted his other disciples to know that this was something that must happen.

Jesus also spoke of his other disciples. He wanted them to know that all of them except Judas were loyal disciples. They trusted Jesus and he trusted them. He also wanted them to know that God forgave their sins. So he called them "clean" (see: 13:10) and "chosen" (see: 13:18).

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

Who did Jesus talk about in 13:19-20?

[13:19, 13:20]

Jesus talked about himself in 13:19-20. He wanted to say that he is God. God gave himself the name "I am" (see: Exodus 3:14). He did this when he spoke to Moses. Jesus used the same words "I am" (see: John 8:58). He wanted people to know that he is God.

Jesus also talked about "him who sent me." He wanted to say that he spoke for God because God sent him to earth.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

13:23-30

Why did John write, "one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved"?

[13:23]

John wrote "one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved" in 13:23. Scholars think this was because John wrote about himself. John did not write his name in his gospel. Instead, he wrote "one whom Jesus loved" (see: John 19:26, John 20:2, John 21:7; John 21:20).

See: [Gospel](#); [Love](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did John write "lying down at the table against Jesus' side"?

[13:23]

John wrote "lying down at the table against Jesus' side." This was how people ate meals. At that time, people ate meals lying down around a table. They laid on their left arm with their feet pointing away from the table. They used their right hand to eat. Each person was near the persons lying next to them. So John was "at Jesus' side." Because he was near Jesus, he could easily lean against Jesus's side and ask him a question (see: 13:25).

Why did Jesus dip bread and give it to Judas Iscariot?

[13:26]

Jesus dipped bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot. He knew that Judas would betray him. Normally, dipping bread and giving it to someone gave that person great honor. However, Jesus knew Judas was going to give him to the Jewish leaders to be killed. Instead of honoring Judas, Judas was shamed.

See: [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#)

Why did John write about Judas and Satan in 13:27?

[13:27]

John wrote that Satan went into Judas to make known that Judas was doing what Satan wanted him to do. Some scholars think Satan controlled what Judas did. Judas was one of Jesus' disciples. However, Judas did not agree with what Jesus said and did. Therefore, he planned with Jesus' enemies. Because of this, he allowed Satan to "enter" him and take control of him. He wanted to do the things that Satan wanted him to do.

Other scholars think Satan only tempted Judas. The longer Judas did what Satan wanted him to do, the more he was doing what Satan wanted him to do. So in this way, Satan was doing what he wanted through Judas.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

13:31-38

Why did Jesus talk about being "glorified"?

[13:31]

Jesus talked about his being "glorified" in 13:31-32. He wanted his disciples to think about how God sent Jesus to earth. He wanted them to know that he did what God said to do. This would honor God. Also, God would greatly honor Jesus for this.

Jesus spoke about himself when he said "Son of Man."

When Jesus said he would be glorified immediately, he spoke of how would be killed and made alive again very soon (see: 13:32).

See: [Son of Man](#); [Disciple](#); [Son of Man](#)

Why did Jesus say "you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later"?

[13:36]

Jesus told Peter "you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later" (13:36). Jesus was speaking about how Peter would die. He used "follow" as a metaphor to talk about being killed in the same way Jesus was killed. The Romans crucified Jesus the next day. Jesus knew Peter would be crucified for believing in Jesus. But this did not happen for many years. So Jesus said it would happen "later."

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Chapter 14

¹ "Do not let your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, for I am going to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, so that where I am you will also be. ⁴ You know the way to where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you know him and have seen him." ⁸ Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "I have been with you for such a long time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from my own authority, but the Father living in me is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe because of the works themselves. ¹² Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will do the works that I do, and he will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it so that the Father will be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. ¹⁵ If you love me, you will keep my commandments, ¹⁶ and I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Comforter so that he will be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive him because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come back to you. ¹⁹ Yet a short amount of time and the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will also live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, and that I am in you. ²¹ He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and I will show myself to him." ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Jesus, "Lord, why is it that you will show yourself to us and not to the world?" ²³ Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and we will make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love me does not keep my words. The word that you hear is not from me but from the Father who sent me.

²⁵ I have said these things to you, while I am staying with you. ²⁶ However, the Comforter—the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and he will remind you of everything that I said to you. ²⁷ I leave you peace; I give you my peace. I do not give it as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not be afraid. ²⁸ You heard that I said to you, 'I am going away, and I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I am. ²⁹ Now I have told you before it happens so that, when it happens, you will believe. ³⁰ I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me, ³¹ but in order that the world will know that I love the Father, I do just as the Father commanded me. Let us get up and go from here."

John 14

14:1-7

Where were Jesus and his disciples?

Jesus and his disciples were still in the upstairs room. They stayed in this room while Jesus taught them.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus talk about his "Father's house"?

[14:2]

Jesus used a metaphor when he talked about his Father's house. His father's house is heaven. It is the place where God lives.

See: [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#)

What are the "many rooms" Jesus talked about?

[14:2]

Jesus talked about "many rooms" in his "Father's house." This was a metaphor. There are many places in heaven. These are places where people can live with God. God wants to have many people with him. Scholars think Jesus wanted the disciples to think about some buildings the Romans built. These buildings were large and meant for many people to live inside together.

See: [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus say that he would "come again"?

[14:3]

Jesus said he would "come again." Some scholars think Jesus was speaking about when he would return to the earth again. This will happen at the time of the end of the world. Other scholars think he also wanted his disciples to know he would come back after he died.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say that he will "receive you to myself"?

[14:3]

Jesus said that he will "receive you to myself." He was saying that he will take the people who believe in him to be with God forever.

What was the "way" Jesus talked about?

[14:4]

Jesus used the metaphor of a "way" to talk about how people believe in him and do the things he wants them to do. Some scholars think he was talking about how God saves a person can be at peace with God because they believe in Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus was also talking about how Christians obey God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "I am"?

[14:6]

See: John 6:35

See: [Yahweh \(I am\)](#)

Why did Jesus say he is "the way, the truth, and the life"?

[14:6]

Jesus said he is "the way, the truth, and the life." This is used a metaphor. He talked about how he made it possible for people to do the things that honor God. He did this when he died. He wanted to say that God will save people from their sinning only if they believe in Jesus.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "if you had known me, you would have known the Father"?

[14:7]

Jesus said "if you had known me, you would have known the Father." He was saying that he is God. So, if someone knows Jesus, that person also knows God. Jesus often said "the Father" when he wanted to talk about God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#)

14:9-11

What did Jesus say in 14:9-11?

[14:9]

In 14:9-11, Jesus said more about what he said in 14:7. That is, he told Philip and the other disciples again that he is God. When he said "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" (14:10a, 14:11), he wanted his disciples to know that he is God. He was not saying that he was inside of God.

When he said "the Father living in me is doing his work" (14:10b), he wanted his disciples to know that God did the things that Jesus did. So when people saw Jesus do something, that was the same as seeing God do it.

See: [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Trinity](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus say that people need to believe in him?

[14:11]

Jesus said people need to believe in him because he is God. However, Jesus knew it is hard for people to know how he and the Father are in each other. So he told his disciples that there is another reason to believe in him.

He told his disciples they need to believe in him because of the miracles he did. He knew he had done many things so that people would know his great power. He did things that only God could do. So Jesus told his disciples that these miracles allowed them to know that he is God.

See: [Miracle](#); [God the Father](#); [Disciple](#); [Miracle](#)

14:12-17

Who is the "comforter" or "advocate" about which Jesus spoke?

[14:16]

The "comforter" that Jesus spoke about is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comforts and encourages Christians. Also, the Holy Spirit speaks for Christians when they are unable to speak (See: Romans 8:26). Therefore, the Holy Spirit is called a "comforter."

Advice to Translators: Use the same word in your language that is used in the Bible in your language for 4:16 to mean comforter or advocate.

See: 14:26

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Jesus say the Holy Spirit "lives with you and will be in you"?

[14:17]

Jesus said the Holy Spirit "lives with" and "will be in" Christians. The Holy Spirit comes into a person in some way when the person believes in Jesus. While Jesus was on earth, the Holy Spirit was in him. When he returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit went inside of every person who believes in Jesus.

Jesus wanted Christians to know that he does not leave them alone after they believe in him. Instead, in some way the Holy Spirit will live in them. He does not force them to do things. Demons do this when they possess a person. Instead, the Holy Spirit helps people. He guides them. He comforts them. He encourages them. He teaches them. The Holy Spirit is God. So Jesus said this to say that in some way God lives with a person after they believe in Jesus.

See: [Holy Spirit](#), [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Demon](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

14:18-21

How did Jesus not leave his disciples alone?

[14:18]

Jesus did not leave his disciples alone because he went back to them after God made him alive again. The disciples continued to see and speak with Jesus during the 40 days after he died and was resurrected. Jesus came back to them to prove he was no longer dead. So, this fulfilled the promise he made to them here.

Jesus also did not leave his disciples alone because he sent his Spirit to live in them (See: John 14:15-17; Acts 2). Jesus' spirit and the Holy Spirit are the same person.

See: [Disciple](#) ; [Disciple](#)

What is "that day" about which Jesus spoke?

[14:20]

"That day" (14:20) was the day Jesus was made alive again. He knew that when his disciples saw that he was alive again, they would be able to understand what he told them at the Passover supper. They would understand that he is God.

Scholars think Jesus also spoke about the time when he would return to earth, that is the last days. He will return at the ending of the world. He used words that Jewish people sometimes used when they wanted to speak about the ending of the world.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Last Days](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who is the "Father" about which Jesus spoke?

[14:20]

When Jesus spoke about the "Father," he wanted his disciples to think about God.

See: [Disciple](#); [God the Father](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say he is "in" his Father, and we are "in" him, and he is "in" us?

[14:20]

When Jesus said he is "in" his Father, he said that he is God. He did not say that he was inside of God.

He also said that Christians are in some way joined to him when they believe in him. However, Christians are not God. That is, Jesus is "in" the Father in a different way than Christians are "in" Jesus.

See: [In Christ](#); [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#); [In Christ](#)

14:28-31

Why did Jesus say the Father is "greater" than Jesus?

[14:28]

Jesus said the Father is "greater" than Jesus (see: 14:28) because he obeyed the Father. The Father made a plan before he created the world. He planned how people's sins could be forgiven. Jesus obeyed that plan when he died on the cross.

In the same way a son obeys his father because the son is ruled by the father, so Jesus obeys God the Father. However, Jesus is God (See: John 5:18).

See: [Jesus is God](#); [God the Father](#); [Will of God](#); [Sin](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Cross](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Who is the "ruler of this world"?

[14:30]

The "ruler of this world" is Satan (See: John 12:31, Ephesians 2:2, and 2 Corinthians 4:4). God is the ruler of Satan and the world. However, God gave Satan permission to rule in some way.

Satan wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus said Satan could not force Jesus to do anything. So Satan was not given permission to kill Jesus. However, Jesus gave people permission to crucify him when Satan tempted them. Jesus did this to obey God the father's plan. Therefore, Satan did not kill Jesus. Instead, Jesus gave his life for people's sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Chapter 15

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the message that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown away like a branch and dries up, and they gather the branches and throw them into the fire, and they are burned up. ⁷ If you remain in me, and if my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified in this, that you bear much fruit and so prove that you are my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, as I have kept the commandments of my Father and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have spoken these things to you so that my joy will be in you and so that your joy will be made full. ¹² This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this—that one lays down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do the things that I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, for everything that I heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain. This is so that whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you love one another. ¹⁸ If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world and because I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ They will do all these things to you because of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates me also hates my Father. ²⁴ If I had not done the works that no one else did among them, they would have no sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But this is in order to fulfill the word that is written in their law, 'They hated me without a cause.' ²⁶ When the Comforter comes—whom I will send to you from the Father, that is, the Spirit of truth, who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷ You also must testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 15

15:1-8

Where are Jesus and his eleven disciples in John 15?

Some scholars think Jesus and his eleven disciples walked to the Garden of Gethsemane in John 15-17. At the end of John 14 (see: John 14:31) Jesus told the disciples they must leave the upstairs room. These scholars think Jesus continued to teach the disciples while they walked to the Garden of Gethsemane. Fewer scholars think Jesus and his disciples went to the temple on the way to Gethsemane. These scholars think that Jesus and the disciples did not arrive in the garden of Gethsemane until John 18:1.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem and Surrounding Area (during Jesus' lifetime) (including Temple, Kidron Valley, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Bethphage, Bethany)

What is a "vine"?

[15:1]

A vine is a kind of plant that grows grapes. In these verses, when Jesus talked about "fruit," he wanted his listeners to think about grapes. Someone needs to carefully care for a vine so it will make as many grapes as possible. Fruit is a metaphor used many times in the Bible.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "I am"?

[15:1]

Jesus said "I am" in 15:1 to say that he is God. This is because Jesus and God have the same name. In 8:58, Jesus said "before Abraham was, I am." Jesus said this so the people would think about Exodus 3:14. In Exodus 3:14, Moses saw God in a burning bush. In that verse, God told Moses that God's name is "I am." So, in John 15:1, Jesus said "I am" to tell the disciples that he is God.

There are several other places in the gospel of John where Jesus said "I am" to say that he is God (See: 4:26, 6:36, 41, 48, 7:28-29, 8:23-24, 9:5, 10:7-14, 10:36, 11:25, 14:6, 14:10-12).

See: [Trinity](#); [Yahweh \(I am\)](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus call himself the "true vine"?

[15:1]

Jesus called himself the "true vine." This was a metaphor. He said this to speak about how people need to follow God. People need to believe in Jesus if they want God to save them from the punishment for their sinning. Grapevines grow in a vineyard. So Jesus spoke about people growing in God's kingdom. This happens when people believe in Jesus. So Jesus is the "true vine."

Jesus said that Israel was not the "true vine." That is, the people of Israel believed they followed God. So they thought they were God's true vine (see: Psalm 80:7-9). But they stopped doing the things that honor God (see: Isaiah 5:1-2). So they were no longer the "true vine." Jesus is now God's "true vine." People who want to honor God must believe in Jesus.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Sin](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is a "gardener"?

[15:1, 15:2]

A "gardener" is a person who grows plants in a garden. In these verses, Jesus talked about a person who grows vines in a vineyard. A vineyard is a kind of garden where people grow vines that produce grapes.

See: [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "my Father is the gardener"?

[15:1, 15:2]

Jesus said "my Father is the gardener." This was a metaphor. Jesus used this metaphor to talk about God. Jesus often "Father" when he wanted to talk about God. In 15:1, he said that God is the "gardener" to say that God cares for people who believe in Jesus.

In a vineyard, the gardener removes vine branches that do not grow. But the gardener carefully trims vine branches that do grow. He trims away things that will harm the branches. This helps the vine to grow more grapes. So Jesus wanted his disciples to think about how God helps people who believe in Jesus. God helps them the way the gardener helps branches that are growing.

See: [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "bear fruit"?

[15:2, 15:4, 15:5, 15:8]

When Jesus said "bear fruit," he continued to use the metaphor of a vine. He wanted his disciples to think about all they could do to honor God. Branches in a vineyard grow grapes. In the same way, Christians that grow will do things that honor God. Jesus called this "fruit."

See: [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#)

Who bears "no fruit"?

[15:2]

When Jesus said some people bear "no fruit" (15:2), he wanted his disciples to think about people who do not honor God. Some scholars think he spoke about Christians who do not do the things that Jesus taught. That is, they say they believe in Jesus, but they do not do the things that he taught them to do. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about people who do not believe in him. Because they do not believe in him, they cannot honor God.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Jesus say his disciples were "already clean"?

[15:3]

Jesus said his disciples were "already clean." He said this to say they were already at peace with God. They did not need to do anything new to be at peace with God. In John 13:10, Jesus said his disciples were clean, except for Judas Iscariot. He said that his disciples (except Judas Iscariot) believed in Jesus. So God forgave them from the punishment of sinning because they believed in Jesus. Because God forgave their sins, they were "clean." They did not need to have their sins forgiven again.

See: [Sin](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Disciple](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Jesus say "remain in me"?

[15:4]

See: [Abide](#)

Why did Jesus speak about branches being burned?

[15:6]

When Jesus spoke about branches being burned (15:6), he wanted his disciples to think about Christians who do not remain in him (see 15:4). He continued to use the metaphor of a vine. In a vineyard, branches that did not make grapes were cut off and burned. This is because they were useless to the owner of the vineyard.

These burned branches were a metaphor for Christians who do not remain in Jesus. They are useless branches. They are not connected to the vine. That is, they are not connected to Jesus. Anyone not connected to Jesus will be thrown away and burned in the same way a dead branch is thrown away and burned.

Sometimes, the word burning is used in the Bible to talk about hell. However, scholars think when Jesus spoke about burning branches in 15:6 he did not want to speak about hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Abide](#); [Metaphor](#); [Vine \(Vineyard\)](#); [Hell](#)

Why did Jesus say "ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you"?

[15:7]

When Jesus said "ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you", he wanted his disciples to know they needed to do the things that God wanted them to do. When a person believes in Jesus, people need to obey Jesus. They should do the things Jesus wants them to do. So when a Christian prays, they should pray for God's will. That is, he will ask God what it is God wants him to do. This kind of prayer honors God. So God will honor the person who prays this way by answering his prayers.

Jesus did not want to say that God will do anything a person wants him to do. Sometimes Christians think about and pray about things that do not honor God. God will not give people the things that do not honor him.

See: [Will of God](#)

Who is the "Father" that Jesus spoke about which Jesus spoke?

[15:8]

When Jesus spoke about the "Father," he wanted his disciples to think about God. Jesus often spoke about the "Father" when he wanted to speak about God.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

15:9-17

Why did Jesus say "my joy will be in you" and "your joy will be complete"?

[15:11]

When Jesus said "my joy will be in you" and "your joy will be complete," he wanted his disciples to know that people can have true joy only if they believe in Jesus and obey him.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

Why did Jesus say a person who believes in Jesus needs to "lay down his life"?

[15:13]

Jesus said a person that believes in him needs to be ready to "lay down his life" for another person. That is, they need to serve other people and perhaps even be willing to die for other people. He said this because he wanted the people who believe in him to "love one another." This is how they are to love one another.

Jesus did not want to say that all Christians need to be killed. He said this to talk about how some Christians will die so other people will know how much they love Jesus. He wanted to say that they would choose to do this. That is, they will choose to obey Jesus instead of not being killed

What did Jesus want to say in 15:14-15?

[15:14, 15:15]

In 15:14-15, Jesus spoke about how much he loves Christians. He told his disciples they were his "friends." In 15:10-13, he spoke about how his disciples must obey him. They do this in the same way a friend does what their friend tells them to do because they love him. So, Jesus spoke about his disciples as "friends" to say that he wanted them to obey him because they loved him.

See: [Disciple](#)

15:18-27

Why did Jesus speak about "hate"?

[15:18]

When Jesus spoke about "hate" in 15:18-21, he wanted his disciples to know that if they believed in him, then other people will persecute them. This is because they do not believe in Jesus.

Jesus said that people would persecute him. The Romans persecuted him by killing him. So, he wanted his disciples to know that people will persecute them for believing in him.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "of the world"?

[15:19]

When Jesus spoke about people who are "of the world," he wanted his disciples to think about people who do not believe in him. They do things that do not honor God.

See: [World](#)

Why did Jesus say "because of my name"?

[15:21]

Jesus said "because of my name" to speak about people who believed in him. That is, people who are "Christians" (see: Acts 11:26).

See: [Name](#)

Why did Jesus say "him who sent me"?

[15:21]

When Jesus spoke about "him who sent me," he wanted his disciples to think about God. God the Father sent God the Son into the world to be the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Trinity](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "now they have no excuse for their sin"?

[15:22]

When Jesus said "now they have no excuse for their sin," he wanted to speak about how people needed to believe in him. God sent Jesus to tell people about God. He did this so they would believe in him and he would forgive them from the punishment of sinning. But when people do not believe in Jesus, they reject God. This is because Jesus is God.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke only about the Jewish people who did not believe in him. These people had the Romans kill Jesus. That was the sin for which they had no excuse. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about anyone who did not believe in Jesus after they have heard the gospel. Still other scholars think Jesus spoke about both these groups of people.

Advice to translators: When someone does something bad, they often make an excuse. They do this so they will not be punished for doing something bad. They defend themselves by saying an excuse. Someone makes an excuse by saying that they had a good reason for doing the bad thing they did. An excuse is them saying to people why they did something. Here, the words "they have no excuse" are being used to say that there is nothing they can say to explain why they rejected Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Gospel](#)

Who is the "Comforter" (or "Advocate") about which Jesus spoke?

[15:26]

The "comforter" or "advocate" about which Jesus spoke is the Holy Spirit. One of the things the Holy Spirit does for Christians is to comfort and encourage them. Another thing the Holy Spirit does is to ask God the Father to do good things for them.

Advice to Translators: Use the same word in your language that is used in your Bible for comforter or advocate in 4:16.

See: 14:16,26

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

Chapter 16

¹ "I have spoken these things to you so that you will not fall away. ² They will throw you out of the synagogues. But the hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think that he is offering a service to God. ³ They will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me. ⁴ I have spoken these things to you so that when their hour comes, you will remember that I told you about them. I did not tell you about these things in the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ But now I go to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ But truly I tell you, it is better for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, the Comforter will prove the world to be wrong about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment— ⁹ about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, and you will no longer see me; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. ¹² I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak from himself. But he will say whatever he hears, and he will tell you things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you. ¹⁵ Everything that the Father has is mine. Therefore, I said that the Spirit will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you. ¹⁶ In a short amount of time you will no longer see me, and after another short amount of time you will see me." ¹⁷ Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A short amount of time you will no longer see me and after another short amount of time you will see me,' and, 'Because I go to the Father'?" ¹⁸ Therefore they said, "What is this that he says, 'A short amount of time'? We do not know what he is talking about." ¹⁹ Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him, and he said to them, "Is this what you are asking each other, what I meant by saying, 'In a short amount of time and you will no longer see me, and again in a short amount of time and you will see me'? ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will be glad. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. ²¹ When a woman gives birth she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers her tribulation because of her joy that a man has been born into the world. ²² So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your heart will be glad, and no one will be able to take away your joy from you. ²³ On that day you will not ask me anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy will be fulfilled.

²⁵ "I have said these things to you in figures of speech, but the hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but instead I will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ On that day you will ask in my name and I do not say to you that I will pray to the Father for you, ²⁷ for the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and because you have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father, and I have come into the world. Again, I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father." ²⁹ His disciples said, "See, now you are speaking plainly and you are not using figures of speech. ³⁰ Now we know that you know all things, and you do not need anyone to ask you questions. Because of this, we believe that you have come from God." ³¹ Jesus answered them, "Do you believe now? ³² See, the hour is coming, yes, and has indeed come, when you will be scattered, everyone to his own home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. ³³ I have spoken these things to you so that you will have peace in me. In the world you have tribulation, but have courage, I have conquered the world."

John 16

16:1-4

Where were Jesus and his eleven disciples in John 16?

In John 16, Jesus and his eleven disciples continued to walk to Gethsemane. At the end of John 14 (see: John 14:31), Jesus told the disciples they needed to leave the upstairs room. Some scholars think Jesus and his eleven disciples walked to the Garden of Gethsemane in John 15-17. Jesus continued to teach

them while they walked to the Garden of Gethsemane. They did not arrive in the Garden of Gethsemane until John 18:1.

Fewer scholars think that in John 16, Jesus and his disciples were at the temple on the way to Gethsemane.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem and Surrounding Area (during Jesus' lifetime) (including Temple, Kidron Valley, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Bethphage, Bethany)

What did Jesus want to say in 16:1-4?

[16:1, 16:2, 16:3, 16:4]

Jesus said things in 16:1-4 to tell his disciples they would be persecuted soon. He wanted them to be ready for this. If they were ready, they would not stop trusting Jesus when other people persecuted them (16:1). Jesus protected his disciples from persecution while he was with them (16:4). However, other people would persecute his followers after he died.

[Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Who was "you"?

[16:1]

Jesus was talking to the eleven disciples when he said "you." However, Jesus also wanted all Christians to know what he said. There were only eleven disciples because Judas left them (see: John 13:27-30). Judas went to betray Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

What are "these things"?

[16:1]

Jesus wanted the disciples to remember what he told them in chapter 15 when he said "these things." He wanted them to "remain" in him (15:4). He wanted them to be ready when other people hated and persecuted them (15:20-21).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Abide](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How does a person "fall away"?

[16:1]

Jesus spoke about falling away. This was a metaphor. He wanted to talk about how someone can stop believing or trusting in Jesus in some way. He wanted to warn the disciples so they would not stop trusting him.

Some scholars think Jesus wanted to speak about a Christian rejecting him completely and permanently. If they did this, they would not live together with him in heaven. Other scholars think Jesus spoke about a Christian not following him for only a short period of time. They will still live together with Jesus in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Disciple](#); [Eternal Security](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Jesus say "the hour" and "their hour"?

[16:2, 16:4]

Jesus used the metaphor "the hour" because he wanted to talk about some time soon. Soon, Jesus' enemies would start to persecute his followers. He was not speaking about a certain time of day. Instead, he wanted to speak again about when his enemies would persecute his followers when he said "their hour."

See: [Metaphor](#) ; [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus say "throw you out of the synagogues"?

[16:2]

Jesus warned his disciples that Jewish leaders would keep them from worshipping with other Jews when he said "throw you out of the synagogues." Synagogues were buildings where Jewish people worshipped God. "Throw out" is a metaphor for not allowing a person to enter a place anymore. It was very bad for Jews when the Jews threw someone out of the synagogue. That person's Jewish friends did not talk to him anymore. He could not worship with other Jews.

See: [Worship](#); [Synagogue](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) : [Worship](#)

Who is the "Father"?

[16:3]

The "Father" is God. Jesus often spoke about the "Father" when he wanted to speak about God.

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

16:5-15

Why did Jesus say "him who sent me"?

[16:5]

Jesus wanted his followers to think about God the Father when he said "him who sent me."

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus say none of his disciples asked him where he was going?

[16:5]

Jesus wanted to say that none of his disciples asked him where he was going at the time he spoke these words in 16:5. Earlier Peter (see: John 13:36) and Thomas (see: John 14:5) asked Jesus where he was going. However, they did not ask him where he was going later in 16:5.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say he would "go away"?

[16:7]

Jesus said he would "go away" because he wanted his disciples to know he had to die. He used "go away" as a metaphor for his crucifixion. He was crucified to save people from sin. So, he could not remain with the disciples.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#).

Why was it "better" for Jesus' followers that he go away?

[16:7]

Jesus wanted his disciples to know that there was something better than having him with them when he said it was "better." He wanted to tell them about the Holy Spirit. Jesus had to be crucified for the Holy Spirit to be able to enter into those who believe in Jesus. He lives in them forever. This was "better" than simply having Jesus on earth to teach a few followers.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Jesus speak about the "Comforter"?

[16:7, 16:8]

Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit when he spoke about the "Comforter" (παράκλητος #g3875). The Holy Spirit comforts, protects, and helps people who believe in Jesus.

Advice to translators: Use the word in your language that is in the Bible text. The Greek word παράκλητος can also be translated into English as "Helper" or "Advocate." It is the word for a person who comes alongside someone else to help him.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Jesus say "the world"?

[16:8]

Jesus wanted to speak about all people and all the things people do that do not honor God when he said "the world."

See: [World](#)

Why did Jesus say the Holy Spirit will "prove the world to be wrong"?

[16:8]

Jesus wanted people to think about how sinning is wrong when he said the Holy Spirit will "prove the world to be wrong." That is, people who sin do wrong. The Holy Spirit will make them know how they dishonor God when they sin. He will make them know how they need God to forgive their sins.

He will also make them know that they do not know how to be at peace with God. They can only be at peace with God by believing in Jesus.

He will also make them know that God will judge them for sinning, unless they repent. God will judge them for sinning the same way he judges Satan. Jesus wanted his disciples to think about Satan when he spoke about the "ruler of this world" in 16:11.

See: [Disciple](#); [World](#); [Sin](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Who is the "ruler of this world"?

[16:11]

Jesus wanted his disciples to think about Satan when he spoke about the "ruler of this world." God gives Satan permission to rule the world in some way, but this will only happen for a short time (see: John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, Ephesians 2:2, 6:12).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Who is the "Spirit of Truth"?

[16:13]

Jesus was speaking about the Holy Spirit when he spoke about the "Spirit of Truth." The Holy Spirit speaks to people. He tells them only what is true. Therefore, he is called the "Spirit of Truth."

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Jesus say "he will not speak from himself" and "he will say whatever he hears"?

[16:13]

Jesus said "he will not speak from himself" and "he will say whatever he hears." He wanted to say that the Holy Spirit will tell people what God the Father wants people to know. The Holy Spirit is God, but he is

not God the Father. So Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit speaks to someone, he speaks what the Father wants the person to know.

See: [Trinity](#); [God the Father](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus say "he will take from what is mine"?

[16:14]

Jesus wanted to speak about the things only God knows when he said "he will take from what is mine." Jesus knows these things because he is God. The Holy Spirit also knows these things because he is also God. The Holy Spirit helps Christians to know God when he tells them these things. He helps them to know what they need to know to do the things that honor God.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

16:16-24

Why did Jesus tell the disciples "in a short amount of time, you will no longer see me"?

[16:16]

Jesus wanted to tell the disciples that he would die when he said "you will no longer see me," He wanted them to know this would happen soon when he said "in a short amount of time." Jesus was crucified the next day.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#) [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "after another short amount of time, you will see me"?

[16:16]

Jesus wanted to speak about when he would come back to life when he said "you will see me." He wanted them to know this would happen soon after he died when he said "after another short amount of time." Jesus was resurrected three days later.

Jesus knew the disciples would not know what he meant. Therefore, he repeated it three times (16:16, 17, 19).

See: [Disciple](#) ; [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say "the world will be glad"?

[16:20]

When Jesus said "the world will be glad." He wanted his disciples to know that people who did not believe in him would be happy when he was killed. His disciples would be sad. But people who did not like what he taught would be glad because he was dead. They thought other people would stop believing in him.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus speak about a woman giving birth in 16:21-22?

[16:21]

Jesus spoke about a woman giving birth in 16:21-22. This was a metaphor. He used this to tell the disciples about the different way they would think about Jesus dying after he was crucified. They would have pain when he was crucified in the same way a woman giving birth will have pain. Jesus knew that he would be made alive again. So in the same way a woman is happy and forgets her pain after the baby is born, they would be happy and forget their pain when Jesus was made alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "I will see you again"?

[16:22]

Jesus wanted to say he would return to the disciples when he said "I will see you again." This happened after he was resurrected. The disciples and many other people saw Jesus many times for 40 days. Then he returned to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Heaven](#)

What is "joy"?

[16:22]

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

[Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "no one will be able to take away your joy from you"?

[16:22]

Jesus wanted the disciples to know that things would change after he was resurrected when he said "no one will be able to take away your joy from you." The disciples were happy because they were with him while he was alive. They would have joy even though he would stop being on earth (see: Acts 13:52). Nobody could do anything to make this joy be gone (see: 1 Peter 1:8).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "you will not ask me anything" and "if you ask anything of the Father in my name"?

[16:23]

Jesus wanted to say that the disciples would not need to ask him for any more information when he said, "you will not ask me anything." This is because they would understand what he told them. Also he wanted them to know that they could pray directly to God the Father when he said "if you ask anything of the Father in my name." They could pray in Jesus' name, and God would answer.

Some scholars think Jesus spoke about prayer when he said both things. They think he wanted to say that while he was on earth, the disciples prayed to Jesus. But he wanted them to know that after he was resurrected they could pray directly to God the Father.

See: 16:26-27

See: [God the Father](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [God the Father](#)

16:25-33**Who is the "Father"?**

[16:25]

See: [God the Father](#)

What is a "figure of speech"?

[16:25, 16:29]

Here the words "figure of speech" refer to the proverbs and parables Jesus used to teach his disciples. That is, Jesus sometimes said things in a way that made it difficult to understand exactly what he meant. Jesus said he had spoken to the disciples in a way that was hard for them to understand. However, soon he would talk to them in a way that they could understand.

See: [Parable](#); [Parable](#)

Why did Jesus say "the hour is coming"?

[16:25]

Jesus wanted to speak about the time after he was resurrected when he said "the hour is coming" in 16:25. He used the metaphor of "hour" to talk about a time in the future.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "the hour is coming"?

[16:32]

Jesus wanted to speak about the time when he was crucified when he said "the hour is coming" in 16:32. He used the metaphor of "hour" to talk about a time in the future. He did not mean a literal time on the clock. This was not the same "hour" as in 16:25.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "you will have peace in me"?

[16:33]

Jesus wanted his disciples to remember what he told them when he said "you will have peace in me." They would not have to fear what might happen after he was crucified. The things Jesus said to them would give them peace and courage.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "I have conquered the world"?

[16:33]

Jesus said "I have conquered the world." He used two metaphors. He wanted to speak about everyone and everything that does not honor God when he said "the world." (see: 16:8). When he said he "conquered," this was not a military victory. Instead, he died and was resurrected so that God could forgive people's sins. He wanted to say he saved people from the power of sin. In this way, he "conquered" the "world."

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 17

¹ After Jesus said these things, he lifted up his eyes to the heavens and said, "Father, the hour has come, glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you— ² just as you gave him authority over all flesh so that he would give eternal life to everyone whom you have given him. ³ This is eternal life: That they know you, the only true God, and him whom you sent, Jesus Christ. ⁴ I glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work that you have given me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify me along with yourself with the glory that I had with you before the world was made. ⁶ I revealed your name to the people whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me comes from you, ⁸ for I have given them all the words that you gave me. They received them and truly knew that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ Everything that is mine is yours, and yours is mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ I am no longer in the world, but these people are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me so that they will be one, just as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I kept them safe in your name, which you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was destroyed, except for the son of destruction, so that the scriptures would be fulfilled. ¹³ Now I am coming to you, but I am saying these things in the world so that they will have my joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask for you to take them away from the world, but for you to keep them safe from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Set them apart by the truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ Just as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For their sakes I have set myself apart, so that they themselves may also be set apart in truth. ²⁰ I pray not only for these, but also for those who will believe in me through their word ²¹ so that they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world will believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you gave me, I have given to them, so that they will be one, just as we are one: ²³ I in them, and you in me—that they may be brought to complete unity, so that the world will know that you sent me, and that you have loved them just as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you gave me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, the world did not know you, but I know you; and these know that you sent me. ²⁶ I made your name known to them, and I will make it known so that the love with which you have loved me will be in them, and I will be in them."

John 17

Where are Jesus and his disciples in John 17?

Some scholars think Jesus and the disciples were at the Jerusalem temple in John 17. These scholars think they were also at this temple in John 15 and 16. Other scholars think the disciples continued to walk from the temple toward the Garden of Gethsemane. Still other scholars think they were still in the upstairs room where they were in John 14.

See Map: Jerusalem and Surrounding Area (during Jesus' lifetime) (including Temple, Kidron Valley, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Bethphage, Bethany)

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

What did Jesus do during John 17?

Jesus prays to God the Father in John 17.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

1:1-5

Why did Jesus "lift up his eyes to the heavens"?

[17:1]

John wrote that Jesus "lifted up his eyes to the heavens" because he wanted readers to know that Jesus began to pray. He wanted to say that Jesus prayed to God the Father.

When the Jews prayed, they looked up. They looked up to look toward God. They thought God was in heaven. They thought heaven was above the sky. So they looked up at the sky to pray to God.

See: [Trinity](#); [God the Father](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus say "the hour has come"?

[17:1]

Jesus said "the hour has come." That is, it was about the time for Jesus to die and be resurrected. He knew that he would die soon. Jesus knew that God would make Jesus alive again after Jesus died. He used the metaphor of "hour" to say that it was ready to happen. He did not mean an actual time on the clock. He wanted his disciples to know that he would die soon when he said "the hour."

See: [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Disciple](#)

What did Jesus want his disciples to think about when he spoke about "glorifying"?

[17:1, 17:4, 17:5]

Jesus wanted his disciples to think about how to honor God when he spoke about "glorifying." He also wanted to say that God honors people when they honor Jesus. So Jesus asked God to honor him (17:1) because Jesus honored God.

Jesus also spoke about his being "glorified" in 13:31-32. He wanted his disciples to think about how God sent Jesus to earth. Jesus obeyed all God the Father told him to do. He also died to obey the Father.

Jesus wanted to return to God the Father in heaven. However, he knew he needed to die and be resurrected in order to do this. Then Jesus again had God the Father's honor and power completely.

Jesus made it possible for people to have peace with God the Father by his death and resurrection. God also greatly honored Jesus for this. Jesus spoke about this again in chapter 17.

Jesus said the words glorify and glory nine times in John 17. He really wanted his disciples to honor God.

See: John 13:31-32, 17:10,22,24

See: [Trinity](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Trinity](#)

Why did Jesus say "your Son" and "the Son"?

[17:1]

Jesus said "your Son" and "the Son" to speak about himself. Jesus is the Son of God. That is, he is the person of God called "the Son."

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

Why did Jesus say "all flesh"?

[17:2]

Jesus used a metaphor to speak about all people when he said "all flesh." He wanted to say that God the Father gave him permission to rule over all people.

See: [God the Father](#); [Flesh](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus say "eternal life"?

[17:3]

Jesus said "eternal life" because he wanted his disciples to think about two things.

Jesus said "eternal life" because he wanted his disciples to think about living forever. He wanted them to think about living with God forever. Jesus said eternal life comes from "knowing" God and Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How did Jesus have "glory" with God the Father before the world was created?

[17:5]

Jesus had "glory" with God the Father before the world was created because he is God. Because he is God, Jesus had the same power and honor as God the Father before the world was created. Jesus created the world with God the Father (see: John 1:1-3). Later, Jesus became a man. When he did this, he removed some of his power and honor (see: Philippians 2:5-11). Here, Jesus asked God the Father to return him to all of Jesus' power and honor. This happened when Jesus was resurrected.

See: 17:24

See: [Son of God](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Incarnation](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#)

1:6-19

Why did Jesus say he "revealed" God's "name" to other people?

[17:6]

Jesus said he "revealed" God's "name" to other people because he wanted them to know that he is God. When Jesus lived, people thought that the name of a person was the person himself. That is, when you spoke about someone's name, you were speaking about that person. So, God's name in some way made people think about all that God is and the things he does. When Jesus said he "revealed" God's name, he wanted to say that in some way people who saw and heard him saw and heard God. He also wanted his disciples to know that when they believe in Jesus, they are believing in God too.

See: 17:26

See: [Disciple](#); [Name](#); [Disciple](#)

Who were "the people whom you gave me"?

[17:6]

"The people whom you gave me" were Jesus' disciples. When he said that God the Father "gave" the disciples to him, he used a metaphor. He wanted to say that in some way God guided him when he chose his disciples. So, in some way God chose the disciples before Jesus did.

See: [Metaphor](#); [God the Father](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Jesus say "I have given them all the words that you gave me"?

[17:8]

Jesus said "I have given them all the words that you gave me." That is, he told his disciples everything God wanted him to say. He wanted them to think about everything he taught them while he was alive. So, he said "all the words."

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus ask God the Father to "keep" his disciples?

[17:11, 17:15]

Jesus asked God the Father to protect his disciples when he asked God to "keep" them. Some scholars think he wanted them to keep believing in Jesus. He knew other people would try to get them to stop believing in Jesus. Those people would try to hurt them or kill them. So he asked God to protect them from this. Other scholars think Jesus wanted them to remain united with one another and not fight with one another.

This happened after Jesus was resurrected and returned to heaven (see: Acts 1). Jesus protected his disciples while he was alive (see: 17:12). That is, he stopped other people from hurting them. However, he knew he was going to die. So he could not do this for them anymore. So, he asked the Father to do this.

See: [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#)

Who was the "son of destruction"?

[17:12]

Jesus spoke about the "son of destruction." He was speaking about Judas Iscariot. Jesus called him this because Judas betrayed Jesus. That is, he told the people who wanted to kill him where he Jesus was located.

Jesus said this was "to fulfill Scripture" because he wanted his disciples to think about prophecies in the Old Testament. Scholars think he spoke about Psalm 41:4-9.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did Jesus speak about "the world"?

[17:13, 17:15, 17:16]

Jesus spoke about "the world" in 17:13 and 17:15 because he wanted his disciples to think about everyone on the earth.

Jesus spoke about "the world" in 17:14 and 17:16 because he wanted his disciples to think about people who do not believe in God. They do not worship or obey God. Instead, they do things that "the evil one" (17:15) wants. The "evil one" is Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Worship](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Jesus say he and his followers are not "of" the world?

[17:14, 17:16]

Jesus said he and his followers are not "of" the world because he wanted to say that they are "of" God. That is, they belong to God. This is because they believe in God. They follow God. They do things to honor God. So they do not belong to "the world." That is, they do not do the evil things "the world" does.

Advice to translators: The word "of" in these verses means "to belong to" or "to be like or similar in some way." Jesus did not want to say his followers are God. But they belong to God.

See: [World](#)

Why did Jesus say "set apart"?

[17:17, 17:19]

Jesus said "set apart" to ask God to help Jesus' disciples. Some scholars think he wanted them to continue to believe in Jesus. When people believe in Jesus, this makes them different from other people. They are different because they worship and obey God. Jesus wanted to say that being different in this way is good. He also wanted to ask God to help his followers to keep believing in him. Other scholars think Jesus asked this because he wants them to continue to be different from people who do not believe in Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

17:20-26

Who did Jesus pray for in 17:20-26?

[17:20]

Jesus prayed for everyone who will believe in him in the future. In 17:13-20, Jesus prayed for the disciples who followed him while he was alive.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Jesus say "in me", "in you", "in us", and "in them"?

[17:21, 17:23, 17:26]

Jesus said "in me" and "in you" because he wanted his followers to know that he is God.

Jesus said "in us" and "in them" because he also wanted his followers to know that he loved them. This is because they believe in him. He used "in" as a metaphor to speak about being loving friends. He did not want to say that his followers are literally "in" his body. He also did not want to say that his followers are God.

Advice to translators: Jesus used the word "in" for two different reasons in this verse.

1. When he said "in me" and "in you", he wanted to say "the same." That is, Jesus and God are the same. So Jesus is God.
2. When he said "in us" and "in them," he wanted to speak of people believing in and following someone. This makes them almost like that person in some way. But they are not the same as the person in which they believe. If your language has different words for these ideas, use those words. If your language has one word that can mean both these things, use that word.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 18

¹ After Jesus spoke these words, he went out with his disciples to the other side of the Kidron Brook, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered. ² Now Judas, who was going to betray him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ Then Judas, leading a company of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Then Jesus, who knew all the things that were happening to him, went forward and asked them, "Who are you looking for?" ⁵ They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am." Judas, who betrayed him, was also standing with the soldiers. ⁶ So when he said to them, "I am," they went backward and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then again he asked them, "Who are you looking for?" Again they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁸ Jesus answered, "I told you that I am. So if you are looking for me, let these go." ⁹ This was in order to fulfill the word that he said: "Of those whom you have given me, I lost no one." ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. Now the name of the servant was Malchus. ¹¹ Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword back into its sheath. Should I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

¹² So a company of soldiers and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, seized Jesus and tied him up. ¹³ They led him first to Annas, for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now Caiaphas was the one who had given the advice to the Jews that it would be better that one man die for the people.

¹⁵ Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest; ¹⁶ but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and he brought Peter in. ¹⁷ Then the female servant, the doorkeeper, said to Peter, "Are you not also one of the disciples of this man?" He said, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now the servants and the officers were standing there, and they had made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves. Peter was also with them, standing there and warming himself.

¹⁹ The high priest then asked Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I was always teaching in synagogues and in the temple where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret." ²¹ Why did you ask me? Ask those who have heard me about what I said. Look, these people know what I said." ²² When Jesus had said this, one of the officers standing there struck Jesus and said, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, testify about the wrong, but if rightly, why do you hit me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him tied up to Caiaphas the high priest.

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. The people then said to him, "Are you not also one of his disciples?" He denied it and said, "I am not." ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, who was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" ²⁷ Then Peter denied it again; and immediately the rooster crowed.

²⁸ Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the government headquarters. It was early in the morning, and they did not enter the government headquarters so that they would not be defiled but would be able to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation are you bringing against this man?" ³⁰ They answered and said to him, "If this man was not an evildoer, we would not have given him over to you." ³¹ Pilate therefore said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." ³² They said this so that the word of Jesus would be fulfilled which he had spoken to indicate by what kind of death he would die.

³³ Then Pilate entered the government headquarters again and called Jesus and he said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you speak from yourself, or did others speak to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the chief priests gave you over to me. What did you do?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, then my servants would fight so that I would not be given over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate then said to him, "Are you a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I have been born, and for this purpose I have come into the world, to

testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" When he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in this man. ³⁹ But you have the custom that I release one person to you at the Passover. So do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?" ⁴⁰ Then they cried out again and said, "Not this man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.

John 18

18:1-11

Where did Jesus and his disciples go at the beginning of John 18?

[18:1]

In John 18, Jesus and his disciples walked to the Garden of Gethsemane (see: Mark 14:32).

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Jerusalem and Surrounding Area (during Jesus' lifetime) (including Temple, Kidron Valley, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Bethphage, Bethany)

Who is Jesus?

[18:5, 18:7]

Jesus said he is God. The soldiers said they looked for Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus did not disagree that he was Jesus of Nazareth. However, Jesus said "I am." He did not mean "I am Jesus." Instead, "I am" was the name God spoke to Moses (see: Exodus 3:14).

See: John 8:58

See: [Yahweh \(I Am\)](#); [Yahweh \(I Am\)](#)

See Map: Nazareth

Why did the soldiers go backward?

[18:6]

The soldiers went backward because of what Jesus said. The soldiers were forced backwards and fell down when Jesus told the soldiers who is he. John does not write why these soldiers fell backwards. Some scholars think the words Jesus said were so powerful that the soldiers were amazed and fell backwards. Other scholars think Jesus said "I am" very loudly, with great power. That is what knocked them down.

Why did Peter cut off the servant's ear?

[18:10]

Peter cut off the servant's ear because he wanted to protect Jesus. Peter fought to stop the soldiers arresting Jesus. Peter did not understand that God's plan was for Jesus to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Peter had a short sword with him. He drew his sword and cut off the right ear of Malchus. He was a servant of the high priest.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Sin](#); [High Priest](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What is "the cup" Jesus said he must drink?

[18:11]

The "cup" Jesus said he must drink was his crucifixion. Jesus used a metaphor to say that he must die on the cross for the sins of everyone (see: Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, and Luke 22:39-46). "Cup" is a metaphor here for something that must be done.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Cross](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

18:12-14

Why did the soldiers take Jesus to Annas after they arrested him?

[18:13]

The soldiers took Jesus to Annas because they needed someone to tell them what to do with Jesus. Jesus was a wise Jewish man. Many people followed him. They might be very angry if they thought Jesus was not being treated in the right way.

So the soldiers needed a powerful Jewish person to tell them what to do with Jesus. Annas was old and experienced. However, Annas was not the actual high priest when Jesus was arrested. He was the father-in-law of the high priest, Caiaphas. Annas was high priest from when Jesus was young. After Annas was the high priest asked, the high priest after him asked him for advice. Therefore, the soldiers took Jesus to Annas so he could help Caiaphas know what to do with Jesus.

See: [High Priest](#)

18:15-24

Who was the other disciple?

[18:15]

John wrote about "another disciple," but he did not write this man's name. Scholars think John wrote about himself. In his gospel, John wrote about himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," instead of writing his own name (see: John 13:23, 19:26-27, 20:2, 21:7, and 21:20). So here, John used another name instead of his name. He called himself, "another disciple."

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did the officer hit Jesus?

[18:22]

The officer hit Jesus because he thought Jesus had insulted Annas. The officer called Annas "the high priest" because Annas had been high priest. So the officer expected everyone to honor Annas. He thought Jesus did not do that. So he thought Jesus needed to be punished for that.

See: [High Priest](#)

18:25-32

Why did John write "immediately the rooster crowed"?

[18:27]

John wrote "immediately the rooster crowed" so people would think about what Jesus told Peter in 13:38. Jesus told Peter that Peter would say he did not know Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. That is to say, Peter would say that he did not know Jesus three times that night. Peter said he did not know Jesus in 18:17, 25, 27. When the rooster crowed, it confirmed that Jesus was right about this. Jesus knew what was going to happen.

Where did they take Jesus after they left Caiaphas' home?

[18:28]

The soldiers took Jesus from Caiaphas' home to the place where the Roman governor Pilate lived. John called this the "government headquarters." This is because this was where most government decisions were made.

See: [Palace](#)

Why did the soldiers not enter?

[18:28]

The soldiers would not enter Pilate's home because Pilate was not a Jew. These soldiers were Jews. If a Jew entered the home of a Gentile that Jew became unclean. He could not eat any of the special Passover meals until a month later (see: Numbers 9:6-13).

Pilate knew the Jews believed this. So Pilate came outside to speak to the Jews about Jesus.

See: [Passover](#); [Gentile](#); [Passover](#)

Why did Pilate not want to judge Jesus?

[18:31]

Pilate did not want to judge Jesus because he did not think Jesus had done anything wrong. The Jews said Jesus did evil things.

Scholars think Pilate really did not want the Jews to be angry with him. He knew large crowds followed Jesus. He was afraid the crowds might become very angry and cause trouble for him if he judged Jesus. So, he told the Jewish people there to judge him according to the Jewish laws. That way Jesus' followers could not say Pilate had done anything wrong.

Why did the Jewish people at Pilate's palace say they could not kill anyone?

[18:31]

The Jewish people at Pilate's palace said they could not kill anyone because only the Romans could legally kill a criminal. The Jews who were there wanted to kill Jesus. However, they could not kill anyone without permission from the Roman governor. The Romans often crucified criminals. However, they did give permission to do this to people they ruled.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

18:33-40

Why did Pilate speak to Jesus in private?

[18:33]

Pilate took Jesus into his palace to talk to him about why the Jews wanted to kill him. He wanted to do this without the Jews listening.

Some Jews accused Jesus of saying he was their king (see: Luke 23:2). In the Roman Empire, it was illegal for anyone except the leader of the Roman Empire to say they were a king. So if Jesus said this, he did something wrong and Pilate could judge him.

However, many other Jews wanted Jesus as their king (see: John 1:49, 6:15, 12:13, and 12:19). They might have started a rebellion against Rome. Because of this, Pilate needed to know if Jesus said he was a king.

See: [Rebel \(Rebellion\)](#); [Rebel \(Rebellion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say what he said in 18:36?

[18:36]

Jesus said what he said in 18:36 to tell Pilate two things: 1. Jesus is a king. 1. Jesus is not a king in the way the Roman emperor was a king. Jesus said "my kingdom is not of this world" because he wanted Pilate to think about God's kingdom. He wanted to say that his kingdom was not going to stop the Roman kingdom.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What was "the truth" Jesus spoke about?

[18:37]

Jesus called his teaching of forgiveness and eternal life "the truth." Jesus said that all those who belong to "the truth" listen to him. Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" (18:38). Pilate said this to say that he did not believe in any certain "truth."

See: [Eternal Life](#)

What was the "custom" about which Pilate spoke?

[18:39]

The "custom" about which Pilate spoke was a special thing the Romans did for the Jews at Passover. The Roman governor would release one man from prison. It would be someone the Jews asked to be released.

Here, Pilate told them Jesus was not guilty of anything. Then Pilate offered to release Jesus. This was because he did not think Jesus needed to be killed.

See: [Passover](#)

Who was Barabbas?

[18:40]

Barabbas was a criminal who was in prison. John wrote that he was a "robber." Scholars think he was also a violent person who fought against the Roman empire. They think the Jewish people asked for Barabbas to be freed because Barabbas was a hero to some of them. He was a hero because he tried to free Israel from Roman rule.

Chapter 19

¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and whipped him. ² The soldiers weaved a crown of thorns. They put it on the head of Jesus and dressed him with a purple garment. ³ They came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they struck him.

⁴ Then Pilate went outside again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him outside to you so that you will know that I find no guilt in him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. Pilate said to them, "Look, here is the man!"

⁶ When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw Jesus, they cried out and said, "Crucify him, crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he has to die because he claimed to be the Son of God." ⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid, ⁹ and he entered the government headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where do you come from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ Then Pilate said to him, "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You do not have any authority over me except for what has been given to you from above. Therefore, he who gave me over to you has a greater sin." ¹² At this answer, Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

¹³ When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place called "The Pavement," but in the Aramaic language, "Gabbatha." ¹⁴ Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, at about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews, "See, here is your king!"

¹⁵ They cried out, "Away with him, away with him; crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "Should I crucify your King?"

The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." ¹⁶ Then Pilate gave Jesus over to them to be crucified.

¹⁷ Then they took Jesus, and he went out, carrying the cross for himself, to the place called "The Place of a Skull," which in the Aramaic language is called "Golgotha." ¹⁸ They crucified Jesus there, and with him two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a sign and put it on the cross. There it was written: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this sign because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The sign was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹ Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This one said, 'I am King of the Jews.''"

²² Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

²³ When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, divided them into four shares, one for each of them; and also the tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. ²⁴ Then they said to each other, "Let us not tear it, but instead let us cast lots for it to decide whose it will be." This happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled which said,

"They divided my garments among themselves
and cast lots for my clothing."

This is what the soldiers did.

²⁵ Now standing beside Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, see, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "See, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

²⁸ After this, knowing that everything was now accomplished and so that the scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A container full of sour wine was placed there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop staff and lifted it up to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had taken the sour wine, he said, "It is finished." He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross during the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was especially important), asked Pilate to break their legs and to remove them. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the second man who had been crucified with Jesus. ³³ When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. ³⁴ However, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ The one who saw this has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that what he said is true so that you would also believe. ³⁶ For these things happened in order to fulfill scripture, "Not one of his bones will be broken." ³⁷ Again, another scripture says, "They will look at him whom they pierced."

³⁸ After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, since he was a disciple of Jesus (but secretly for fear of the Jews), asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission. So Joseph came and took away his body. ³⁹ Nicodemus also came, he who at first had come to Jesus by night. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about one hundred litras. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, as was the custom of the Jews to bury bodies. ⁴¹ Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden was a new tomb in which no person had yet been buried. ⁴² Because it was the day of preparation for the Jews and because the tomb was close by, they laid Jesus in it.

John 19

19:1-16

Why did John write Pilate whipped Jesus?

[19:1]

John wrote Pilate whipped Jesus because he wanted people to know that Pilate ordered it. Pilate did not do it himself. However, he ordered the Roman soldiers to do it. They had to obey Pilate.

Why did Pilate have Jesus whipped?

[19:1]

Pilate had Jesus whipped so the people would know that Pilate punished criminals. Pilate was the Roman governor in Judea. He wanted Judea to have peace. Therefore, he did not want people to think that criminals were not punished. Although Jesus was not a criminal, people thought he was a criminal.

When Jesus was whipped, it was not as severe as when the soldiers flogged Jesus just before he was crucified (see: 19:16).

See Map: Roman provinces including Judea

Why did the Roman soldiers put a "crown of thorns" and a purple robe on Jesus?

[19:2, 19:5]

The soldiers put a "crown of thorns" and a purple robe on Jesus to hurt him and mock him. This was part of the way the Romans crucified him.

The crown he wore have very long thorns. It had sharp ends stuck out of it. So, these thorns went into Jesus' head and caused bleeding.

Purple was the color of clothes that kings wore. The soldiers dressed Jesus like this to say that they thought he was not a true king.

The soldiers did this because Pilate called Jesus "King of the Jews." However, they did not believe Jesus was the king of the Jews. They wanted to mock and humiliate Jesus. They wanted people to think that even if Jesus was a king, he was not very powerful.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Crown](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Why did Pilate tell the Jewish leaders again that Jesus was not guilty?

[19:4, 19:6]

Pilate did not agree with what the Jews said Jesus had done. Because of this, he again told the Jewish leaders that Jesus was not guilty. That is, he did not do anything wrong or break the law.

Why did Pilate go back inside the government headquarters?

[19:9]

Pilate went back inside the government headquarters to think about what to do. He was afraid (19:8) of what might happen. He was afraid that the Jews might begin to cause trouble for him if he did the wrong thing. The Roman emperor could have Pilate killed if the Jews began to make trouble for Rome.

The Jews said Jesus did something that was not to be done according to the Law of Moses (see: Leviticus 24:16). They said he needed to die because of this. However, Pilate was not a Jew. He did not have to follow the Law of Moses. However, he did have to keep anyone from causing trouble for the Roman empire. So he needed time to think about how to control the Jewish people.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Why did Jesus say, "You do not have any power over me except for what has been given to you from above"?

[19:11]

Jesus said, "You do not have any power over me except for what has been given to you from above" to make Pilate and other people think about God. Pilate thought he had power over Jesus. Pilate could release Jesus or have him crucified because he was the governor.

Jesus said that Pilate could only do these things because God allowed Pilate to do these things. He said Pilate was given his power "from above." That is, God gave Pilate permission to do these things.

Jesus said the person who sent Jesus to Pilate was more responsible for his death than Pilate. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the high priest Caiaphas. Caiaphas was responsible for the Jewish religious leaders' efforts to kill Jesus (see: John 11:45-53). Other scholars think Jesus spoke about Judas Iscariot. Judas gave Jesus to Caiaphas by telling the soldiers where they could find Jesus.

See: [High Priest](#); [High Priest](#)

Who was "Caesar"?

[19:15]

"Caesar" was the Roman emperor. It was the title people used when they wanted to speak about the emperor.

19:17-27

Why did Jesus carry his own cross?

[19:17]

Jesus carried his own cross because the Romans made him do this. They made him do this so the crowds would see it. They wanted the people to be afraid of them. So they forced criminals to carry their crosses through the streets.

Scholars think Jesus only carried part of the cross. The entire cross was too heavy for one person to carry, especially if that person had just been whipped. Because of this, Jesus only carried it a short distance. Then the soldiers forced someone else to carry the cross for Jesus. This person was Simon of Cyrene (see: Luke 23:26).

See: [Cross](#)

How was a person crucified?

[19:18]

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Where was Jesus crucified?

[19:17, 19:18]

Jesus was crucified at a place called "the Place of a Skull." This was a small hill just outside of Jerusalem. The Romans often crucified criminals there. The Aramaic word for this place was "Golgotha." The English word for this place is "Calvary".

See: [Languages in the New Testament](#)

See Map: Golgotha

Why did Pilate put a sign on Jesus' cross in three languages?

[19:20]

Pilate put a sign on Jesus' cross in three languages. He wanted everyone who saw it to be able to read it. The Romans put signs on crosses to tell people the criminal's name and the crime they had done. The sign on Jesus' cross was written in the three languages spoken in Jerusalem. That is, the message was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. Pilate thought that most people could read one of these languages. Some translations use the word "Hebrew" instead of Aramaic. Aramaic was the language spoken by the Hebrew people, that is, the Jews. However, there was another language called Hebrew that only the priests could speak. It was the language the Jewish people spoke before the spoke Aramaic.

Scholars think Pilate wrote "the King of the Jews" on Jesus' sign to mock the Jews. The Jewish religious leaders hated Jesus and wanted him crucified. However, Pilate hated the Jews. He wanted to release Jesus, but the Jews made Pilate crucify Jesus. So, Pilate mocked them because they hated Jesus. He did this by writing Jesus was the King of the Jews.

See: [Languages in the New Testament](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Languages in the New Testament](#)

Why did the chief priests ask Pilate to change the sign?

[19:21]

The chief priests asked Pilate to change the sign because they did not want the people to read what Pilate wrote. They were afraid the people would think that Jesus really was their king. So they asked Pilate to change it to Jesus said that he was the king of the Jews.

See: [Chief Priest](#)

Why did Pilate say "what I have written, I have written"?

[19:22]

Pilate said, "what I have written, I have written" to tell the Jewish leaders he would not change the sign.

Why did the soldiers "cast lots" for Jesus' tunic?

[19:24]

The soldiers "cast lots" for Jesus' tunic to decide which of them would take it.

The Romans stripped criminals before they crucified them. That is, the criminals did not have any clothes on them when they were crucified. The soldiers got the clothes of the criminal. Jesus' tunic was worth more than the rest of his clothes. They decided to cast lots to determine which soldier would get Jesus' tunic.

Advice to Translators: A tunic was an outer robe that people wore over other clothes.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Who were the women John named?

[19:25]

John named four women who watched Jesus' crucifixion.

- Jesus' mother, Mary.
- Jesus' mother's sister.
- Mary, the wife of Clopas.
- Mary Magdalene.

Some scholars think John wanted to say that Jesus' mother's sister was Mary wife of Clopas. That is, he only named three women.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus say "Woman, see your son!" and "See your mother"?

[19:26, 19:27]

Jesus said "Woman, see your son!" and "See your mother" because he wanted John to care for his mother Mary after he died. That is, he told them to treat each other in the same way they treated their mother and their son.

Some scholars think John was Jesus' cousin. They think he chose John to care for Mary because of this. That is, he said it because John and Mary were already family.

19:28-37

Why did John write "everything was now completed"?

[19:28]

John wrote that Jesus knew "everything was now completed" because he wanted his readers to think about how God the Father gave Jesus a great task to finish. He gave Jesus this task before he sent him to earth. Now, Jesus knew he completed everything this task needed to be done.

See: [God the Father](#)

Why did Jesus say "I am thirsty"?

[19:28]

Jesus said "I am thirsty" because he needed something to drink. He had not had anything to drink for many hours. Scholars think Jesus also wanted his followers to think about Psalm 22:15.

Why did Jesus say "It is finished"?

[19:30]

Scholars disagree about why Jesus said, "It is finished."

1. Some scholars think Jesus said this because he finished his life as a human.
2. Other scholars think Jesus was finished the work God the Father sent him to do on earth.

3. Other scholars think Jesus finished dying for the sins of every person (see: 1 John 2:2).
4. Other scholars think Jesus finished what was needed for God to save people from their sins (see: Ephesians 2:8-10).

Scholars often think Jesus wanted to say more than one of these things.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did John write that Jesus "gave up his spirit"?

[19:30]

John wrote that Jesus "gave up his spirit" because he wanted his readers to know two things. 1. Jesus died at that time. John used a metaphor about people's bodies and spirits to write about when a person died. 1. Jesus controlled when he died. That is, Jesus died at that moment because he wanted to die at that moment.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What is the "day of preparation"?

[19:31]

The "day of preparation" is the day before the Sabbath. According to the Law of Moses, Jews cannot work on the Sabbath. Therefore, they must do certain things the day before the Sabbath.

Also, this day of preparation was the day before Passover. So, the Jews had to do extra things to prepare for the Passover.

See: [Passover](#); [Sabbath](#); [Passover](#)

Why did the Jews not want Jesus' body to remain on the cross during the Sabbath?

[19:31]

The Jews did not want Jesus' body to remain on the cross during the Sabbath because the Law of Moses required dead bodies to be buried before Sabbath began (see: Deuteronomy 21:23). For the Jews, each day begins at sunset. This meant that the Sabbath began that evening. Therefore, Jesus' body needed to be buried before sunset.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Advice to translators: Sunset is the time at the end of the day when one can no longer see the sun. This is not because it is behind a cloud.

Why did John write "that Sabbath was especially important"?

[19:31]

John wrote "that Sabbath was especially important" because it was the Sabbath of Passover. Passover was a festival for Jewish people, but it was not always celebrated on the Sabbath. So having Passover on the Sabbath was special.

See: [Passover](#); [Passover](#)

Why did the soldiers break the legs of the two criminals but not Jesus' legs?

[19:31, 19:32, 19:33]

The soldiers broke the legs of the two criminals to make them die more quickly. They did not break Jesus' legs because he was already dead.

Crucifixion was a form of execution. So, victims had to die. Victims normally died because the weight of their bodies on the cross stopped them from breathing. However, sometimes crucified men survived several days on crosses before they died. They could do this by using their legs to push their bodies up.

Then they could keep breathing. So, if the Romans wanted someone to die faster, they would break the person's legs. This kept the person from pushing up to breathe.

In this case, the Jews did not want dead bodies hanging on crosses on the Sabbath. Each new day for Jews began at sundown. The Jews had to remove the dead bodies off their crosses and bury them before sundown.

However, when the soldiers came to break Jesus' legs, Jesus was already dead. So the soldiers did not break Jesus' legs.

See: Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20

See: [Sabbath](#); [Cross](#); [Sabbath](#)

Why did a soldier stab Jesus' side with a spear?

[19:34]

The soldier stabbed Jesus' side with a spear so he would know Jesus was dead. Blood and water came out, but Jesus did not react to the spear. So the soldiers knew he was dead. Scholars think the water was from the fluid that is near the heart. Therefore, they stabbed Jesus in the heart.

Who was "the one who saw this"?

[19:35]

John himself was "the one who saw this." So he was able to write that "his testimony is true."

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

19:38-42

Who was Joseph of Arimathea?

[19:38]

Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin (see: Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50). Scholars think he was also a Pharisee. He was wealthy.

He was also a follower of Jesus. However, most people did not know this (see: Matthew 12:23-24). Joseph asked Pilate to let him remove Jesus' body from the cross. This was so he could bury it.

Most rich men had large tombs carved into rocky hillsides. These tombs had places carved out of the rock walls inside the tomb. They could place the bodies of their family members in those places. Jesus' body was the first body buried in Joseph's tomb because it was a new tomb.

See: [Tomb](#); [Pharisees](#); [Cross](#); [Tomb](#)

Who was Nicodemus?

[19:39]

Nicodemus was a Pharisee. He might have been a member of the Sanhedrin (see: John 3:1). Nicodemus respected Jesus. He defended Jesus against other Pharisees (see: John 7:46-52). Now Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea to care for Jesus' body.

See: [Pharisees](#); [Pharisees](#)

Why did Nicodemus bring myrrh and aloes?

[19:39]

Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes to anoint Jesus' body. Myrrh and aloes were expensive spices. Ancient people used spices like these to prepare bodies for burial. So Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped these spices in linen burial cloths. Then they wrapped those around Jesus' body.

Scholars think Nicodemus paid for these large amounts of expensive burial spices himself. "One hundred litras" was about 35 kilograms.

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Why did John write what he wrote in 19:42?

[19:42]

John wrote what he wrote in 19:42 to tell his readers that Joseph and Nicodemus had to bury Jesus quickly.

Chapter 20

¹ Now early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and she saw the stone rolled away from the tomb. ² So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she said to them, "They took away the Lord out from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

³ Then Peter and the other disciple went out, and they were going to the tomb. ⁴ They both ran together, and the other disciple quickly ran ahead of Peter and arrived at the tomb first. ⁵ Then stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go inside. ⁶ Simon Peter then arrived after him and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there ⁷ and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, the one who first arrived at the tomb, also went in, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For until that time they still did not know the scripture that he should rise from the dead. ¹⁰ So the disciples went back home again.

¹¹ But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she stooped down into the tomb. ¹² She saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the foot of where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to them, "Because they took away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him." ¹⁴ When she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"

She thought that he was the gardener, so she said to him, "Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him away."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni" (which is to say "Teacher").

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet gone up to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to them that I will go up to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God."

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that he had said these things to her.

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the middle of them and said to them, "Peace to you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus then said to them again, "Peace to you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." ²² When Jesus had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ Whoever's sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whoever's sins you keep back, they are kept back."

²⁴ Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples later said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

He said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ After eight days his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came while the doors were closed, and stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger and see my hands. Reach here with your hand and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believe."

²⁸ Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God."

²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen, and believed."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, signs that have not been written in this book, ³¹ but these have been written so that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so that believing, you would have life in his name.

John 20

20:1-10

What was the "first day of the week"?

[20:1]

The "first day of the week" was Sunday. The Jews said that the Sabbath was the last day of the week. The Sabbath was on Saturday.

See: [Sabbath](#)

Who was Mary Magdalene?

[20:1]

Mary Magdalene was a woman named Mary who came from Magdala. Magdala was a town on the Sea of Galilee six kilometers north of Tiberias (see: Matthew 15:39). She followed and served Jesus and his disciples in Galilee. Several other women also did this. She was there when Jesus was crucified and saw him die (see: Mark 15:37-41; Matthew 27:55-61). Mary was one of the first people to see Jesus after he was resurrected (see: 20:1-18, Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:1-8, and Luke 24:1-12).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Galilee; Magdala; Tiberias

Who did Mary speak about when she said "they"?

[20:2]

When Mary spoke about "they," she spoke about someone she thought moved Jesus' body. She thought Pilate or the Sanhedrin may have sent soldiers to roll away the stone and move Jesus' body. Mary continued to think this until Jesus spoke to her (see: John 20:16).

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

Who was the "other disciple" John wrote about?

[20:3]

When John wrote about the "other disciple," he wanted his readers to think about himself. John often wrote about himself by writing "other disciple" or "disciple whom Jesus loved" (See: John 13:23, John 18:15-16, John 21:7, 20, 23). Scholars think John wrote this because he wanted to be humble.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did John have to bend down to look into the tomb?

[20:5]

John had to bend down to look into the tomb because the tomb's entrance was lower than where he stood. Scholars think Jesus' tomb had a stairway that went down into the ground. These tombs were often carved out of the rock in the side of a hill. The entrance could go down a few steps into a room. So to see inside the tomb without entering it, John had to bend down to see under the top of the entrance.

See: [Tomb](#)

Why did John not go inside the tomb?

[20:5]

Scholars disagree about why John did not go inside the tomb. Some scholars think he wanted to allow Peter to enter first. Other scholars think John may have been afraid to go in.

See: [Tomb](#)

What did the disciples see in the tomb?

[20:5, 20:6, 20:7]

The two disciples saw Jesus' linen burial cloths lying inside the tomb. Linen was expensive. In ancient times, people used linen to wrap dead bodies before they buried them. The linen cloths protected the air from the decaying body. The spices Nicodemus brought (see: 19:39-40) were wrapped inside the layers of linen to reduce the odor of the decaying body.

Because the linen cloths lay on the ground, the disciples knew someone had unwrapped the cloths from Jesus' body. They understood that Jesus had come back to life, unwrapped himself, and left the linen cloths in the tomb.

Advice to translators: When someone died, their body decayed. That is, it broke down and was destroyed.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Tomb](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did John believe after he entered the tomb?

[20:8]

After John entered the tomb and did not see Jesus' body, John believed that Jesus was resurrected. He believed that Jesus had come back to life in the cloth he was buried in. However, Jesus unwrapped himself. He left the burial wrappings in the tomb, and he left the tomb. According to the other gospels, an angel rolled the stone away (see: Matthew 28:2).

See: [Angel](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Gospel](#); [Angel](#)

20:11-18

Why did John write that the angels were "in white"?

[20:12]

When John wrote that the angels were "in white", he wanted his readers to think that the angels wore white clothes. These clothes were very bright.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

Why did Mary "not know that it was Jesus"?

[20:14]

Mary did "not know that it was Jesus" because it was dark (see: 20:1). It was too dark for her to see him clearly. Also, she was surprised. She did not expect to see Jesus again after he died and was buried. So she thought the man she saw was the gardener. Mary did not recognize Jesus until he spoke to her. Then she recognized his voice.

Why did Mary say "Rabboni"?

[20:16]

Mary said "Rabboni" because she recognized the man in the garden with her was Jesus. Jesus' followers called him "Rabboni" (the Hebrew word for "teacher"). So now Mary said "Rabboni" to say that she knew it was Jesus.

Why did Jesus say "my brothers"?

[20:17]

Jesus said "my brothers" to speak about his disciples. He wanted to say that he felt that they were close friends.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

Why did Jesus say "my Father and your Father, and my God and your God"?

[20:17]

When Jesus said "my Father and your Father, and my God and your God," he wanted to speak about God. That is, "my Father", "your Father", "my God", and "your God" all are ways to speak about the same God. Jesus spoke this way to get Mary to think that in some way God the Father was her "Father" and her "God."

See: [Children of God](#); [Children of God](#)

20:19-23

Why were Jesus' disciples hiding "for fear of the Jews"?

[20:19]

Jesus' disciples were hiding because they were afraid the Jews or Romans might arrest and kill them, like they had done to Jesus. Many times the Romans did this with people who followed leaders the Romans executed. Many people knew who followed Jesus. It would be easy for Jewish leaders to tell the Romans about them. So, the disciples hid to keep this from happening.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

How did Jesus "come" and "stand in the middle of them" when the doors were locked?

[20:19]

Scholars do not know exactly how Jesus "came" and "stood in the middle of them" when the doors were locked. In some way, after he was resurrected, he could move differently than when he was alive. He was able to come into the room without opening the door.

See: 20:26

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Jesus show the disciples his hands and side?

[20:20]

Jesus showed the disciples his hands and side to prove he was alive. They knew he was crucified. They knew that this left holes in his hands where he was nailed to the cross. They knew a soldier stabbed him with a spear in his side. So Jesus showed them the scars to show it was really him and he was really alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Cross](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did Jesus give to the disciples?

[20:21, 20:22]

Jesus gave the disciples three things:

1. Jesus gave them peace. He gave them his peace and helped them when people opposed them and persecuted them. The first time Jesus said "peace to you" (20:19), this was a way the Jews greeted one another. But the second time (20:21), he said it to speak about this power.
2. Jesus wanted them to do something. God the Father sent Jesus into the world to serve him a certain way. He wanted Jesus to die so people could have their sins forgiven. It was also to teach people how to worship and serve God. Now, Jesus told his disciples to people how to worship and serve God.
3. Jesus gave them the Holy Spirit. After this, the Spirit of God lived in Christians in some way.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [God the Father](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How could Jesus' disciples forgive sins and not forgive sins?

[20:23]

Jesus' disciples could forgive sins because they served Jesus and Jesus gave them permission to do this. However, they did not have the power to do this. Only Jesus could forgive sins. However, Jesus gave them permission to tell people whether their sins were forgiven.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

20:24-29

Who were "the twelve"?

[20:24]

John wrote about "the twelve" to make his readers think about Jesus' closest disciples. Jesus chose twelve men to follow him closely (see: Luke 6:13). Now, because Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus and killed himself (see: 13:21-30; Acts 1:18), only eleven of them were left. However, John still used the words "the twelve" to write about the ones who were left.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Thomas say what he said when the other disciples told him Jesus appeared to them?

[20:25]

When the other disciples told Thomas that Jesus appeared to them, Thomas said what he did to tell them that he did not believe what they told him. Thomas was not with the disciples when Jesus appeared and showed them the scars on his body. So it was difficult for him to believe them. So, he said he would have to see the scars himself before he would believe Jesus was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did Jesus "come" and "stand among them" when the doors were closed?

[20:26]

See: John 20:19

Why did Jesus tell Thomas to touch his hands and side?

[20:27]

Jesus told Thomas to touch the scars on his hands and side, to help Thomas believe that he was really alive again.

Why did Thomas say "my Lord and my God"?

[20:28] Thomas said "my Lord and my God" because now he believed Jesus was resurrected. He also believed that Jesus is God. When Thomas said "my Lord", he used the same word that the Old Testament uses to speak about God.

See: [Jesus is God](#) ; [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Who are "those who have not seen, and believed"?

[20:29]

When Jesus said "those who have not seen, and believed," he spoke about all Christians. That is to say, he knew the disciples who saw him after he was resurrected believed in him because they saw him again. However, he also knew that many people would believe in him without seeing him. Jesus told Thomas that God blesses people who believe in him, even when they do not see him with their eyes.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

20:30-31

What are "signs"?

[20:30]

"Signs" are special things that Jesus did. He did these signs to show he is God. He did them to get people to believe in him. John wrote that in his gospel, he wrote down some of the signs Jesus did, but not all of them. This is because Jesus did so many signs.

See: [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did John write "so that you would believe"?

[20:31]

John wrote that he wrote down some of the signs Jesus did so that his readers would believe in Jesus.

Some scholars think John wanted to help people who do not yet believe in Jesus, to believe in him. Fewer scholars think John wanted to help Christians to trust in Jesus more.

See: [Sign](#)

Chapter 21

¹ After these things Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. This is how he revealed himself: ² Simon Peter was together with Thomas called Didymus, Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus. ³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We, too, will come with you." They went and got into a boat, but they caught nothing during the whole night.

⁴ Now, when it was already early in the morning, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know it was Jesus. ⁵ So Jesus said to them, "Young men, do you have anything to eat?"

They answered him, "No."

⁶ He said to them, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw their net and were not able to draw it in because of the large number of fish.

⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied up his outer garment (for he was undressed), and threw himself into the sea. ⁸ The other disciples came in the boat (for they were not far from the land, about two hundred cubits off), and they were pulling the net full of fish. ⁹ When they got out upon the land, they saw a charcoal fire there and fish laid on it, with bread.

¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹ Simon Peter then went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, 153 of them, but even with so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and the fish also. ¹⁴ This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after he had risen from the dead.

¹⁵ After they ate breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

Peter said to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter said to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Shepherd my sheep."

¹⁷ He said to him a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was sorrowful because Jesus had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" He said to him, "Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you become old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you and carry you where you will not want to go."

¹⁹ Now Jesus said this in order to indicate with what kind of death Peter would glorify God. After he had said this, he said to Peter, "Follow me."

²⁰ Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had also leaned back against the side of Jesus at the dinner and who had said, "Lord, who is the one who will betray you?" ²¹ Peter saw him and then said to Jesus, "Lord, what will this man do?"

²² Jesus said to him, "If I want him to stay until I come, what is that to you? Follow me."

²³ So this statement spread among the brothers, that that disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to Peter that the other disciple would not die, but, "If I want him to stay until I come, what is that to you?"

²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies about these things, and who wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ There are also many other things that Jesus did. If each one were written down, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

John 21

21:1-14

Where is the "Sea of Tiberias"?

[21:1]

The Sea of Tiberias is another name for the Sea of Galilee. Some people called it this to honor the Roman Emperor Tiberius.

See Map: Sea of Galilee

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Who were the disciples to whom Jesus appeared?

[21:2]

Jesus appeared to seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee: * Simon, who Jesus named Peter (see: Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-18, Luke 5:1-11, and John 1:35-51). * Thomas, who was also called Didymus (see: John 11:16, John 14:5, and John 20:24-21:1). * Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, who was also named Bartholomew (see: John 1:43-51). * The sons of Zebedee, James and John (see: Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 1:19-20, and Mark 3:17). * Two disciples whose names John did not write.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did Peter and some other disciples go fishing?

[21:3]

Scholars disagree about why Peter and the other disciples went fishing.

Some scholars believe Peter and these disciples returned to their old job of fishing. Jesus had appeared a few times, but most of the time people could not see him. So these scholars think the disciples did not believe Jesus was going to do anything more.

Other scholars think these disciples were fishing because they needed food. They also needed to earn some money by selling fish. They were waiting for Jesus to tell them what he wanted them to do.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did the disciples "not know it was Jesus"?

[21:4]

The disciples "did not know it was Jesus" because they were too far away. Also, it was early morning. So they could not see who it was.

Who is "the disciple whom Jesus loved"?

[21:7]

When John wrote about the "disciple whom Jesus loved", he wanted his readers to think about himself. John often wrote about himself by writing "other disciple" or "disciple whom Jesus loved" (See: John 13:23, John 18:15-16, John 20:3-8). Scholars think John wrote this way because he wanted to be humble.

Why did the disciple whom Jesus loved call Jesus "the Lord"?

[21:7]

The disciple whom Jesus loved called Jesus "the Lord" to honor him. This disciple was John. He first recognized the man was Jesus. He said to Peter the man was "the Lord." John that understood Jesus is God. So he used a word that many people used to honor God.

The Greek word that is translated as "the Lord" is the same word that the Jews used when speaking about God. Therefore, whenever Jesus is called this, the Jews would have thought about God. They would have thought that people were saying that Jesus is God.

See: [Disciple](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Disciple](#)

Was Peter naked while he fished?

[21:7]

Peter was not naked while he fished. But he wore only a robe as an outer garment. So, Peter tied his robe around him before he jumped into the water.

Why did Peter "throw himself into the sea"?

[21:7]

Peter "threw himself into the sea" to swim to shore to see Jesus. He was excited that Jesus had come. So he wanted to get to shore as fast as he could. He also needed to go to the shore to pull the net full of fish onto the shore (see: 21:11). To throw oneself into the sea is to jump out of the boat and into the water.

How far is "two hundred cubits"?

[21:8]

Two hundred cubits is about 90 metres.

How did John know there were 153 fish?

[21:11]

John does not say how he knew there were 153 fish. Some scholars think God wanted to say something special about the number of fish. But most scholars think John knew they caught exactly 153 fish. Fishermen like to count their fish.

Why did John write that this was "the third time Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he had risen from the dead"?

[21:14]

John wrote that this was "the third time Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he had risen from the dead" so his readers would think about the first two times that John wrote about when Jesus appeared to the disciples. The first appearance was when Jesus appeared to all of the disciples except Thomas. This happened on Sunday after the crucifixion (see: John 20:19-23). He appeared again to all the disciples a week later (see: John 20:24-29). This is the third time he appeared to seven disciples that Jesus was writing about.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#) ; [Disciple](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

21:15-25

Why did Jesus call Peter "Simon Peter" and "Simon son of John"?

[21:15]

When Jesus called Peter "Simon Peter" and "Simon son of John", he used different names for Peter. Simon was the name his parents gave him when he was born. Jesus had named him Peter, so he was often called Simon Peter after that (see: Matthew 16:16, Luke 22:31-34, and John 18:10). Peter was also called the son of John because his father's name was John (see: Matthew 16:17).

Who did Jesus speak about when he said "more than these"?

[21:15]

When Jesus said "more than these", he wanted Peter to think about the other disciples. Jesus asked Peter if Peter loved him more than the other disciples loved him.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who are the "lambs" and "sheep" that Jesus spoke about?

[21:15, 21:16, 21:17]

When Jesus spoke about "lambs" and "sheep", he used a metaphor for new Christians. He wanted to say that they had a lot to learn about God and Jesus. Peter had to teach them these things. So Jesus used a metaphor about feeding sheep to speak about this teaching.

See: [Shepherd](#); [Shepherd](#)

Why did Peter say that Jesus "knew all things"?

[21:17]

Peter said that Jesus "knew all things" because he had followed Jesus long enough to know that Jesus was very wise. In fact, he knew that Jesus is God. So, because God knows all things, Jesus must know all things. Jesus knows all things (see: Matthew 12:25, Matthew 22:18, Mark 2:8, Luke 6:8, Luke 11:17, Luke 16:15, and John 2:25).

See: [Jesus is God](#)

What did Jesus want Peter to think when he spoke what he spoke in 21:18?

[21:18]

When Jesus spoke what he spoke in 21:18, he wanted Peter to think about how Peter would die. He wanted to say that Peter would be crucified. In the Roman world, speaking about "stretching out" the hands was a way to speak about crucifixion.

Nobody wanted to die by being crucified. So Jesus said Peter would have to go where he would not want to go.

Scholars think Peter was crucified in Rome during the rule of the Roman Emperor Nero. This was about 30 years after Jesus said these words.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

Why did Jesus tell Peter to "follow me"?

[21:19]

Jesus told Peter to "follow" him because he knew Peter was not certain if Jesus still wanted Peter as a disciple. Peter had denied Jesus three times before Jesus was crucified (see: John 18:17-27). So Peter did not know if Jesus still wanted him. Peter did not know what he should do now. Jesus answered this question Peter thought about but did not ask. Jesus made it very clear to Peter what he should do. Peter should continue to follow Jesus.

See: [Disciple](#)

Who was the other disciple Peter asked about?

[21:20]

The other disciple Peter asked about was John. Peter wanted to know about John's life and death. Jesus told Peter to focus on his own life and death, not John's. Peter needed to obey what God wanted him to do, and John needed to obey what God wanted him to do. Each Christian must follow Jesus by obeying him and doing the things he wants them to do.

See: [Disciple](#)

Why did John write 21:23?

[21:23]

John wrote 21:23 to make clear what Jesus said. Some people thought Jesus told Peter that John would not die until Jesus returns to earth. However, Jesus did not want Peter to think about this. Peter must follow Jesus, and John must follow Jesus. They should not compare themselves to each other. Each disciple must obey Jesus and do the things he wants them to do.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who is the disciple who wrote this book?

[21:24]

John is the disciple who wrote this book. John never called himself by his name in this gospel. He did not want to take any attention away from Jesus. John wanted the readers of this gospel to remember Jesus, not John.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Savior](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did John write?

[21:25]

John explained in 21:25 that Jesus did many other things. John did not write all these things in his gospel. These other things were amazing things. They were amazing because Jesus did them. But there were so many of them that John could not write all of them down.

See: [Gospel](#)

Book: Acts

Introduction to the Book of Acts

Who wrote this letter?

Luke wrote the book of Acts. He was a Gentile doctor from Antioch, He also wrote the gospel of Luke

See: [Gentile](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Antioch

To whom did Luke write?

Luke wrote this book to Theophilus. This was the same man to whom he wrote the gospel of Luke to Theophilus. Theophilus can be translated as "friend of God." Some scholars think that Theophilus was a man who helped Luke. Perhaps he helped him to write this book by giving him money. Other scholars think Luke wrote to anyone who loves God. That is, he wrote to all Christians.

See: [Gospel](#)

What did Luke write about in Acts?

Luke wrote about church as more people believed in Jesus. He wrote about the days immediately after Jesus' death and resurrection until the time when Paul arrived in Rome. Luke wrote about the great things the Holy Spirit did to help people to know about Jesus. He also wrote about how both the Jews and Gentiles believed in Jesus.

See: [Church](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Rome

Why did Luke write this letter?

Luke wrote this letter so that people would know what happened to the Christians after Jesus died and was resurrected. He wanted people to know that both the Jews and the Gentiles could be Christians. He wanted all people to believe in Jesus.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Gentile](#)

Outline of the Book of Acts

1. The beginning of the church (1:1-2:41)
2. The early church in Jerusalem (2:42-6:7)
3. Increasing opposition to the gospel and persecution (6:8-7:60)
4. The persecution of the church and Philip's ministry (8:1-40)
5. Paul becomes an apostle (9:1-31)
6. The ministry of Peter and the first Gentile Christians (9:32-12:24)
7. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, Law of Moses, and the gathering of church leaders in Jerusalem (12:25-16:5)
8. The church growing and many people becoming Christians (16:6-19:20)
9. Paul travels to Jerusalem and becomes a prisoner in Rome (19:21-28:31)

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Acts

Chapter 1

¹ The former account I wrote, Theophilus, told all that Jesus began to do and to teach, ² until the day that he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself alive to them with many convincing proofs. For forty days he appeared to them, and he spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ When he was meeting together with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, about which he said, "You heard from me ⁵ that John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days."

⁶ When they were assembled together they asked him, "Lord, is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has determined by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ When the Lord Jesus had said these things, as they were looking up, he was raised up, and a cloud hid him from their eyes. ¹⁰ While they were looking intensely to heaven as he went, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. ¹¹ They said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return in the same manner as you saw him going into heaven."

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain that is called Olives, which is near to Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. ¹³ When they arrived, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying. They were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They all were devoted with one purpose to prayer, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers, about 120 names, and said, ¹⁶ "Brothers, it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled, that the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who guided the ones who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷ For he was one of us and received a share of this ministry." ¹⁸ (Now this man bought a field with the earnings he received for his wickedness, and there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines poured out. ¹⁹ All those living in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language "Akeldama," that is, "Field of Blood.") ²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

'Let his field be made desolate,
and do not let even one person live there';
'Let someone else take his position of leadership.'

²¹ It is necessary, therefore, that one of the men who accompanied us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John to the day that he was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection." ²³ They put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ They prayed and said, "You, Lord, know the hearts of all people, so reveal which of these two is the one whom you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned away to go to his own place." ²⁶ They cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Acts 1 Commentary

1:1-11

What does the kingdom of God mean in this passage?

[1:3]

In this passage, the "kingdom of God" means two different things.

God rules over everything. However, some scholars think that Christians agree for him to rule over themselves now in this life. This is why they obey him and trust in him. When Luke says that God rules over his kingdom, he means that these Christians agree to trust in him and obey him. But this is not the same as God ruling over the whole world, because most people still reject Jesus.

God rules over everything, but other scholars believe that he will also rule over the earth when Jesus comes back to earth and stays here. These scholars think that this is what Jesus was talking about in 1:3.

Most Jews thought that the Messiah would free Israel from the Gentiles ruling them. Some scholars believe that this meant that the nation of Israel would be free once again. They believe that Jesus will do this for Israel in the future and it will last forever.

Other scholars think that Jesus was talking about a new kind of kingdom. In this kingdom, Christians agree for God to rule over themselves, and they will obey him. While Jesus has always ruled over everything, he now rules over Christians in a special way. They also believe that Christians are the new “people of God” and therefore can also be called Israel.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [People of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Gospel](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did the disciples wait for the Holy Spirit?

[1:4, 1:5]

What the disciples waited for was for the Holy Spirit to do something new and different. They waited for him to give them his power in a new way. This new way would begin a new time when God would do new things for mankind.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How is a person baptized with the Holy Spirit?

[1:5]

To baptize something means to dip it into water or to cover it with water. The Jews dipped things in water to make them pure, that is, so they could use them as the Law of Moses instructed them. They also bathed themselves in order to make themselves pure or clean, that is, so that God would continue to accept them as his people.

In the same way, some scholars think that God baptizes people with the Holy Spirit when they begin to believe in Jesus. When God does that, he joins that person to himself. That person then becomes part of the Church, which is also called the “body of Christ.”

However, other scholars think that when God baptizes a person with the Spirit, he makes that person able to do miracles, such as speaking in unknown languages. However, only some Christians experience this.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How does one receive the Holy Spirit?

[1:8]

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Jesus talk about how the church would grow?

[1:8]

In 1:8 Jesus told his disciples how the Church will grow, that is, how more people would believe in him. Jesus said, “In Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” In the book of Acts, Luke tells how the Christians announced the gospel to people in these places, first in Jerusalem, next in Judea and Samaria, and finally much farther away, in Greece and in Rome.

See: [Samaria](#); [Israel](#); [Samaria](#)

What is the purpose of the church?

[1:8]

Christians are to tell people about God. They are also to share the gospel with everyone, no matter where they come from. They are to continue doing this until the whole world hears the gospel. This is the work that the church must do.

The church is able to do this by the power of the Holy Spirit, who is always with the church. The nation of Israel did not always have the Holy Spirit with it. But in the church, the Holy Spirit lives in all Christians. Because of this, Christians have become the primary means by which God draws people to himself.

See: [Israel](#); [Gospel](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Israel](#)

See Map: Jerusalem and Judea

1:12-26

Who were the apostles?

[1:13]

Eleven apostles were mentioned in 1:13. They are not always called by the same name in Scripture. However, they were the same eleven men.

Jewish people often had Greek names in addition to their Hebrew names. For example, Simon Peter had a Hebrew name (Simon) and a Greek name (Peter). He is sometimes called by one name, sometimes by the other, and sometimes by both.

Judas, son of James, is also called Thaddeus. Simon the zealot is also called Simon the Canaanite. Thomas is also called Didymus ("twin" in Greek). James is identified as a son of Zebedee (see: Matthew 4:21)

See: Mark 6:7-13, Matthew 10, and Luke 9:1-6

See: [Apostle](#)

Who were the “zealous people”?

[1:13]

The “zealous people” were a group of Jews who wanted to stop the Romans from ruling their own nation. The zealous people were often willing to fight with violent force in order to stop the Romans. They may have even murdered leaders in the government.

In 1:13 Luke shows that Simon was a member of this group. Scripture probably referred to Simon as a zealous person in order to tell him apart from Simon Peter. Scholars think that Simon did not continue to act as a zealous person after he started following Jesus.

See: Matthew 10:4

See: [Zeal \(Zealous, Zealot\)](#)

Who were Jesus’ “brothers”?

[1:14]

“Brothers” usually referred to brothers born from the same mother. However, it also refers to Christians together. They are brothers because they believe in Jesus. Most scholars believe 1:14 referred to Jesus’ brothers who were born from Mary, his mother. But perhaps “brothers” in 1:14 referred to Christians.

See: [Family of Jesus](#); [Family of Jesus](#)

Why were Jesus’ brothers praying?

[1:14]

If brothers referred to other Christians, then they were obeying Jesus' command to pray.

Brothers might have also referred to Jesus' brothers who were also born from Mary. However, these brothers did not believe in Jesus before he died on the cross. It would have been surprising for them to obey the commands of Jesus if they did not believe in him. Therefore, they probably came to believe in Jesus after he died and rose again.

See: Matthew 12:46-50, Galatians 1:18-19, 1 Corinthians 15:7, and Mark 6:3

See: [Family of Jesus](#); [Family of Jesus](#)

How did Judas Iscariot die?

[1:18]

Matthew said that Judas hanged himself (see: Matthew 27:5). In the book of Acts, Luke perhaps told what happened to Judas' body after he died. If no one found his body, it would have decomposed and, after some time, have fallen down to the ground. The rotten corpse could easily have burst open.

Was the role of apostle possible only in the very early Church?

[1:20, 1:21, 1:22]

Some scholars think that only the first Christians could be "apostles." They think this, because in 1:21-22 Luke says who could be an apostle. To be an apostle, a man had to be someone who had followed Jesus while Jesus lived on earth. He also had to have seen Jesus after he rose from the dead. This is why only people who lived in the time of Jesus could be apostles.

However, some scholars think that God still makes certain people able to be apostles. These people are of course different from the twelve apostles in the time of the first Christians.

Still other scholars think that the apostles sinned in selecting Matthias as the twelfth apostles. They do not think that God wanted Matthias to replace Judas Iscariot; they think that God wanted Paul instead.

These scholars say that the disciples sinned when they cast lots in order to find out what God wanted. It is true that Israelites cast lots in order to know what God wanted (see: Leviticus 16:8-10 and Numbers 26:55-56. Also, the book of Proverbs appears to permit the casting of lots (see: Proverbs 16:33.

However, most scholars do not think that Christians should cast lots. Few Christians cast lots today. Some scholars say that people who cast lots do sorcery. Others scholars say that Christians do not need to cast lots, because the Holy Spirit now lives in them and guides them.

See: Acts 6:2

See: [Will of God](#); [Cast Lots](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Will of God](#)

Why were there twelve apostles?

[1:26]

In Matthew 19:28, Jesus prophesied that the twelve apostles would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. This is probably the reason that the apostles appointed another disciple to replace Judas Iscariot.

In addition to this, some scholars believe that the Church has replaced Israel as the people of God. They think that the twelve apostles represent this new Israel. However, other scholars believe that the church and Israel remain distinct groups.

See: Luke 22:30

See: [Israel](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Church](#); [Israel](#)

Chapter 2

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in the same place. ² Suddenly a sound like the rush of a violent wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ There appeared to them tongues like fire that were distributed, and they sat upon each one of them. ⁴ They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them the ability.

⁵ Now there were Jews who were living in Jerusalem, godly men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When this sound was heard, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ They were amazed and marveled; they said, "Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our languages about the mighty works of God." ¹² They were all amazed and perplexed; they said to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others mocked and said, "They are full of new wine."

¹⁴ But Peter stood with the eleven, raised his voice, and declared to them, "Men of Judea and all of you who live at Jerusalem, let this be known to you; pay attention to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk as you assume, for it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ 'It will be in the last days,' God says,
 'I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.
 Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
 your young men will see visions,
 and your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Surely on my servants
 and my female servants in those days
 I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the sky above
 and signs on the earth below,
 blood, fire, and vapor of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood
 before the great and remarkable
 day of the Lord comes.

²¹ It will be that everyone who calls
 on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

²² Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited to you by God with the mighty deeds and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.

²³ This man was handed over by God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge; and you, by the hand of lawless men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross. ²⁴ But God raised him up, freeing him from the agonies of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David says about him,

'I saw the Lord always before my face,
 for he is beside my right hand
 so that I should not be moved.

²⁶ Therefore my heart was glad
 and my tongue rejoiced.
 Also, my flesh will live in hope.

²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
 neither will you allow
 your Holy One to see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life;
 you will make me full of gladness with your face.'

²⁹ Brothers, it is proper for me to speak to you confidently about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of the fruit of his loins on his throne. ³¹ He saw what was to happen in the future and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay.

³² This Jesus—God raised him up, of which we all are witnesses. ³³ Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out what you see and hear.

³⁴ For David did not ascend to the heaven, but he says,

"The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand

³⁵ until I make your enemies
the footstool for your feet."

³⁶ Therefore, let all the house of Israel certainly know that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were pierced in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what must we do?"

³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far off, as many people as the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰ With many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." ⁴¹ Then they received his word and were baptized, and there were added in that day about three thousand souls. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

⁴³ Fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and they sold their property and possessions and distributed them to all, according to the needs anyone had. ⁴⁶ So day after day they devoted themselves with one purpose in the temple. They also broke bread in homes, and they shared food together with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people, and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2

2:1-4

What was the day of Pentecost?

[2:1]

Pentecost was a Jewish festival. This festival came 50 days after the Passover week ended. It was one of the three most important festivals in the Jewish faith. For these three festivals, the Law of Moses made all Jewish men come to Jerusalem to "appear before the Lord" (see: Deuteronomy 16:16). These men brought offerings of the grain from the summer wheat harvest. These offerings gave thanks to God for helping the harvest. Pentecost was also called "The Feast of Weeks." It was celebrated seven weeks after the Passover week ended (see: Leviticus 23:15).

The Feast of Pentecost brought the most visitors of Jews and Gentiles who believed in God to Jerusalem. It was the best time of year to travel. Some scholars think this is why God chose the Pentecost festival to baptize the followers of Jesus with the Holy Spirit. That is, the most people possible were there to see it.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Pentecost](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Who was there when the Holy Spirit came?

[2:1]

Scholars disagree on how many people were there when the Holy Spirit came. They do not know if it was only the twelve apostles or if Jesus' relatives and the 120 disciples were also there (see:1:14-15). The house or upper room was big enough for the twelve apostles (see:1:13). If 120 disciples were there, then the "house" where they met was thought to be a large house with many rooms. Or some scholars think they met in part of the outer courts of the temple.

See: [Temple Courts](#); [Apostle](#); [Disciple](#); [Temple Courts](#)

How did Luke describe the coming of the Holy Spirit?

[2:2]

The Holy Spirit came with the sound of a strong "rushing" (φέρω/g5342) "wind"(πνοή/g4466). Luke said all the people in the house heard this sound. The word wind, or "breath"(πνοή/g4466), is used other places in the Bible to talk about the Holy Spirit (see: 17:25; Ezekiel 37:9-10). In those places, it is the Spirit who gives life. The Holy Spirit is also a part of giving Christians a new life after they believe in Jesus (see: Titus 3:5).

Luke also talked about the Holy Spirit coming in little flames in the shape of tongues. These tongues laid on top of all those in the house. Some scholars think Luke was talking about the Holy Spirit's coming in the same way John the Baptist spoke of it (see: Luke 3:16-17).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What did it mean that the disciples spoke in other tongues?

[2:4]

When the disciples spoke in other "tongues"(γλώσσα/g1100) on the day of Pentecost, it meant they spoke in commonly known languages. But, the disciples did not know these languages. That is, they did not learn these languages by studying them or learning them. The Holy Spirit caused the disciples to speak in other languages. In this way, the Jews from many language groups heard the disciples speaking in their own languages.

See: [Speak in Tongues](#)

2:5-13**What places did Luke speak about?**

[2:5, 2:9, 2:10, 2:11]

See Map: Ancient Middle East

Why did many in the crowd think the disciples were drunk?

[2:13]

Many in the crowd thought the disciples were drunk because they did not know what the disciples said. Because they spoke in languages that the people did not know, they thought they just spoke from drunkenness. Others became confused and amazed when they heard the disciples speaking in their own language. This confusion and amazement allowed Peter to tell them about what really happened.

2:14-21**What was the third hour of the day?**

[2:15]

The Jews counted time each day beginning with the sunrise. The third hour of the day was about nine o'clock in the morning. Three hours after the sun rose where they lived. When are the "the last days"?

Some scholars think the "last days" began when Jesus first came to earth. That is, they began at his birth. These scholars think the last days continue until Jesus comes back to earth. Other scholars think the last days began after Jesus came back from the dead and the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. These scholars also think the last days will end when Jesus comes back to earth.

See: [Last Days](#)

Who are "all flesh"?

[2:17]

Some scholars think Luke said "all flesh" to say all kinds of Jewish people. In the past, God only spoke to certain people, that is, prophets, kings, or priests with messages from the Holy Spirit. Other scholars think the words "all flesh" meant the Gentile nations of the world along with the Jews.

See: [Gentile](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Gentile](#)

When did the people think Joel's prophecy was going to happen?

[2:17]

Peter knew the signs of flames of fire and the speaking of foreign languages to be the "signs on the earth below." Some scholars think the prophecy of the "wonders in the heavens" happened on the day when Jesus died (see: Luke 23:44-45). Other scholars think the signs of blood, fire, smoke, the sun changing to darkness, and the moon changing to blood all speak about when Jesus is going to come back to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is the "great and glorious day of the Lord"?

[2:20]

The 'great and glorious day of the Lord' is the day of judgment. It is the time when Jesus comes back to earth and judges the whole human race (see: Matthew 24:30-31 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4). Scholars think the word glorious also meant fearful or dreadful.

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

2:22-36

What does it mean that God "accredited" Jesus to the men of Israel?

[2:22]

When Peter said God "accredited" Jesus to the men of Israel, he said that through the many miracles he did, God helped people to know that Jesus was the promised messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was meant by "God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge"?

[2:23]

God's predetermined (ὁρίζω/g3724) plan spoke about God's specific and unchangeable will. That is, God knew what would happen before it happen because he wanted it to happen or allowed it to happen. God planned Jesus' death on the cross before he created the world (see: 2 Timothy 1:9; Revelation 13:8). God's foreknowledge (πρόγνωσις/g4268) spoke about God setting the time for Jesus to be crucified by "lawless" (ἄνομος/g0459) men. Some scholars think "lawless men" spoke about the Romans who beat Jesus and nailed him to the cross. Other scholars think both the Jewish leaders and the Romans were guilty of having Jesus killed.

See: [Will of God](#); [Foreknow \(Foreknowledge\)](#); [Will of God](#)

Why was death not able to keep Jesus?

[2:24]

In the same way that God planned Jesus dying on the cross, he also planned to make Jesus live again. God controls living and dying. Dying could not stop Jesus because he is God.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is “Hades”?

[2:27]

Here, Hades means the general place where the dead people go. Peter said David was a prophet because he spoke about Jesus dying and that his body would not decay or rot.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

What did the people see and hear that showed the Holy Spirit came to them?

[2:33]

The people saw and heard the disciples speaking in languages that the disciples did not know how to speak (see: 2:6-8). This showed the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made. Also, it showed that the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. The Holy Spirit came with power in the same way Jesus said the Holy Spirit was going to come.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What do the words, “The Lord said to my Lord” mean?

[2:34]

Scholars think the words, “The Lord said to my Lord” spoke about God saying that Jesus is also the Lord. That is, Jesus is God. Only God could be a master of God.

See: Psalm 110:1

See: [Trinity](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Trinity](#)

How is Jesus at the right hand of the Father?

[2:34]

Some scholars think the words meant “having been exalted by the right hand of God” instead of “to the right hand of God.” That is, Jesus was given back the honor he had in heaven before he came to earth. By coming to earth, he humbled himself and was not honored as much while he was on the earth. When someone sat at the right hand of a king, he was honored greatly. They were given power and permission to rule.

When someone sat down, it meant that they were finished working. The writer of Hebrews talks about the difference between Jesus finishing the things he wanted to do and the Jewish priests who continuously stand because they never finish the things they need to do (see: Hebrews 10:11-12). Jesus was given the highest place of honor and permission to rule in heaven.

See Psalm 110

See: [Heaven](#); [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#)

How do Jesus’ enemies become a stool for his feet?

[2:35]

This is a prophecy from Psalm 110:1. God placed the enemies of Jesus under Jesus, who was given permission to rule them. That is, Jesus holds complete rule over his enemies.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

2:36-41

Who was “the whole house of Israel”?

[2:36]

The whole house of Israel was all the Jewish people who rejected Jesus (see: Mark 14:61-65).

What did Peter mean when he called Jesus both Lord and Christ?

[2:36]

Peter called Jesus lord and christ. He meant that Jesus completed the prophecy David wrote in Psalm 110:1. Jesus is “lord”(κύριος/g29362) because God placed him at his right hand after he rose from the dead (see: Psalm 16:8). Jesus is ruler over everything.

Jesus is the “christ.” That is, he is the messiah, the one to complete God’s plan for saving people from their sins. Paul also spoke of Jesus as the Christ. Jesus showed that he was the Christ because he did not stay dead (see: Romans 1:4).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What does it mean to be pierced to the heart?

[2:37]

Scholars think to be “pierced to the heart” spoke of when a person would know something quickly and very strongly. They think the people knew quick and strong sorrow and felt guilty. They understood they killed their messiah. Their words of “what shall we do” were desperate words.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was meant by the word “repent”?

[2:38]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did Peter command the Jews to be baptized in the name of Jesus?

[2:38]

Scholars think several things happened when baptism “in the name of Jesus” happened:

1. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews acknowledged that Jesus is Israel’s messiah and savior. They knew that Jesus did not stay dead and is sitting at God’s right hand.
2. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews accepted that forgiveness for sins was only possible by believing in Jesus.
3. By calling on the name of Jesus, the Jews publicly said that only Jesus can cleanse them from their sin and impurity.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Name](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Savior](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What was the “gift of the Holy Spirit”?

[2:38]

The gift of the Holy Spirit was the comforter that Jesus promised (see: John 14:16). The Holy Spirit comes to live inside those who believe in Jesus (see: Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13-14). Scholars agree that the gift of the Holy Spirit is different from the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All Christians are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. But the gifts the Holy Spirit gives each Christian are different. He chooses to give different people different gifts to help the church (see: 1 Corinthians 12:11).

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why does Peter say this promise is “for you, your children and to all those who are far off?”

[2:39]

This promise of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians of all ages everywhere. The promise of the Holy Spirit was not only for the first Christians but also for all who will become Christians. Luke also wrote that the promise of the Holy Spirit was for the Jews and the Gentiles (see Acts 10:45; 11:16,17). Peter did not fully know that the Holy Spirit was also for the Gentiles when he spoke. But the Holy Spirit spoke this through him.

See: [Gentile](#)

What did it mean when Peter said, “to as many as the Lord our God will call”?

[2:39]

Peter again quoted from the prophet Joel when he said, “to as many as the Lord our God will call.” The prophecy spoke of both those who call on the name of the Lord, and of those whom the Lord will call.

See: Romans 1:6; 9:1-33, John 3:16

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#)

Why did Peter say “save yourselves from this wicked generation”?

[2:40]

Scholars think Peter told the Jews to “save themselves”(σώζω/g4982) because he told the Jews to allow themselves to be saved by Jesus. The book of Acts speaks about God being the one who saves (see: 2:21, 39; 4:11-12). These scholars think that God’s call offers salvation. The people who are called must respond to the gospel with faith and by repenting (see: 2:38; 16:14-15, 30-34).

A “wicked generation” spoke about people who continually reject God and the things he says. Moses wrote about a wicked generation in the Old Testament (see: Deuteronomy 32:5), and Paul wrote about a wicked generation in the New Testament (see: Philippians 2:15).

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

2:42-47

What was the “apostles’ teaching”?

[2:42]

The apostles taught about the things Jesus said and did. The apostles saw the power of Jesus in the miracles he did while they were with him. The teaching also talked about God’s plans and promises. God planned to save people from their sins even before he created the world. That is, he planned for Jesus to die on the cross, be buried, and be brought back to life even before he created the world. The apostles strongly taught that Jesus is the messiah whom God promised to come. They taught that it was through Jesus alone that someone could be at peace with God (see: 2:36-39; 3:17-23).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What was meant by “the fellowship”?

[2:42]

The word “fellowship” meant to share or be a part of something. Here, it meant sharing in each other’s lives. That is, in the same way they shared life in Jesus, they also shared life together. To share life with each other meant to know others, care for others, and allow them to care for you and to help one another in times of suffering (see: Romans 12:10-13; 1 Peter 4:8-10).

See: [Fellowship](#)

What was meant by “the breaking of bread”?

[2:42]

Some scholars think the “breaking of bread” took place at any ordinary meal time where people gathered together to eat. They think Jesus gave this command when he celebrated his last Passover meal with the disciples (see: Luke 22:14-19). That is, they took the loaves of bread they ate, broke them into small pieces, and shared them with one another. Other scholars think the “breaking of bread” was for Christians to regularly be a part of, so that they specifically remembered Jesus’ death on the cross, the forgiveness of sins, and the new covenant made by God with Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

See: [New Covenant](#); [Disciple](#); [New Covenant](#)

What were the prayers about which Luke wrote?

[2a:42]

Scholars think the prayers were Jewish prayers and possibly the Jewish times of prayer as well (see: 3:1). Certainly, the Christians prayed together. They also went to the prayer times in the temple together (see: 2:46).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did those gathered experience “awe”?

[2:43]

Because the apostles did signs and wonders similar to the miracles done by Jesus, the people felt great “awe”(φόβος/g5401) about God. This means the people felt great respect and reverence for God.

See: [Miracle](#); [Sign](#); [Miracle](#)

What did it mean to have all things in common?

[2:44]

Some scholars think “to have all things in common” meant the Christians wanted to share the things they owned. Though they kept the things they owned, they willingly sold them to help people with needs near them (see: 4:32). When someone needed something, the Christians sold some of their things, land, or other things they owned. Then they brought the money to the leaders or apostles to give to all with needs (See: Acts 4:32-37).

See: [Apostle](#)

Why did the early Christians worship at the Temple?

[2:46]

The Christians went to the temple daily for prayers because the first Christians were Jewish. This was before they were not allowed to go to the temple because they believed in Jesus. They went there to pray Jewish prayers and to praise God who sent the messiah into the world (see: John 17:18).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did Luke mean when he wrote “the Lord added to their number”?

[2:47]

Scholars think Luke wrote “the Lord added to their number” because it was God’s church. He is the one who adds people to his church (see: 11:21).

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² Now a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful. They would place him there every day so he could ask those who were going into the temple for alms. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked them for alms. ⁴ Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, "Look at us." ⁵ The lame man looked at them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have, I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, Peter raised him up, and immediately the man's feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ Leaping up, the lame man stood and began to walk; and he entered with Peter and John into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. ⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God. ¹⁰ They noticed that it was the man who had been asking people for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement because of what had happened to him.

¹¹ As he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly marveling. ¹² When Peter saw this, he answered the people, "You Israelite men, why do you marvel? Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness? ¹³ The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. He is the one whom you handed over and rejected before the face of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ You rejected the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked instead for a murderer to be given to you. ¹⁵ You killed the Founder of life, whom God raised from the dead—and we are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ On the basis of faith in his name, his name made this man, whom you see and know, strong. The faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. ¹⁷ Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ But the things which God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he has now fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent, therefore, and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰ so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you, Jesus. ²¹ He is the One heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things, about which God spoke from ancient times by the mouth of his holy prophets. ²² Moses indeed said, 'The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ It will happen that every person who does not listen to that prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.' ²⁴ Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who came after him, they spoke out and announced these days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, as he said to Abraham, 'In your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.' ²⁶ After God raised up his servant, he sent him to you first, in order to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

Acts 3

3:1-10

What was the "hour of prayer"?

[3:1]

The Jewish people went to the temple three times a day to pray. The "ninth hour" was in the middle of the afternoon. Jews also prayed in the middle of the morning at the middle of the day (see: Psalm 55:16-19). Peter and John were Christians. But they were also Jews. So they continued to pray at the temple three times a day after they became Christians.

Why did Luke write that the man was "lame from birth"?

[3:2]

Some scholars think Luke wrote that the man was "lame from birth" because it showed how powerful Jesus was because he healed this man. Scholars think "lame" (χωλός/g5560) meant a man with legs,

ankles and feet not formed correctly. That made this man not strong enough to walk or stand (see: 3:7). What was the “Beautiful Gate”?

The “Beautiful Gate” was one of many gates that went into the Jewish temple. Scholars think the greatest number of people entered into the temple through this gate. Perhaps they carried the lame man to this gate so that they could ask people for gifts of money.

See: [Temple](#)

Why did Peter “fasten his eyes” on the lame man?

[3:4]

The phrase “fastening his eyes”(ἀτενίζω/g0816) meant that Peter looked specifically and closely at the lame beggar. Also, Peter commanded the man saying, “Look at us.” Scholars think the lame man looked at Peter and this man had expected a great gift.

Advice to Translators: A beggar was someone who asked people for money because they were poor or because they could not do anything.

Why did Peter tell the man to stand and walk, “in the name of Jesus”?

[3:6]

The lame man did not stand up and walk before Peter spoke the name of Jesus. The phrase “in the name of Jesus” meant that Jesus gave him permission to heal this man and the power to do so. People knew Jesus’ power because of what Peter did (see: 3:16). Some scholars say the power that caused the lame man to stand up and “walk”(περιπατέω/g4043) and he was strong enough to walk for the rest of his life (see: 3:16).

See: [Name](#)

3:11-16

Where was Solomon’s porch?

[3:11]

Solomon’s porch was on the east side of the temple courts. Scholars think the court of the Gentiles was near this area. Jesus taught on this porch to many people (see: John 10:23).

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Show map of Jewish temple with its various gates, and porches

Why did Peter speak about the “God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob”?

[3:13]

Peter spoke about God in a way that the Jewish people would understand. Scholars think Peter wanted the Jews to think about God promised to do certain things. God not only healed a lame man, but he made it so that people would know that Jesus is the promised messiah. The things Peter said also helped people to know he and the apostles served the God of Israel. They did not worship another god.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Peter say that Jesus was God’s servant?

[3:13]

Scholars think Peter said the same thing the prophet Isaiah said to show that Jesus is the messiah. Jesus is the servant who brings the justice of God, he brings people back to God, and he is the servant who suffers for the people of God (see: Isaiah 42:1; 49:5-6; 52:13-15). The Jewish people knew what Isaiah said and expected a suffering servant to come.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

Who is the “Holy and Righteous One”?

[3:14]

Jesus is the holy and righteous one.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How is Jesus the “Founder of Life”?

[3:15]

Peter spoke about Jesus as the “founder of life”(ἀρχηγός/g0747). This meant that Jesus created the universe and created everything on earth. It also meant that Jesus was the leader of the whole world. Jesus also made it so that Christians would live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#)

3:17-21

What was meant by the words, “you acted in ignorance”?

[3:17]

Peter knew the people and the religious leaders did not fully understand the plan of God for Jesus. God made this plan before the beginning of the world (see: Ephesians 1:4). The prophets spoke how the messiah must suffer and die (see: Isaiah 53:1-12; Zechariah 12:10). Some scholars think Jesus spoke about how those who crucified him did not really know what they were doing (see: Luke 23:34).

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did Peter command the people to “repent and turn back”?

[3:19]

Peter told the Jewish people and leaders they must “repent.” This meant they must believe that Jesus is the messiah. It also meant they must think differently about what the Scriptures teach about the messiah (see: 2 Corinthians 3:12-16). The people refused to believe that Jesus was God’s servant. They did not think that Jesus was the “holy one.” They refused to believe that Jesus was the one who created everything and was the messiah. Peter’s told the people that they needed to repent and believe in Jesus. In this way, their sins were to be “blotted out,” that is, the penalty for their sins was removed because Jesus served the penalty for their sins. They were made clean.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What were “periods of refreshing”?

[3:19]

Some scholars think “refreshing” meant to experience a relief from trouble or to have a time of peace before Jesus returns. They think that Scripture teaches that there will be a time of peace and forgiveness when God would not judge people. Other scholars think the “periods of refreshing” spoke about the time when Peter lived. They think that Luke was speaking about God given them peace from different things. Still other scholars think the periods of refreshing came when the people repented and trusted in God. That is, the Holy Spirit brings refreshing in the life of a person who repents (see: Acts 2:38; John 14:15-21).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What does “the final restoration of all things” mean?

[3:21]

Some scholars think when Luke spoke about “restoration,” he wanted to say that God will bring Israel back to their land (see: 1:6). That is, he will bring back the kingdom of Israel. These scholars also think this is a time when God will fulfill his promises made through the prophet Malachi (see: Malachi 4:2-6). This is when the messiah returns to the world to judge the world for its sin. Other scholars think Peter spoke about the world being restored. That is, the world will be returned to be perfect in the same way it was perfect before Adam and Eve sinned (see: Genesis 3). These scholars think Peter spoke about something still to have that the prophets spoke about (see: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

However, God began the restoring people making it possible for them to be at peace with him because Jesus died. In Scripture, there is a metaphor about people who reject God are far away from him. People who were far away from God because of sin, were brought near to God because of the sacrifice for sin made by Jesus on the cross. That is, But, most scholars think there will still be a future time in which all of creation will be brought back to God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Prophet](#); [Metaphor](#)

3:22-26**Who was the prophet that was like Moses?**

[3:22]

The Old Testament spoke of a prophet coming in the future (see: Deuteronomy 18:15-18). The Jews thought of Moses as the first and greatest of all prophets. They thought Moses said that the prophet coming in the future was the messiah. Peter said clearly that the people needed to “listen” to the prophet, that is, to obey the prophet God sent, the messiah. This meant they needed to listen and obey the words of the messiah. That is, they needed to do what Jesus told them to do. Peter said that the people who did not listen to the prophet from God were going to be punished. God raised this prophet up to a high position in the same way he raised up Moses to a high position (see: Deuteronomy 18:19). Scholars think the punishment which Peter spoke was the removing of the people from being in the family of God.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Peter mention the prophet Samuel?

[3:24]

God told him to anoint King David (see: 1 Samuel 16:11-13). God gave David promises from the prophet Nathan that spoke of someone to come. This person was to reign forever. This person to come was the messiah (see: 2 Samuel 7:8-17).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “these days”?

[3:24]

Scholars think the words “these days” spoke about the times when Peter and the other apostles lived. They think it was the beginning of the days of the promised New Covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:31-34). Scholars think the phrase “these days” also meant the beginning of the last days spoken of by the prophet Joel (see: 2:17-21).

See: [Last Days](#); [New Covenant](#); [Last Days](#)

What was the covenant that God made with Abraham?

[3:25]

God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all the nations of the world through Abraham (see: Genesis 22:15-18). One promise was that one of Abraham's descendants would bring about a certain blessing. That is, the messiah was going to be a descendant of Abraham (see: Galatians 16-18).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Peter say that God sent his servant, Jesus, to the Jewish people first?

[3:26]

The Old Testament spoke about God's covenant with the nation of Israel as the people. He made Israel his people. The Jewish people thought about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as their fathers. They thought about Moses as their greatest prophet. Keeping his covenant with Abraham and Israel, God sent the promised messiah to the Jews (see: Genesis 22:18; Jeremiah 31:31-34). God's plan from the beginning of the world was to give his favor to all the nations of the world. Jesus was how God gave his favor to the world. Paul also spoke about God's plan to save people from all of the nations. God gave the gospel first to the Jews and then to the rest of the world (see: Romans 1:16).

See: [Gospel](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Chapter 4

¹ As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them. ² They were deeply troubled because Peter and John were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ They laid hands on them and put them in custody until the next morning, since it was now evening. ⁴ But many of the people who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men who believed was about five thousand.

⁵ It came about on the next day that their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all who were relatives of the high priest. ⁷ When they had set Peter and John in their midst, they asked them, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You rulers of the people, and elders, ⁹ if we are on trial today concerning a good deed done to a sick man, and by what means this man was healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that this man stands before you healthy in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹ Jesus Christ is the stone which you builders rejected but which has been made the cornerstone. ¹² There is no salvation in any other person, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men, they were surprised, becoming aware that Peter and John had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ Because they saw the man who was healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against this. ¹⁵ But after they had commanded the apostles to leave the council meeting, they talked among themselves. ¹⁶ They said, "What should we do with these men? For a remarkable sign has been done through them, and this is evident to everyone who lives in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But in order that it spreads no further among the people, let us warn them not to speak anymore to anyone in this name." ¹⁸ Then they called them in and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is proper in the sight of God to obey you rather than him, you judge. ²⁰ We are not able to stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." ²¹ After further warning Peter and John, they let them go. They were unable to find any excuse to punish them, because all of the people were glorifying God for what had been done. ²² The man who had experienced this sign of healing was more than forty years old.

²³ After they were set free, Peter and John came to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard it, they raised their voices with one purpose to God and said, "Lord, you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David,

'Why did the Gentile nations rage,
and the peoples imagine useless things?'

²⁶ You said,
'The kings of the earth set themselves together,
and the rulers gathered together
against the Lord, and against his Christ.'

²⁷ Indeed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They gathered together to do all that your hand and your plan had decided in advance would happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, look upon their warnings and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and to give signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." ³¹ After they had prayed, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

³² The great number of those who believed were of one heart and soul. No one said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ With great power the apostles were proclaiming their testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

³⁴ There was no person among them who lacked anything, for all who owned title to lands or houses sold

them and brought the money from the things that were sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each one according to their need.

³⁶ Joseph, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a man from Cyprus, ³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 4

4:1-7

Who were the captains of the temple and the priests?

[4:1]

The captain of the temple controlled soldiers. These soldiers protected the temple area. This made the temple a peaceful area to worship. The priests offered sacrifices and worshiped in the temple (see Exodus 28).

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#) ; [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Who were the Sadducees?

[4:1]

See: [Sadducees](#)

Why did the Sadducees questioned Peter and John?

[4:2]

Some scholars think the priests and Sadducees questioned Peter and John because they taught that after people died, they would be resurrected. That is, their bodies will be made alive again. The Sadducees did not believe anyone would be made alive again (see: 4:2; 5:17). Peter and John taught that some people will be made alive again to live in heaven, and other people will be made alive again to live in hell. They taught that by believing in Jesus, people will be made alive again to live in heaven. That is, they will live together with God in heaven forever. Those who do not believe in Jesus will live separated from God forever and be punished for their sins. Other scholars think the priest and Sadducees questioned Peter and John because Peter and John taught in the temple area without permission from the Sadducees.

See: [Sadducees](#)

Why did the Sanhedrin arrest the apostles, Peter and John?

[4:3]

The Sanhedrin arrested the apostles because it was evening. The Sanhedrin, a group of Jewish leaders, could not gather together until the morning. They did not want the apostles to leave without questioning them. They wanted to know how the lame man was healed.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

How did people respond to the apostles' preaching after the healing miracle?

[4:4]

People responded to the apostles' preaching that day in two different ways. First, the religious leaders opposed the apostles. Second, Luke wrote that about 5,000 men who came to believe the apostles' teaching about Jesus. Some scholars think this number is the total number of men and women who believed in Jesus at that time. Other scholars think the number is simply the men who believe in Jesus that day. Fewer scholars think Luke wrote the total number of Christians from the entire area, including Galilee.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

See Map: Galilee

Who came together to discuss the actions of Peter and John?

[4:5, 4:6]

Verse 5 talks about three types of people: the rulers, the elders, and the teachers of religious laws. Scholars think these three groups combined to make the Sanhedrin. At that time, Rome allowed the Sanhedrin to make many decisions for the nation. The elders were the ordinary people. They were leaders of the community and the leaders of powerful families. They were mostly Sadducees. The teachers of the law were scribes. They were also the lawyers. They were mostly Pharisees. The rulers were mostly priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.

The ruling High Priest, Caiaphas, was the Chief (or High) Priest. He was the High Priest when Jesus was killed (see Matthew 26:3; John 18:28). The former High Priest, Annas, was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Therefore, though the verse says Annas was the High Priest, he was the former High Priest. Many still called Annas High Priest to honor him. So, it was Caiaphas who was the High Priest at the time.

See: [High Priest](#); Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Sadducees](#); [Pharisees](#); [Scribe](#); [Chief Priest](#); [High Priest](#)

Why did the leaders ask the apostles who gave them permission to heal the crippled man?

[4:7]

The Jews at that time believed that the power to heal a lame man came either from God or from Satan. So the Sanhedrin wanted to know if God or Satan gave him permission to heal this man (see: Luke 11:15; Matthew 9:34).

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

4:8-12

Why did Luke write, “Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[4:8]

Scholars think God gave Peter special power to speak what God needed him to say to the Jewish leaders. This fulfilled the promise Jesus made to his followers (see: Luke 12:11; 21:14-15).

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

What did Peter say to the people listening?

[4:8, 4:9, 4:10]

Some scholars think the things Peter said confronted the Jewish leaders for arresting them. People normally gave thanks when a sick person was healed. Instead, they arrested Peter and John. Other scholars think Peter wanted to know why the Sanhedrin arrested him and John. Peter said clearly that Jesus has the power and permission to heal the man.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

What was a cornerstone?

[4:11]

Builders used a cornerstone to make buildings. This was the first stone used when building. They used this stone to know the direction the building needed to go and where the building needed to be placed. They did not bury this stone, but they always made it so that people could see it. The prophet Isaiah spoke of this cornerstone. He said that God placed this cornerstone in Jerusalem. It was firm, tested, precious,

and it prevented people from needing to be afraid (see: Isaiah 28:16). Finally, Jesus used this metaphor when speaking about himself (see: Mark 12:1-12).

Peter quoted the well-known passage about the messiah from Psalm 118:22: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” However, Peter added the words, “by you.” He used the words “by you” to say that the religious leaders rejected God’s cornerstone, Jesus the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How is Jesus the only way to be saved?

[4:12]

Peter said there “is no other name... by which we must be saved.” He was talking about Jesus. He wanted to say that people could only be at peace with God by believing in Jesus.

See: John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5

See: [Name](#); [Name](#)

4:13-22

How were Peter and John “ordinary, uneducated men”?

[4:13]

Luke wrote that Peter and John were ordinary, uneducated men. That is, they did not have any formal training in the Old Testament from certain teachers. The Jewish teachers did not teach them about the Old Testament in the synagogues.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did the Sanhedrin not know what to do with the apostles?

[4:16]

The Sanhedrin did not know what to do to stop the apostles from talking about Jesus. Everyone knew about the miracle they did in Jesus’ name.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did the Sanhedrin tell the apostles not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus?

[4:18]

The Sanhedrin didn’t want the apostles to speak or teach in the name of Jesus because they did not think Jesus was the messiah. They did not think Jesus was the reason the crippled man was healed (see: 4:10). They thought Jesus was dead. Therefore, they did not think that Jesus was the messiah.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Name](#): [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What did it mean for Peter to obey God rather than man?

[4:19]

Obedying God meant not doing what people said to do if what they said to do was something God said not to do. Jesus said to tell the whole world about him and to feed his sheep (see: Matthew 28: 18-20; John 21:15-20; Acts 1:8) The apostles had to obey Jesus (See: Acts 5:29).

See: Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 15:22

See: [Shepherd](#); [Shepherd](#)

Why did Luke say the crippled man was over 40 years old?

[4:22]

Luke said the crippled man was over 40 years old to say that a great healing occurred. Everyone knew this man. He lived in that area all of his life.

4:23-31

How did the other Christians pray and praise God together?

[4:24]

Some scholars think one person led the group by praying aloud. The others repeated what he said or agreed with him by saying "Amen." Other scholars think the Christians prayed one at a time. That is, one prayed and then another prayed until all the people prayed.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did the disciples of Jesus call God Lord?

[4:24]

The disciples of Jesus called God "Lord" (δεσπότης/g1203). This is how the Jewish people began their prayers.

See: Isaiah 37:16-20

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Lord](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did Peter say, "You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David?"

[4:25]

Peter said, "You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David." God spoke through King David. God fulfilled the prophecy he gave to David (see: Psalm 2:1-3). Some scholars think this makes known that God spoke to the prophets and apostles. He inspired them to write the words of the Bible.

See: 2 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:5

See: [Inspired](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophet](#); [Apostle](#); [Inspired](#)

What does Psalm 2 say about Jesus?

[4:25, 4:26]

The Jewish religious teachers taught that Psalm 2 was about the messiah. The words "his anointed," "my king," and "my son" were ways of talking about the messiah. The apostles knew the "holy servant Jesus" was the "Son of God" in Psalm 2. The "raging gentiles" were the Roman soldiers who killed Jesus. The "peoples" were the Jewish leaders. The "kings of the earth" was Herod Antipas (ruler of Galilee; see Luke 23:7-12). And the "rulers" was Pontius Pilate (v. 27).

See: [King Herod](#); [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#); [Son of God](#); [King Herod](#); [King Herod](#)

Why did Luke say, "your hand and your plan"?

[4:28]

The Christians knew Jesus suffered because God wanted him to and because he made a plan for him. The words “your hand” means God used the gentiles, rulers, and king to kill Jesus (see Exodus 3:20, 13:3; 15:6).

See: Acts 2:23; 3:18; Ephesians 1:4,5; Exodus 3:20, 13:3, 15:6)

See: [King Herod](#)

How did they “speak the word with all boldness”?

[4:29]

Jesus’ disciples prayed for God “boldness”(παρρησία/g3954). They wanted boldness to “speak the word.” That is, they wanted boldness to speak of the gospel to other people clearly and without fear. They wanted God’s word to be proven true. That is, they wanted more great things through the name of Jesus. This would make people know that Jesus was the messiah.

Advice to Translators: To do something in Jesus’ name means that they did something to honor Jesus and that Jesus gave permission to them to do these things.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”?

[4:31]

God filled the Christians with the Holy Spirit. This made them speak boldly about Jesus. This same power gave Peter the boldness to speak about Jesus to the Jewish leaders.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

4:32-37

How were the Christians “of one heart and soul”?

[4:32]

The Christians we “of one heart and soul.” First, the Christians did not say they owned anything. They knew God owned everything. That is, their property was not truly theirs. Knowing this made them want to share. Second, the apostles spoke powerfully about Jesus being made alive again (v.33). Third, Luke said, “there was no person among them who lacked anything.” That is, all the Christians had everything they needed to live. The Christians gave generously after selling their fields, properties, and houses.

See: [Apostle](#); [Soul](#); [Apostle](#)

How did they place the money “at the apostles’ feet”?

[4:35]

The Christians brought the money to the apostles. The apostles decided who received the money. It was given to other Christians when they needed it to live.

See: [Apostle](#)

Barnabas was a Levite. Why did he own a field?

[4:37]

God did not give the Levites any land in the Old Testament (see: Numbers 18:20; Deuteronomy 10:9). Some scholars think the Old Testament laws of inheritance were not being followed during the time of the New Testament. Other scholars think Barnabas’s wife owned the land that he sold.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Now a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property, ² and he kept back part of the sale money (his wife also knew it), and brought the other part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own, and after it was sold, was it not under your authority? Why did you put it in your heart to do this? You have not lied to men, but to God." ⁵ Hearing these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last, and great fear came upon all who heard it. ⁶ The young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After about three hours, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." ¹⁰ She immediately fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in, they found her dead, and carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard these things.

¹² Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles. They were all together in Solomon's Porch. ¹³ But none of the rest had the courage to join them; however, they were held in high esteem by the people. ¹⁴ Still more believers were being added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women, ¹⁵ so that they even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, so that as Peter came by, his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ There also came together a great number of people from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees); and they were filled with jealousy ¹⁸ and laid hands on the apostles, and held them in custody in the common prison. ¹⁹ Yet during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison and led them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life." ²¹ When they heard this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and taught. But the high priest came, and those who were with him, and called the council together, all the elders of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought. ²² But the officers that went did not find them in the prison, and they returned and reported, ²³ "We found the prison securely shut and the guards standing at the door, but when we had opened it, we found no one inside." ²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much perplexed concerning them as to what would come of it. ²⁵ Then someone came and told them, "The men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people." ²⁶ So the captain went with the officers and brought them back, but without violence, for they feared the people, that they might be stoned. ²⁷ When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest interrogated them, ²⁸ saying, "We ordered you with a command not to teach in this name, and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and desire to bring this man's blood upon us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. ³² We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³ When the council members heard this, they were furious and they wanted to kill the apostles. ³⁴ But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people, stood up in the council and gave a command to take the men outside for a little while. ³⁵ Then he said to them, "Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you propose to do with these people. ³⁶ For before these days, Theudas rose up claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who had been obeying him were scattered and came to nothing. ³⁷ After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away some people after him. He also perished, and all who had been obeying him were scattered. ³⁸ Now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or work is of men, it will be overthrown. ³⁹ But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; you may even find that you are fighting against God." So they were persuaded. ⁴⁰ Then they called the apostles in and beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ They went away from before the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for

the Name. ⁴² Thereafter every day, in the temple and from house to house, they were continuously teaching and proclaiming the good news that the Christ is Jesus.

Acts 5

5:1-11

What did it mean to keep back part of the price of the land?

[5:2]

Luke wrote that Annanias and Sapphira kept back part of the price of the land. They sold a piece of land and gave the money to the apostles. However, they did not give all of the money to the apostles. It was not wrong for them to do this. However, they made the apostles think they gave all of the money to them. They wanted to be honored for doing this. This was wrong.

What did Peter mean about Satan filling Ananias' heart?

[5:3]

Peter said that Satan filled Annaia's heart. Peter said that Satan wanted Ananias to lie to the apostles. Satan put the idea for doing the wrong thing into the heart of Ananias. He made Annanias think about doing the wrong thing.

See: [Apostle](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Apostle](#)

How did Ananias lie to the Holy Spirit?

[5:3]

Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think that when Ananias lied to the apostles, this was the same as lying to the Holy Spirit. This was because the Holy Spirit had created Christians. Other scholars think Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit because he lied to the apostles who have the Holy Spirit in them.

See: Hebrews 4:12-13

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Apostle](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did Peter know that Ananias lied?

[5:3]

Luke wrote that Peter knew Annanias lied to the apostles. Luke does not write how Peter knew this. Some scholars thought there was someone told Peter. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit told Peter in some way.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Peter write, "You have not lied to men but to God?"

[5:4]

Scholars think when Peter said, "you have not lied to men but to God," he wanted people to know that Annanias lied to the apostles and to God. This was because Ananias gave an offering to God when he gave money to the apostles.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

How did someone test the Spirit of the Lord?

[5:4]

How did someone test the Spirit of the Lord. Annanias and Sapphira tested the Holy Spirit when they lied to the apostles. When they did this it also tested the Holy Spirit. This is because they did not think the Holy Spirit knew what they were doing.

See: [Apostle](#); [Test](#); [Apostle](#)

When speaking to Sapphira, why did Peter say, “they will carry you out”?

[5:9]

When speaking to Sapphira, Paul said, “they will carry you out.” Some scholars think that because Peter watched Ananias die for lying to the Holy Spirit, he also thought Sapphira was also going to die. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit helped Peter to know that Sapphira was going to die for deceiving the Holy Spirit. Peter was not judging them. God judged Ananias and Sapphira.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How did great fear come upon the whole church?

[5:11]

Great fear came upon the whole church. He was speaking about a certain group of Christians. Scholars think the Christians suddenly became afraid because God quickly judged Anania and Sapphira.

See: [Church](#)

5:12-16

What were “signs and wonders”?

[5:12]

See: [Sign](#)

Why were the people afraid of joining the apostles in the Temple area?

[5:12]

People were afraid of joining the apostles in the Temple area. Scholars think the people were afraid of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira or that they feared the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders rejected Jesus and they arrested the apostles.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why did people hope that Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them?

[5:15]

People hoped that Peter’s shadow would fall on them. This is a metaphor. Scholars think that because many signs and wonders were being done through the apostles, the people hoped that Peter would heal them. They think the people believed that if the crowds were too large, that even if Peter’s shadow crossed over a sick person, they would be healed. Luke wanted people to know that the people who were brought before the apostles were all healed.

See: [Apostle](#); [Sign](#); [Apostle](#)

5:17-21

Why did the high priest and Sadducees arrest the apostles?

[5:18]

The high priest and Sadducees arrested the apostles. Some scholars think the high priest and the Sadducees were filled with “jealousy”(ζήλος/g2205) because many people believed the things the apostles

taught about Jesus (see 13:45). The Jewish leaders believed the apostles taught the wrong things so they arrested the apostles. Other scholars think that the Jewish leaders really wanted to protect the Temple, the Law of Moses, and what they believed about God. The Sadducees zealously protected the things they taught would honor God.

What is an angel?

[5:19]

See: [Angel](#)

What were “all the words of this life”?

[5:20]

The angel of the Lord told the apostles to speak “all the words of this life.” He wanted them to preach the gospel and help people to know how to be at peace with God by believing in Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Who were “all the elders” and “the council”?

[5:21]

Scholars think the assembly, which was the council and all the elders was made up of the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and even Gamaliel, an honorable teacher of the Law of Moses (see: Acts 5:34).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sadducees](#); [Pharisees](#); [Law of Moses](#)

5:22-26

Why did the Captain of the Temple guard and the guards fear that the people might stone them when they arrested the apostles?

[5:24]

The people thought the apostles were great because of the things they did. They did many miracles and healed many people (see: Acts 5:12-16). The guards thought the people would begin to throw stones at them if they were to hurt the apostles in any way. For this reason the guards feared the people.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

5:27-32

What was meant by the words, “to bring this man’s blood upon us”?

[5:28]

The words, “to bring this man’s blood upon us” meant to make someone responsible for a death. They were willing to be the reason people died. Perhaps the Jewish leaders were willing to have people blame them for Jesus dying.

Why did God exalt Jesus to his right hand?

[5:31]

In ancient times, a person on the right hand side of the king was greatly honored. The king gave this permission to do things for the king. Some scholars think Luke wrote this so that people would know that God gave Jesus permission to do all things and power to do anything. Other scholars think Luke wrote this so people would know that Jesus should be honored.

See: Psalm 110:1-8

See: [Right Hand](#); [Right Hand](#)

How was the Holy Spirit a witness to these things?

[5:32]

The Holy Spirit was a witness to things. Some scholars think the Holy Spirit was causing people to understand the things the apostles taught. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to perform miracles to prove to people that they were saying true things about Jesus.

See: [Miracle](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Miracle](#)

5:33-42

What kind of beating did the apostles receive from the Sanhedrin?

[5:40]

The apostles were beaten because of the Sanhedrin. Scholars think the apostles were beaten with whips. A whip is made from leather strips. Other scholars think the apostles were beaten with rods. In ancient Israel, they would not hit someone 40 times because of something taught in the Law of Moses (see: Deuteronomy 25:3). Instead, they hit someone 39 times.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did the apostles rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer dishonor for Jesus?

[5:41]

The apostles left the Sanhedrin rejoicing because they believed they were suffering to honor Jesus.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

Chapter 6

¹ Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint by the Grecian Jews began against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of help.

² The twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said, "It is not right for us to give up the word of God in order to serve tables. ³ You should therefore choose, brothers, seven men from among yourselves, men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴ As for us, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word." ⁵ Their speech pleased the whole multitude. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶ The believers brought these men before the apostles, who prayed and then placed their hands upon them.

⁷ So the word of God continued to spread, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large number of the priests became obedient to the faith.

⁸ Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ But there arose some people who belonged to the synagogue called the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia. These people were debating with Stephen.

¹⁰ But they were not able to stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke. ¹¹ Then they bribed some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God." ¹² They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they approached Stephen and seized him and brought him before the council. ¹³ They brought false witnesses, who said, "This man does not stop speaking words against this holy place and the law. ¹⁴ For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us." ¹⁵ Everyone who sat in the council fixed their eyes on him and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

Acts 6

6:1-7

What was a disciple?

[6:1]

See: [Disciple](#)

Who were the "Grecian" Jews and the Hebrews?

[6:1]

Scholars think the "Grecian Jews" were to Greek-speaking Jewish Christians. They think these were Jews were raised in other countries and only spoke Greek. The Hebrews referred to Jewish Christians who spoke Hebrew or Aramaic.

What did it mean that the "widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food"?

[6:1]

The widows that were among the Grecian Jews were being "overlooked" (παράθεωρέω/g3865) when the daily food was distributed. That is, they were not given food regularly. Instead, the Hebrew widows were given food instead.

What did Luke mean by saying, "give up the word of God in order to serve tables"?

[6:2]

Luke wrote about giving up the Word of God. He did not want the apostles to stop telling people about Jesus in order to do something else. The apostles did not think that it was right for them to stop teaching so they could make sure people were given food. Some scholars think this was because Jesus specifically

commanded the apostles to preach and teach the message of the gospel. The apostles were not too great to serve people by giving them food.

See: [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Who were men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom?

[6:3]

A man of “good reputation” was a man who other people spoke well about. People trusted this type of man to do the right things. It was the Holy Spirit who gave these men the wisdom they needed to serve other people.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Luke write, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word?

[6:4]

Scholars think the apostles wanted to “devote”(προσκαρτερέω/G4674) themselves completely to prayer and teaching people about Jesus. They wanted to pray for people. They also wanted to preach and teach about Jesus and the things he taught.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did the apostles place their hands upon the men chosen to the community?

[6:6]

When someone laid their hands on someone, they gave this permission to do something. The apostles then prayed for them while they laid their hands on these men.

See 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:14

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

How did the priests become obedient to the faith?

[6:7]

When the priests became “obedient”(ὕπακούω/G5219) to the faith, they accepted that Jesus was the messiah God promised to Israel.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

6:8-14

How was Stephen full of grace and power?

[6:8]

How was Stephen full of grace and power. Because of God’s favor toward Stephen, God gave Stephen power in the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think the power God gave him was the power to do amazing miracles. Other scholars think that God gave Stephen great wisdom and courage to speak the truth about Jesus in a bold way.

See: Grace; [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

What was the “Synagogue of the Freedmen”?

[6:9]

The synagogue of freedom was a place where certain people went to worship God. These people were once slaves or prisoners of war who now lived in Jerusalem as free people.

See: [Synagogue](#)

How were the freedmen not able to stand against Stephen?

[6:10]

Stephen was wise and full of the Spirit. Because of this, some scholars think that when Luke said the freedmen “were not able to stand against” Stephen, he wanted to say that they could not prove that what Stephen was saying was wrong.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did someone blaspheme Moses and God?

[6:11]

The people from the synagogue charged Stephen with blaspheming against Moses and against God. When he wrote about Moses, he was writing about the Law of Moses. These people accused Stephen of saying things that were untrue about the Law of Moses and God.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Synagogue](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What were the “holy place” and the “law” about which Luke wrote?

[6:13]

The “holy place” was the temple and the “law” referred to the rules for the running of the temple.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

Were the witnesses right about what Stephen said about Jesus?

[6:13]

The witnesses misunderstood what Jesus taught about the temple and the Law of Moses. Jesus did say he would destroy the temple and in three days he would rebuild it again (see: John 2:19, 20). However, Jesus was using a metaphor. He was speaking about dying and being resurrected.

They said the same thing Stephen said. Stephen taught about what Jesus said, but people did not understand what Jesus meant about dying and resurrecting on the third day (see: Matthew 12:40). Jesus body was a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus also prophesied about the destruction of the Jewish Temple (see Luke 21:6). This happened about 40 years after Jesus died. So Stephen knew the current temple was temporary and the Law of Moses had been replaced after Jesus’ resurrection.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Temple](#); [Metaphor](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What did Luke mean when he said Stephen’s face was “like the face of an angel”?

[6:15]

Luke wrote that Stephen’s face was like the face of an angel. Some scholars think Stephen’s face was shining in the same way that Moses’ face shone after God had talked with Moses (see: Exodus 34:29-35). Other scholars think Stephen’s face was shining because the Holy Spirit was completely controlling Stephen.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 7

¹ The high priest said, "Are these things true?" ² Stephen said,

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran; ³ he said to him, 'Leave your land and your relatives, and go into the land that I will show you.'

⁴ "Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran; from there, after his father died, God brought him into this land, where you live now. ⁵ He gave none of it as an inheritance to him, no, not even enough to set a foot on. But he promised—even though Abraham had no child yet—that he would give the land as a possession to him and to his descendants after him. ⁶ God was speaking to him like this, that his descendants would live for a while in a foreign land, and that the inhabitants there would bring them into slavery and mistreat them for four hundred years. ⁷ 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they will come out and worship me in this place.' ⁸ Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, so Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of the twelve patriarchs.

⁹ "Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him into Egypt; but God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his tribulation. He gave Joseph favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over Egypt and over all his household.

¹¹ "Now a famine and great tribulation came over all Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers could find no food. ¹² But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first trip. ¹³ On their second trip Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. ¹⁴ Joseph sent his brothers back to invite Jacob his father to come to Egypt, along with all his relatives, seventy-five persons in all. ¹⁵ So Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers. ¹⁶ They were carried over to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a price in silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷ "As the time of the promise approached, the promise that God had made to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, ¹⁸ until there arose another king over Egypt, a king who did not know about Joseph. ¹⁹ He deceived our people and mistreated our fathers, forcing them to expose their newborn infants so they would not be kept alive.

²⁰ "At that time Moses was born; he was very beautiful before God and was nourished for three months in his father's house. ²¹ When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and raised him as her own son. ²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works.

²³ "But when he was about forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the descendants of Israel. ²⁴ Seeing an Israelite being mistreated, Moses defended him and avenged him who was oppressed by striking the Egyptian: ²⁵ he thought that his brothers would understand that God, by his hand, was giving them salvation, but they did not understand. ²⁶ On the next day he appeared to them when they were fighting, and he tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you wronging one another?'

²⁷ "But the one who had wronged his neighbor pushed him away, and said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?' ²⁸ Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ Moses ran away after hearing this statement; he became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰ "When forty years were past, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ³¹ When Moses saw the fire, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look at it, the voice of the Lord came, saying, ³² 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob.' Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

³³ "The Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴ I have certainly seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them; now come, I will send you to Egypt.'

³⁵ "This Moses whom they rejected, when they said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge?'—he was the one whom God sent as both a ruler and deliverer. God sent him by the hand of the angel who appeared to Moses in the bush. ³⁶ Moses led them out of Egypt, after doing miracles and signs in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds, and in the wilderness during forty years.

³⁷ "It is the same Moses who said to the people of Israel, 'God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, a prophet like me.' ³⁸ This is the man who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who had spoken to him on Mount Sinai, who was with our fathers, and who received living words to give to us.

³⁹ "But our fathers refused to obey him; they pushed him away from themselves, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt. ⁴⁰ At that time they said to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will lead us. As for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.' ⁴¹ So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced because of the work of their hands. ⁴² But God turned and gave them up to worship the stars in the sky, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'Did you bring me offerings and sacrifices
during the forty years in the wilderness, house of Israel?

⁴³ You accepted the tabernacle of Molech
and the star of the god Rephan,
and the images that you made to worship them:
and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

⁴⁴ "Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as God commanded when he spoke to Moses, that he should make it like the pattern that he had seen. ⁴⁵ Later, our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them when they took possession of the land. God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers. The tabernacle remained in the land until the time of David, ⁴⁶ who found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob ^[1]. ⁴⁷ But it was Solomon who built the house for God.

⁴⁸ "However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, as the prophet says,

⁴⁹ 'Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is the footstool for my feet.
What kind of house can you build for me? says the Lord,
or what is the place for my rest?

⁵⁰ Did my hand not make all these things?'

⁵¹ "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit; you act just as your fathers acted. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed the prophets who appeared in advance of the coming of the Righteous One; and you have now become the betrayers and murderers of him also, ⁵³ you people who received the law that angels had ordained, but you did not keep it."

⁵⁴ Now when the council members heard these things, they were furious in their hearts and they ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up intently into heaven and saw the glory of God; and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ Stephen said, "Look, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

⁵⁷ At this the council members covered their ears, and shouting out with a loud voice, they rushed at him with one purpose. ⁵⁸ They forced him out of the city and began to stone him. The witnesses laid down their outer clothing at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹ As they were stoning Stephen, he was calling out to the Lord and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Footnotes

7:46 ^[1]The phrase:

Acts 7**7:1-8****Why did Stephen call the council members his “brothers” and his “fathers”?**

[7:2]

Stephen called these members of the council his “brothers” because they were all Jews. He called them “fathers” because they were older so he wanted to honor them when he spoke.

What did Stephen mean by calling their God “the God of glory?”

[7:2]

Scholars think the words “God of glory” referred to God’s glory. Though Stephen did not write how God showed himself to Abraham, scholars think it was in a way that Abraham knew that it was God.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Where were Mesopotamia and Haran?

[7:4]

See Map: Mesopotamia; Haran

Why did Stephen say God gave none of the land as an inheritance to Abraham?

[7:5]

Stephen said that God did not give any of the land as an inheritance to Abraham. Abraham did not possess the land that was promised to him. Instead, his descendants inherited the land promised to Abraham.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Inheritance \(Heir\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Where was the land where the descendants of Abraham went and became slaves?

[7:6]

The descendants of Abraham first went to the land of Egypt when Abraham’s great-grandson, Joseph, was sold into slavery there (see: Genesis 39:1-4; 46:3-4). They were slaves in Egypt for 400 years.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

See Map: Egypt

Where was the place where God said Abraham’s descendants will worship him?

[7:7]

God said that Abraham’s descendants will worship him in Canaan.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

See Map: Canaan

What was the covenant of circumcision that God made with Abraham?

[7:8]

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#)

What was a Patriarch?

[7:8]

The Patriarchs are the 12 sons of Jacob. The twelve tribes of Israel are named for each of the sons of Jacob.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

7:9-19

Why were Joseph's brothers jealous of Joseph?

[7:9]

Scholars think Joseph's brothers were "jealous" (ζηλόω/g2206) of him because their father, Jacob, showed more favor to Joseph than he did to the other brothers (see: Genesis 37:3-4).

What did Stephen mean by saying "our fathers"?

[7:11]

When Stephen spoke the words, "our fathers" he was referring to the twelve sons of Jacob.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did Joseph have to reveal himself to his brothers?

[7:13]

Scholars think that because Joseph lived in Egypt for thirteen years after his brothers sold him, Joseph acted and spoke in the same way the Egyptians did. Because of this, his brothers did not know him immediately. Joseph also spoke to his brothers through a translator to cause them to think he was an Egyptian (see: Genesis 42:23).

See Map: Egypt

Where was Shechem?

[7:16]

See Map: Shechem

Who was buried in Shechem?

[7:16]

Scholars think that Stephen was speaking about the twelve sons of Jacob when he spoke of those buried in Shechem.

What was "the time of the promise"?

[7:17]

Stephen spoke about the time of promise. Some scholars think Stephen was speaking about two different parts of the same promise. That is, God promised Abraham that he would give the land of Canaan to his

descendants. The second part of the promise was that Abraham's descendants would first be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years (see: Genesis 15:13).

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\); Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\); Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

See Map: Canaan

What is important about the new king not knowing Joseph?

[7:18]

While Joseph was in Egypt, he became one of their most recognized leaders under Pharaoh. That is, everyone in Egypt knew Joseph. However, sixty years after Joseph died, a new king began to rule in Egypt. The new king hated and was very afraid of the people of Israel.

See Map: Egypt; Israel

7:20-36

How was something "beautiful before God"?

[7:20]

Scholars disagree about how something was beautiful before God. Some scholars think it meant that God was very pleased with Moses. Other scholars think this was something the Israelites said when they wanted to say that someone was a very beautiful child.

How was Moses placed outside?

[7:21]

Moses' parents hid Moses for three months without Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, knowing. Some scholars think that after three months, Moses' parents could no longer keep him hidden, so they placed him in a basket that was then placed in the river. This basket floated. They think this was done so that the king's daughter would find him (see: Exodus 2:3-10)

How had the daughter of Pharaoh adopted Moses and raised him as her own son?"

[7:21]

Pharaoh was the king of Egypt. Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses. Stephen meant that Pharaoh's daughter took Moses and cared for him, raising him up in her family as if Moses was her own son. She made him part of her own family.

How did Moses avenge an Israelite by "striking the Egyptian"?

[7:24]

When Stephen said that Moses avenged an Israelite by "striking the Egyptian," he wanted people to know that Moses killed the Egyptian. The Old Testament does not say how Moses killed the Egyptian (see: Exodus 2:12).

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did the people ask, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us"?

[7:27]

The people asked Moses, "who made you a ruler and a judge over us." These people wanted to say that Moses was not a ruler over them and could not judge them.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Where was the land of Midian?

[7:29]

See Map: Midian

Where is the wilderness of Mt. Sinai?

[7:30]

See Map: Mt. Sinai

See: [Sinai](#)

Who was the “angel” who appeared to Moses?

[7:30]

The “angel” who appeared in a flame of fire to Moses was the angel of God. That is, God showed himself to Moses in the form of a flame (see: Exodus 3:2).

See: [Angel](#)

Why did God say that he was the God of Moses’ fathers--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

[7:32]

God revealed himself to Moses as the God of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Scholars think God wanted Moses to know that God kept his promises. That is, Moses experienced part of the covenant promise God made with Abraham.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why did God command Moses to remove his sandals?

[7:33]

God commanded Moses to remove his sandals because God declared the place where he was standing was holy. When he did this, it was a sign of great respect and honor for God.

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

How did God “come down” to rescue His people from their sufferings in Egypt?

[7:34]

God came down in the form of an angel to speak to Moses and to send Moses to rescue the Israelites. God was going with Moses to be with him to tell him what to say and do.

See: [Angel](#)

Where did God send Moses to deliver God’s people?

[7:35]

God sent Moses back to Egypt to deliver his people from the suffering and slavery.

See: [People of God](#); [People of God](#)

See Map: Egypt

Why did Stephen speak about the people of Israel rejecting Moses?

[7:35]

Stephen spoke about the people of Israel rejecting Moses. Scholars think Stephen spoke about Israel rejecting Moses to show that Israel rejected many of the prophets God sent to them. Ultimately, the people of Israel rejected Jesus, the one Moses declared would come after him (see: 1 Corinthians 7:37, 51-52).

See: [Prophet](#)

How did Moses lead Israel out of Egypt?

[7:36]

Moses did many miracles so the king of Egypt would let the Israelites leave Egypt. However, he did not let them leave. Then God used Moses to punish Egypt and help the Israelites leave Egypt.

See: Exodus 7-14

See: [Exodus](#); [Exodus](#)

Where was the Red Sea and the wilderness of Mt. Sinai?

[7:36]

See Map: Red Sea; Mt. Sinai

7:37-43

What did Stephen mean by saying, “God will raise up a prophet”?

[7:37]

The words, “God will raise up a prophet” meant that God was going to appoint and send a prophet to the people of Israel. Scholars think Moses was speaking about the Messiah. Just as Moses was the mediator between the people of Israel and God, so the Messiah is the greatest mediator who mediates between all the peoples of the world and God.

See: [Mediator](#); [Appoint](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Mediator](#)

What were the “living words” Moses received to give to the Israelites?

[7:38]

Scholars think the “living words” about which Stephen spoke were the messages from God that told people how to live in a way that honored God. They think these “living words” were also seen in the laws given to Moses (see: Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What did Stephen mean when he said, “in their hearts they turned back to Egypt?”

[7:39]

Some scholars think that when Stephen spoke about the fathers who “in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,” he was speaking about the Israelites who wanted to return to Egypt where they had plenty to eat and drink. Fewer scholars think the fathers wanted to return to Egypt to reject God and worship the idols of Egypt.

See: Exodus 16:3; Numbers 11:4-6

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

Where was Moses when the Israelites asked Aaron to make other gods to lead them?

[7:40]

Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the laws from God when the Israelites asked Aaron to make other gods. The Israelites were impatient, and wanted instead the kind of gods they worshipped in Egypt.

See: Exodus 32:1-6

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [False gods](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

See Map: Mount Sinai

Why did Aaron and the people make a calf as their idol?

[7:41]

Scholars think Aaron and the people made a calf as an idol because it was like the bull worship of the Egyptians.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How did God give them up?

[7:42]

The words “God gave them up” meant that God let the Israelites go and follow their own desires. That is, God let the Israelites do the sins they wanted to do. Some scholars think that the Israelites sinned more and more, so God let them suffer the consequences of sinning.

See: [Sin](#)

What was the “book of the prophets”?

[7:42]

The “book of the prophets” referred to the last twelve books of the Old Testament. These books were also known as the books of the minor prophets. Stephen quoted from one of the minor prophets (see: Amos 5:25-27).

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was the “tabernacle of Molech” and the “star of the god Rephan?”

[7:43]

Scholars think the Israelites misused the tabernacle to worship false gods, Molech and the star of Rephan. Scholars think Molech represented the planet Venus, while the star of the god Rephan was the planet Saturn.

See: [Tabernacle](#); [Tabernacle](#)

What and where was Babylon?

[7:43] Babylon was in modern day Iraq and it represented a far away place from home and captivity as slaves. Stephen quoted the passage from Amos where God threatened to send the Israelites there as slaves because they worshipped idols.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

See Map: Babylon

7:44-53

What was the tabernacle of the testimony?

[7:44]

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

How did Israel gain possession of the promised land?

[7:45]

God gave the Israelites the land by driving out the people who were there. He did this by giving the Israelites good leaders like Joshua and by doing miracles (see: Joshua 6).

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

What did it mean that David “found favor in the sight of God”?

[7:46]

David “found favor in the sight of God.” That is he lived in a way that honored God.

What was a dwelling place for the God of Jacob?

[7:46]

David wanted to build a beautiful temple for God and for the Ark of the Covenant that represented God’s presence with the people. Jacob was the father of the 12 tribes of Israel.

See: [Tribes of Israel](#); [Ark of the Covenant](#); [Presence of God](#); [Tribes of Israel](#)

Who was Solomon?

[7:47]

Solomon was David’s son from his wife Bathsheba. He ruled Israel.

See: 1 Kings 6

What was the house that Solomon built?

[7:47]

Solomon built a house, which is the temple. This was a place where Israel could go to worship God. It was a house because it was where God’s presence was on the earth at that time.

See: [Presence of God](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Presence of God](#)

Did the Most High live in houses made with hands?

[7:48]

Stephen said the same thing that Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 66:1-2). He wanted to show that God is far greater than any house that can be made with human hands.

How did Stephen say the people of Israel acted?

[7:51] Stephen spoke about four different ways in which the people of Israel acted:

1. Stephen said the people were “stiff-necked.” This was a way of saying the people were very stubborn in doing wrong. Scholars think the people did not want to obey God.
2. Stephen said the Israelites were “uncircumcised in heart and ears.” This meant that though the Israelites has the outward signs of belonging to God, they did not obey God, or even listen to him. That is, they acted like the people who did not believe in God.
3. Stephen said to the Israelites “you always resist the Holy Spirit.” This meant the Israelites had a history of rejecting or fighting against the Holy Spirit (see Isaiah 63:10).
4. Stephen said to the Israelites “you act just as your fathers acted.” This meant the Israelites were doing the same thing as their ancestors who resisted the Holy Spirit by rejecting the messages of the prophets.

See: 1 Kings 19:14; Nehemiah 9:26; Luke 6:22-23; 11:49; 13:34

See: [Prophet](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Prophet](#)

Did the people of Israel persecute every prophet?

[7:52]

Stephen asked a rhetorical question. That is, he did not expect any answer from the Israelites. The Israelites persecuted most of the prophets. They repeatedly rejected Moses, even though they said that Moses was their greatest teacher.

See: Matthew 23:29-36

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

[7:52]### Who was the righteous one?

The righteous one was the Messiah. People knew that Stephen was talking about Jesus.

See: Isaiah 53:11; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What was Stephen accusing these members of the Jewish council of doing?

[7:52, 7:53]

Stephen accused the members of the Jewish council of being traitors (προδότηι /g4273) and killing Jesus because they helped the Romans to kill Jesus (see John 19:11).

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

What was the law the “angels had established”?

[7:53]

Scholars think that God used angels to give the Law of Moses to the Israelites. That is, God created the Law of Moses and then sent his angels to deliver the Law of Moses (see: Deuteronomy 33:2; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

7:54-60

Who were the council members?

[7:54]

The Council members were the religious leaders of the people, that is, the Sanhedrin.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “cut to the heart”?

[7:54]

When Luke wrote that the council members were “cut to the heart,” it was a metaphor. It meant that the council members were extremely angry.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

What did Luke mean when he said the council “ground their teeth at Stephen”?

[7:54]

When Luke wrote the words “ground their teeth at Stephen” he meant the council members were so angry they closed their mouths tightly. Perhaps they did this to not do some bad because they were angry.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

How was Stephen “full of the Holy Spirit”?

[7:55]

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why was Jesus “standing at the right hand of God”?

[7:56]

Scholars think that Jesus being at the “right hand of God” was to show that Jesus had all the power of God and God gave him permission to rule everything. Some scholars think Jesus was “standing” to welcome Stephen into heaven. Stephen also called Jesus the “Son of Man.” Those who heard Stephen understood that Stephen was claiming that Jesus was God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Son of Man](#); [Jesus is God](#)

See: Mark 14:62; Daniel 7:13-14

How were the heavens opened?

[7:56]

The words that the heavens were opened was a way to say that God revealed things about heaven. God did this to honor Jesus. At the baptism of Jesus, the heavens were also opened and the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus.

See Matthew 3:16; Ezekiel 1:1

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did the council members stone Stephen?

[7:58]

Scholars think the Jewish council stoned Stephen to death because they believed he blasphemed God. They think he did this when he said that Jesus is God. However, this is not blasphemy because Jesus is God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did the witnesses lay their clothing at Saul’s feet?

[7:58]

Scholars think the witnesses laid their clothing at Saul’s feet simply so that he would guard the clothes while they cast stones at Stephen. Some scholars do not know if Saul was leading this stoning. Other scholars think he was just watching Stephen being stoned.

Who was Saul?

[7:58]

Saul was the same one who had the name Paul (see: Acts 13:9) He became an apostle.

See: [Apostle](#)

What did Stephen mean when he cried out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”?

[7:59]

Scholars think that when Stephen cried out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” he was asking Jesus to welcome him into heaven, that he might be with Jesus. This prayer is very similar to that which Jesus himself prayed (see: Luke 23:6).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What did Stephen mean when he asked God to “not hold this sin against them”?

[7:59]

Scholars think Stephen prayed that Jesus would forgive the people who were stoning him. This prayer is very similar to the prayer Jesus prayed (see: Luke 23:34).

See: [Sin](#)

How did Stephen fall asleep?

[7:59]

When Luke wrote that Stephen “fell asleep, ” he wanted to write that Stephen died.

Chapter 8

¹ Saul was in agreement with his death.

So there began on that day a great persecution against the church that was in Jerusalem; and the believers were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul tried to destroy the church. He would enter house after house, drag off both men and women, and put them in prison.

⁴ Yet the believers who had been scattered went about preaching the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. ⁶ Crowds of people were giving close attention to what was being said by Philip; with one mind they heard him, and they saw the signs he did. ⁷ Unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying out with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much joy in that city.

⁹ But there was a certain man in the city named Simon, who had earlier been practicing sorcery; he used to astonish the people of Samaria while claiming that he was an important person. ¹⁰ All the Samaritans, from the least to the greatest, paid attention to him; they said, "This man is that power of God which is called Great." ¹¹ They listened to him because he had astonished them for a long time with his sorceries. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the gospel about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after he was baptized he stayed with Philip constantly. When he saw signs and mighty works taking place, he was amazed.

¹⁴ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John. ¹⁵ When they had come down, they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For until that time, the Holy Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money. ¹⁹ He said, "Give me this authority, too, that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish along with you, because you thought to obtain the gift of God with money. ²¹ You have no part or allotted portion in this matter, because your heart is not right with God. ²² Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord, so that he might perhaps forgive you for the intention of your heart. ²³ For I see that you are in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of unrighteousness."

²⁴ Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

²⁵ When they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, "Arise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This road is in a desert.) ²⁷ He arose and went. Behold, there was a man from Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. ²⁸ He was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹ The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to this chariot."

³⁰ So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹ Then he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" He invited Philip to come up into the chariot and sit with him.

³² Now the passage of the scripture which the Ethiopian was reading was this,

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and like a lamb before his shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

33 In his humiliation
justice was taken away from him.
Who can give a full account of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth."

34 So the eunuch asked Philip, and said, "I beg you, tell me who is the prophet speaking about, himself, or someone else?" **35** Philip began to speak, and beginning with this scripture he proclaimed the gospel about Jesus to him. **36** As they went on the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, there is water here. What prevents me from being baptized?" **37**^[1]**38** So the Ethiopian commanded the chariot to stop. They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him. **39** When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing. **40** But Philip appeared at Azotus and he went through that region, proclaiming the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

Footnotes

8:37 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have Acts 8:37,

Acts 8

8:1-3

How was Saul "in agreement" with Stephen's death?

[8:1]

Saul thought that Stephen should die. When the angry people threw stones at Stephen, Saul guarded their clothes they took off themselves (see: Acts 7:58). Scholars think Saul later changed his name to Paul after he became a Christian.

See Acts 22:20

What was a "great persecution"?

[8:1]

A "strong and violent persecution" began when the angry people killed Stephen. The people from a certain synagogue organized attacks in Jerusalem. They put many Christians in prison. Saul went from house to house and put Christians in prison (see: Acts 8:3). The Christians who were not in prison quickly left Jerusalem and went to Samaria and other places in Judea to escape persecution. Only the apostles stayed in Jerusalem at that time.

Some scholars think those who left Jerusalem were the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians and not the Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians. The Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians were more loyal to Jerusalem. Other scholars think the persecution was stronger against the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians. Thus, the apostles, who were Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jewish Christians, were able to stay in Jerusalem.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:14

See: [Apostle](#); [Synagogue](#); [Apostle](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Samaria; Judea

Who were the "devout men" who buried Stephen?

[8:2]

The “devout men” were men who feared God and lived in a way that honored God. These men took Stephen’s body to bury it in the way the Law of Moses required. Scholars think these men believed in Jesus.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

8:4-8

What was “preaching the word”?

[8:4]

See: Galatians 2:19-20

See: [Gospel](#); [Word of God](#); [Gospel](#)

What was “proclaimed to them the Christ”?

[8:5]

Philip told those in Samaria the important story about the messiah. He told them that Jesus was the messiah of the Jewish and Samaritan people, and that he lived a perfect life. Jesus did many miracles and taught them about God. Jesus suffered, died, and became alive again on the third day.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Samaria

Who was Philip?

[8:5]

Philip was one of the seven brothers the Christians chose to help widows (see: Acts 6:5).

How did people give “close attention”?

[8:6]

The crowds listened together with complete attention. All of the people watched and listened to what Philip said because he did miracles and he spoke strongly.

See: [Miracle](#)

What was a sign?

[8:6]

A sign was a miracle that God did and people were able to see it (see: Acts 8:7).

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

What is an unclean spirit?

[8:7]

An unclean spirit is an evil spirit. It is also called a demon. Unclean spirits and demons obey Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was a paralyzed person? A lame person?

[8:7]

A paralyzed person was someone who was partially or completely unable to move.

A lame person was someone who was injured or had an illness and were not able to walk well or they were not able to walk at all.

8:9-13

Why did the people think God gave power to the man who did sorcery?

[8:9]

The people believed God gave power to the man who did sorcery because he did amazing things for a long time and he claimed to be someone great (see: Acts 8:9,11).

See: [Sorcery](#)

What was the gospel of the kingdom of God?

[8:12]

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What did the people do after they believed the good news about Jesus and the kingdom of God?

[8:12]

The people, both men and women, were baptized immediately after they believed the good news about Jesus and the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Gospel](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did Simon, who had great power of God, believe and be baptized?

[8:13]

Simon believed and was baptized because he was surprised when he saw the signs and mighty works Philip did with God's power. That is, the Samaritans thought Simon had great power of God, but Simon himself was amazed when he saw God's power through Philip. Simon knew about power from God and he knew something more powerful than his power worked through Philip. His trust in miracles and power was not enough for him to believe for very long. He soon became more interested in power than in believing (see: Acts 8:18-19). Jesus knew Simon was thinking in the wrong way (see: John 2:23-24).

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

8:14-25

What did the apostles in Jerusalem think about the Samaritans believing in Jesus, the Messiah?

[8:14]

The apostles in Jerusalem were glad the Samaritans believed in Jesus and they were not surprised. They did, however, feel it was their duty to inspect the new work to make sure it was true and good (see: Acts 11:22). Before, John went to Samaria because before that he wanted Jesus to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans for rejecting Jesus since Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (see: Luke 9:52-55). Now, John went to see for himself if the Samaritans believed in Jesus. Then, John told other Samaritan villages about Jesus and the gospel (see: Acts 8:25).

See: [Gospel](#); [Samaria](#); [Fire](#); [Heaven](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

How did Samaria receive the "word" of God?

[8:14]

Samaria received the “word”(λόγος/g3056) of God when they believed Jesus is the messiah, the Son of God, and the power of salvation (see: Romans 1:2-5). It was a way to say they believed the things Philip said about Jesus, who is the “Word” of God (see: John 1:1).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria?

[8:14]

Scholars give several reasons why the apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria.

1. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem needed evidence that God accepted the Samaritans. The Jews in general did not accept the Samaritans because the Samaritans were a mixed race of Jews who married Gentiles (see: 2 Kings 17:26). So the apostles sent Peter and John to see the new work of God in Samaria.
2. It was necessary for the apostles from Jerusalem to welcome the Samaritan Christians. Then the Christians in Jerusalem would be able to fully include Samaritan Christians into the Christian community. The Christian community was only Jewish people until that time.
3. It was not necessary for the apostles from the Jerusalem church to welcome the Samaritan Christians. Luke did not write it was necessary. Later, Paul wrote that other Christians who were not apostles baptized people (see: 1 Corinthians 1:14-17).
4. God wanted to use the apostles when the first Gentiles received the Holy Spirit.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Samaria](#); [Gentile](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Samaria

Why did Luke write “to come down” to Samaria?

[8:15]

Samaria was lower in elevation from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is high in elevation. So they came down to Samaria from Jerusalem.

See: [Samaria](#)

What happened when the apostles Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit?

[8:15, 8:16, 8:17]

Luke did not write what happened when the apostles Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans for them to receive the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think they spoke in tongues because that happened at other times when the Holy Spirit filled people in Acts (see: Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6). Other scholars think there were other gifts of the Spirit or signs because Luke did not write the Samaritans spoke in tongues.

See: [Sign](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Samaria](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Sign](#)

Why did Simon want to give the apostles money to give the Holy Spirit to people?

[8:18]

Simon wanted to do the same things an apostle did. Then he will have the power to give people the Holy Spirit when he laid his hands on people. He liked having power and this was another way for him to have power over people and bring glory to himself.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Peter rebuke Simon for wanting to buy the power of God from the apostles?

[8:20, 8:21]

Peter rebuked Simon for wanting to buy the free gift of God with money. The Holy Spirit was not for sale. People did not need money to have the gifts of God (see: Acts 8:20). Instead, a person repented and believed in Jesus. God's gift of the Holy Spirit to live in everyone was a free gift for all who believed in him.

See: Acts 3:6

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

What did Peter wish will perish?

[8:20]

Peter wanted Simon to not have money. Peter did not wish for Simon to die.

What was the “part or allotted portion” for which Simon did not have the right heart?

[8:21]

Peter and John knew Simon did not have the right heart. That is, he did not think the right things and they did not think Simon should be a leader.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

When was a person's heart not right with God?

[8:21]

A person's heart was not right with God when a person did not live in a way that honors God or does not want to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Peter say God “might perhaps forgive”?

[8:22]

Peter did not question if God was able to forgive Simon. He said these words because he did not know if God will forgive Simon. His sin of offering money for the gift of God was a serious sin. God will not allow man to control God (see: 2 Samuel 6:1-7).

See: Joshua 7:1

How did a person repent?

[8:22]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How was Simon “in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of unrighteousness”?

[8:23]

Some scholars think Simon was still controlled by his old self. That is he sinfully wanted power and glory. Simon was a Christian. He believed the message from Philip and he was baptized, but he still wanted to do evil (see: Romans 7:8,19). Other scholars think Simon was not a Christian. He was not part of the kingdom of God (see: John 8:31,44-47). Simon really wanted to have power over others by having the permission to give the Holy Spirit to others. If he repented and asked God's forgiveness, then God would forgive and heal him. Then, God would give him the Holy Spirit to help him to stop sinning and wanting to sin

See: Deuteronomy 29:17-18

See: [Sin](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Old and New Self](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin](#)

How did Simon respond to Peter?

[8:24]

Simon did not respond according to what Peter said. Peter told Simon to pray and repent. Instead Simon asked Peter to pray for him.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

8:26-31

What is an angel?

[8:26]

See: [Angel](#)

Where was Gaza?

[8:26]

See Map: Gaza

Where was Ethiopia?

[8:27]

Ethiopia, or Cush, was where the ancient kingdom of Nubia was located. It was in the southern part of Egypt in what today includes part of Sudan.

See Map: Ethiopia; Sudan; Cush.

What was a eunuch?

[8:27]

A eunuch was a man whose testicles were cut off. This was usually done for a certain purpose. Sometimes this was done so the man could guard the women in a royal palace. This eunuch was the treasurer for the queen of the Ethiopians. He had great power. In Israel, a eunuch was not allowed in the military and could not worship God with other people. God did not want the people of Israel to make their boys eunuchs (see: Genesis 1:27-28).

See: [Worship](#)

Why did the eunuch go to Jerusalem to worship?

[8:27]

The eunuch went to Jerusalem to worship God because he feared the God of Israel. However, because this man was an eunuch and a gentile, he was not allowed to go into the temple area. He was reading the book of Isaiah. Some scholars say he wanted to see the memorial for eunuchs inside the temple (see Isaiah 56:3-5). Other scholars say the prophecy of Isaiah became complete when this eunuch believed in Jesus and was baptized (see: Isaiah 56:3-7). There was also another Ethiopian eunuch who went to Jerusalem (see Jeremiah 38:7-13).

See: Leviticus 23

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Fear of God](#); [Gentile](#); [Temple](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

What was a chariot?

[8:28]

A chariot was a two-wheel vehicle pulled by horses or a horse. It was often used for war or racing. Certain leaders travelled in chariots to go from one place to another place. Since this eunuch was the treasurer of the queen of the Ethiopians, this was a larger chariot.

See: [Chariot](#)

How was the man reading?

[8:28]

The man was reading aloud from the book of Isaiah and Philip heard him reading. In ancient times, people did not often read silently.

See: Isaiah 53:7-8

Why did the man not understand the things Isaiah wrote about?

[8:30, 8:31]

The man did not understand the things Isaiah wrote about because he did not have anyone to explain this prophecy. He asked Philip to sit beside him and tell him about what Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 53).

Whom did the prophet Isaiah write about in Isaiah 53?

[8:32, 8:33, 8:34, 8:35]

The prophet Isaiah wrote about Jesus in Isaiah 53. It was a prophecy about a servant of God who was persecuted. Isaiah wrote about Jesus. The servant of God suffered and was rejected for other people. That is, God forgave others because Jesus died. However, the suffering servant prophesied about Jesus' resurrection when Isaiah spoke about Jesus seeing the light of life again (see: Isaiah 53:11).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What things did the eunuch read from Isaiah 53 about the death of Jesus?

[8:32, 8:33, 8:34, 8:35]

The eunuch read several things read from Isaiah 53 about the death of Jesus.

1. Jesus was led like sheep to the slaughter. This is a metaphor. Jesus died in the same way sheep died. Sheep follow and go where they are led, even if they will die. Jesus died to obey God and was willing to die to obey God.
2. Jesus was silent like a lamb before his shearer. This is a metaphor. Jesus did not argue with God to try to keep living. He did not try to stop people from killing him. He did not open his mouth (see: Matthew 26:62, 63).
3. In his humiliation, justice was taken away from Jesus. That is, Jesus was humble and did not speak and try to defend himself. People said he was guilty and punished him even though he was innocent.
4. No one can give a full account of all of Jesus' descendants. That is, Jesus has more children than anyone can count. Jesus did not have any children and never had sex. However, all Christians are part of Jesus' family and are children of God.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Family of God](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did the eunuch ask to be baptized?

[8:36]

The eunuch asked to be baptized because Philip explained the prophet Isaiah's words about Jesus. That is, if someone believed in Jesus, then they should be baptized. The eunuch believed in Jesus so he asked to be baptized. There was much more about "the gospel about Jesus" Philip told the eunuch that Luke did not write. This was why Luke wrote, "Beginning with this Scripture." Philip began with the Scripture from Isaiah that the eunuch was reading, but Philip explained more than just those few verses.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Did Luke write verse 37?

[8:37]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have verse 37. More and older copies of the Greek New Testament do not have verse 37. Scholars do not think Luke wrote the words in verse 37.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How did the Spirit of the Lord take Philip away?

[8:39]

The Spirit of the Lord took Philip away miraculously. That is, Philip vanished quickly and then he appeared somewhere else. The Spirit of the Lord is also called the Holy Spirit.

See: 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16; Ezekiel 3:14; 8:3

See: [Lord](#); [Lord](#)

Why did the eunuch go on his way with rejoicing?

[8:39]

The eunuch experienced the same joy the Samaritans did when they believed in Jesus (see: Acts 8:8). The eunuch continued on the road home "rejoicing" (χαίρω/G5463) or "being glad." It did not matter to him that God took away Philip.

See: [Samaria](#); [Samaria](#)

Where were Azotus and Caesarea?

[8:40]

Azotus was the Greek name of the city of Ashdod in the Old Testament.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

See Map: Azotus

Chapter 9

¹ But Saul, still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters for the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ As he was traveling, it happened that as he came near to Damascus, suddenly there shone all around him a light out of heaven; ⁴ and he fell upon the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ Saul replied, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; ⁶ but rise, enter into the city, and it will be told you what you must do." ⁷ The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one. ⁸ Saul arose from the ground, and when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight, and he neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!" He said, "See, I am here, Lord."

¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might see again."

¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ He has authority from the chief priests to put in bonds everyone here who calls upon your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel; ¹⁶ for I will show him how much he must suffer for the cause of my name."

¹⁷ So Ananias departed, and entered into the house. Laying his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road when you were coming, has sent me so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he received his sight; he arose and was baptized; ¹⁹ and he ate and was strengthened.

He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days. ²⁰ Right away he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying that he is the Son of God. ²¹ All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name? He has come here to take them bound to the chief priests." ²² But Saul became more and more powerful, and he was causing distress among the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

²³ After many days, the Jews planned together to kill him. ²⁴ But their plan became known to Saul. They watched the gates day and night in order to kill him. ²⁵ But his disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

²⁶ When he had come to Jerusalem, Saul attempted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and he told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how at Damascus Saul had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ He was with them, going in and out around Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus ²⁹ and debated with the Grecian Jews; but they kept trying to kill him. ³⁰ When the brothers learned of this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹ So then, the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the church grew in numbers. ³² Now it came about that, as Peter went throughout the whole region, he came down also to God's holy people who lived in the town of Lydda. ³³ There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been in his bed for eight years, for he was paralyzed. ³⁴ Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed," and right away he got up. ³⁵ So everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon saw the man and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶ Now there was in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha (which is translated "Dorcas"). This woman was full of good works and merciful deeds that she did for the poor. ³⁷ It came about in those days that she fell sick and died; when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, pleading with him, "Come to us without delay." ³⁹ Peter arose and went with them. When he had arrived, they brought him to the upper room, and all the widows stood by him weeping, showing him the tunics and garments that Dorcas had made while she had been with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put them all out of the room, knelt down, and prayed; then, turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ Peter then gave her his hand and raised her up; and when he called God's holy people and the widows, he presented her alive to them. ⁴² This matter became known throughout all Joppa, and many people believed on the Lord. ⁴³ It happened that Peter stayed for many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner.

Acts 9

9:1-9

What was a high priest?

[9:1]

See: [High Priest](#)

How was the high priest in Jerusalem able to approve Saul's request to bring people back to Jerusalem?

[9:2]

At that time the high priest in Jerusalem had permission to bring back a prisoner to Jerusalem from other areas under Roman control. Saul looked for Christians who left Jerusalem when the people persecuted Christians (see: Acts 8:1).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

What was a synagogue?

[9:2]

See: [Synagogue](#)

Where was Damascus?

[9:2]

See Map: Damascus

What was "the way"?

[9:2]

"The way" was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

What did Saul want to do when he found Christians in Damascus?

[9:2]

Saul wanted to bring Christians back to Jerusalem in ropes or chains to punish them (see Acts 22:5). The high priest and the Jewish council in Jerusalem gave permission to Paul to bring Christians back to Jerusalem. He also planned to kill Christians and destroy the church (see: Acts 8:3; 9:1; 22:4-5).

See: [Church](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Church](#)

Why did Saul fall to the ground?

[9:4]

Saul fell to the ground because he was blinded by the very bright light from heaven. It was mid-day so the light shone even more than the sun. He was not able to see any more. Luke used the same word for a lightning flash. Thus, Saul saw a light bigger than a lightning flash around him that blinded him. However, it did not make the men with him blind.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Saul call the person speaking “Lord”?

[9:5]

Some scholars think Saul did not know who spoke, so he used the word “sir” or “master” out of respect or fear. Other scholars think he said “Lord” (κύριος/g2962) to talk to God because the voice he heard seemed to be God. However, Saul did not know at first who it was because he had to ask who spoke to him (see: Acts 9:17,27; 1 Corinthians 15:8). The voice replied to Saul’s question and told Saul it was Jesus who spoke.

See: [Lord](#)

Why were the men with Saul speechless?

[9:7]

The flash of light from above and then heard Saul speak but could not see to whom he was speaking. This made the men afraid so that they were not able to speak. They heard the voice but the words of the voice came only to Saul. They saw the bright light shining all around but it did not blind them and they did not see anyone.

See Acts 22:9

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Saul not eat or drink for three days?

[9:9]

Saul was not able to see for three days. Some scholars think he was still in shock so he did not want to eat. Other scholars think he was praying and fasting to repent (see: Acts 9:11). He felt terrible about killing and persecuting Christians because Jesus told him when he persecuted Christians, Saul actually persecuted Jesus.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Pray \(prayer\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

9:10-19

How did Ananias become a disciple?

[9:10]

Luke did not write how Ananias became a disciple of Jesus. Some scholars think he came from Jerusalem after people began persecuting Christians. Other scholars think he lived in Damascus and heard the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Jerusalem; Damascus

What was a vision?

[9:10]

See: [Vision](#)

Why did the Lord tell Ananias the name of the street?

[9:11]

Jesus told Ananias the name of the street so he was able to find the right house where Saul was staying. Straight Street was the long street that ran east to west through Damascus.

See Map: Damascus

Who was Judas?

[9:11]

Judas was a Jew and the host of Saul when Saul came to Damascus. He was not the same person as Judas Iscariot.

See Map: Damascus

Where was Tarsus?

[9:11]

Paul was from Tarsus, but he moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem to study Judaism (see: Acts 22:3). He came to Damascus directly from Jerusalem.

See Map: Tarsus

Why did the Lord want Ananias to lay hands on Saul?

[9:12]

Some scholars think Jesus wanted Ananias to lay hands on Saul so Saul will see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is, the laying on of hands made Saul receive the Holy Spirit in the same way Peter and John prayed and laid hands on the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit (see: Acts 8:14-17). Other scholars think Jesus called Saul to serve him and then Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit after his baptism (see: Acts 9:18). In ancient Israel, the Israelites laid on hands so people were able to know God wanted someone to do something (See Numbers 8:10; 27:18).

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Pray \(prayer\)](#); [Samaria](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Who were the Lord's holy people?

[9:13]

The Lord's holy people or holy ones were Christians. The New Testament wrote Christians were holy people because God forgave them (see Ephesian 1:1,4,7).

See: [People of God](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [People of God](#)

What was a chief priest?

[9:14]

See: [Chief Priest](#)

Why did people call upon the Lord's name?"

[9:14]

People called upon the Lord's name to ask Jesus to save them. That is, anyone who believed in Jesus became a Christian (See Acts 4:12; 26:16-18). Saul was coming to get any Christians and bring them to Jerusalem in chains.

See: [Lord](#)

How was Saul a chosen instrument for God?

[9:15]

God chose Saul to be an apostle to bring the gospel to people. Saul was going to tell kings and rulers of the Gentiles and the Jews about Jesus. He told them he has seen and heard Jesus after Jesus died (see: Acts 22:15).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Gentile](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did Saul "suffer for the cause of my name"?

[9:16]

Saul will suffer to serve Jesus. He was persecuted because he told many people about Jesus. Saul was often put in prison for telling people about Jesus.

See: Acts 16:16-40; 17:-9; 21:30-36; 22:21-29; 27:27-28:6; 2 Corinthians 6:4-5; 11:23-27

How was someone filled with the Holy Spirit?

[9:17]

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why was Ananias able to call Saul "brother"?

[9:17]

Ananias was able to call Saul "brother" (ἀδελφός/g0080) because Jesus told Ananias that Saul was a different man. The word "brother" (ἀδελφός/g0080) was a gentle term to tell Saul he was no longer an enemy of Christians. Saul was now part of the family of God.

See: [Family of God](#)

Why was Saul baptized?

[9:18]

Saul was baptized to obey Jesus (see: Matthew 28:18-20). Saul was also able to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit (see: Matthew 3:16; Acts 19:5-6).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Saul stay with the disciples in Damascus for several days?

[9:19]

Some scholars think Saul stayed with the disciples in Damascus to learn from them about Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus revealed to Saul everything he needed to know about Jesus (see: Galatians 1:11-12).

The Christians in Damascus wanted to give Saul a safe place to stay. The Jews wanted to harm him (see: Acts 9:23).

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

See Map: Damascus

9:20-25

How did Saul right away proclaim “Jesus in the synagogues”?

[9:20]

Some scholars think the high priest and Jewish council in Jerusalem gave permission to Saul to teach people about Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus gave Saul permission to do this. Saul told the Jews Jesus is the Son of God and he proved Jesus is the messiah. He told the Jews about what he saw and heard on the road to Damascus (see: Acts 9:20). He wanted them to know Jesus was resurrected and Jesus spoke to him.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Heresy](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Damascus

Why did Luke write, “But Saul became more and more powerful?”

[9:22]

Luke wrote, “But Saul became more and more powerful,” because Saul became more effective in proving that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised messiah. It did not mean Saul was getting stronger physically.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Saul distress the Jews in Damascus?

[9:22]

Saul distressed the Jews in Damascus because they thought Saul went there to bring Christians back to Jerusalem. Instead, he became a Christian and persuaded other Jews to also believe in Jesus.

See Map: Damascus

Why did the Jews in Damascus want to kill Saul?

[9:23]

The Jews in Damascus wanted to kill Saul because they thought he tried to make Jews worship other gods (see: Deuteronomy 13:6-11). The Jews were wrong to think that. They did not believe Jesus is the Son of God and the messiah.

See: [False gods](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Worship](#); [False gods](#)

Who were Saul’s disciples?

[9:25]

Scholars think Saul’s disciples were people in Damascus who Saul helped to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

9:26-30

Why were the disciples in Jerusalem afraid of Saul?

[9:26]

The disciples in Jerusalem remembered how Saul helped people to stone Stephen and other Christians. They had not heard that Saul became a Christian.

Who were the Grecian Jews?

[9:29]

The Grecian Jews were the ones who made trouble for Stephen and who stoned him when Saul looked upon this.

Where was Caesarea?

[9:30]

See Map: Caesarea

9:31-35

Where were Judea, Galilee, and Samaria?

[9:31]

See Map: Judea; Galilee; Samaria

How was the church one?

[9:31]

The church was one. That is, they all served Jesus together.

How was the church built up?

[9:31]

The church in Jerusalem was built up. That is, more people became Christians.

See: [Church](#)

How did the church “walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit”?

[9:31]

The church walked in fear of the Lord. They honored God and did the things God wanted them to do. They knew God has power and is very holy. Yet, they did not fear people because the Holy Spirit comforted them.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Fear of God](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Who were God’s holy people?

[9:32]

See: [People of God](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [People of God](#)

Where was Lydda?

[9:32]

See Map: Lydda

How did God completely heal Aeneas?

[9:33, 9:34]

God completely healed Aenaes when he was no longer paralyzed after eight years. That is, there was nothing to make him paralyzed. It was the same as if he was not paralyzed for eight years. Also, God healed him right away. Peter told him to make his bed because he was not going to need it there anymore. He was healed.

How did everyone in Lydda and Sharon turn to the Lord?

[9:35]

Everyone in Lydda and Sharon saw the healed man and they heard how he was healed, so they believed in Jesus. That is, they turned away from the things God did not want them to do and believed in Jesus.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

See Map: Sharon; Lydda

9:36-43

Where was Joppa?

[9:36]

See Map: Joppa

Why did Luke write Tabitha was translated to Dorcas?

[9:36]

Luke wrote Tabitha was translated to Dorcas because Tabitha was the woman's name in the Aramaic language. Dorcas was her name in the Greek language. Peter and others called her Tabitha.

Why did they wash the dead woman and place her in the upper room?

[9:37]

In ancient times, some people washed a body before they buried it. These people heard Peter healed the paralyzed man in Lydda. So they put her body in the upper room and asked Peter to come there. They were Christians, and because Tabitha helped the poor, they hoped God will make her alive again.

According to the Law of Moses, these people needed to bury Tabitha before sundown so they sent two men to ask Peter to come right away. Even though Lydda was near Joppa, it took three or four hours for him to walk from Lydda to Joppa.

See: [Law of Moses](#) ; [Law of Moses](#)

See Map: Lydda; Joppa

Why did the widows show Peter the tunics and garments Tabitha made?

[9:39]

The widows showed Peter the clothes Tabitha made. They wanted Peter to know how generous and kind Tabitha was to them. It was a way for Peter to know who she really was and convince him to ask God to make her alive again.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Peter ask everyone to leave the room?

[9:40]

Peter asked everyone to leave the upper room so he was able to pray for her without anyone doing or saying anything against him praying to God. He prayed a similar prayer that Jesus prayed when Jesus made Jairus's daughter alive again (see: Mark 5:41).

See: Matthew 10:8

See: [Pray \(prayer\)](#)

Why did Peter stay in Joppa?

[9:43]

Luke did not write why Peter stayed in Joppa. Scholars think he stayed to teach the many Christians there because of the miracle God did for Tabitha (see Acts 9:42).

Chapter 10

¹ Now there was a certain man in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Company of Soldiers. ² He was a devout man, one who feared God with all his household, gave many alms to the people, and prayed to God constantly. ³ About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him. The angel said to him, "Cornelius!" ⁴ Cornelius stared at the angel and was very afraid and said, "What is it, sir?"

The angel said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have gone up as a memorial offering into God's presence. ⁵ Now send men to the city of Joppa to bring a man named Simon who is called Peter. ⁶ He is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the seaside."

⁷ When the angel who spoke to him had left, Cornelius called two of his house servants, and a devout soldier from among those who served him. ⁸ Cornelius told them all that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

⁹ Now on the next day at about the sixth hour, as they were on their journey and were approaching the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray. ¹⁰ He then became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while the people were cooking some food, a trance came on him, ¹¹ and he saw the sky open and a certain container descending, something like a large sheet coming down to the earth, let down by its four corners. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky. ¹³ Then a voice spoke to him: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat."

¹⁴ But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean."

¹⁵ But the voice came to him again a second time: "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled."

¹⁶ This happened three times; then the container was immediately taken back up into the sky.

¹⁷ Now while Peter was very confused about what the vision that he had seen could mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius stood before the gate, after they had asked their way to the house. ¹⁸ They called out and asked whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.

¹⁹ While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. ^[1]²⁰ Arise and go down and go with them. Do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them."

²¹ So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am he whom you are seeking. Why have you come?"

²² They said, "A centurion named Cornelius, a righteous man and one who fears God, and is well spoken of by all the nation of the Jews, was instructed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house, so he could listen to a message from you." ²³ So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him.

On the next morning he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ On the following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them; he had called together his relatives and his close friends. ²⁵ It came about that when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet to worship him. ²⁶ But Peter helped him up, saying, "Stand up! I too am a man."

²⁷ While Peter was talking with him, he went in and found many people gathered together. ²⁸ He said to them, "You yourselves know that it is not lawful for a Jewish man to associate with or to visit a foreigner. But God has shown me that I should not call any man defiled or unclean. ²⁹ That is why I came without arguing, when I was sent for. So I ask you why you sent for me."

³⁰ Cornelius said, "Four days ago at this very hour, I was praying at the ninth hour in my house; and see, a man stood before me in bright clothing. ³¹ He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard by God, and your alms have reminded God about you. ³² So send someone to Joppa, and call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying in the house of a tanner named Simon, by the seaside.' ^[2]³³ So at once I sent for you. You are kind to have come. Now then, we are all here present in the sight of God to hear everything that you have been instructed by the Lord to say." ^[3]

³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly I understand that God is not partial. ³⁵ Instead, in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message that he sent to the people of Israel, when he announced the good news about peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all— ³⁷ you yourselves know the events that took place, which occurred throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John announced; ³⁸ the events concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses of all the things Jesus did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen, ⁴¹ not by all the people, but to the witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to testify that this is the one who has been chosen by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all of those who were listening to his message. ⁴⁵ The people who belonged to the circumcision group of believers—all of those who came with Peter—were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard these Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" ⁴⁸ Then he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for several days.

Footnotes

10:19 ^[1]Some ancient copies have,

10:32 ^[2]Some ancient copies add:

10:33 ^[3]Instead of

Acts 10

10: 1-8

Where was Caesarea?

[10:1]

See Map: Caesarea

What was a centurion in the "Italian Regiment"?

[10:1]

A centurion in the "Italian Regiment" was an officer in the Roman army. He lead about eighty soldiers. The Roman army recruited these soldiers in Italy.

See Map: Italy

Why was Cornelius a devout man?

[10:2]

Cornelius was a devout man because he worshipped God, but he was not a Jew. He was not circumcised. He helped the poor and he often prayed (see: Acts 10:4).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Who was included in Cornelius' household?

[10:2]

The household of Cornelius included his wife, children, and all relatives living in his home. It also included his servants and their children.

See: [Serve](#)

What time was "the ninth hour of the day"?

[10:3]

"The ninth hour of the day" was about 3 PM. It was during the hot part of the day. What was a vision?

See: [Vision](#)

Why was Cornelius "very afraid" of the angel?

[10:4]

Cornelius was "very afraid" of the angel because the angel knew him. Cornelius was not dreaming (see: Acts 10:10). Instead, Cornelius was fully awake.

See: Luke 2:9

See: [Angel](#)

What was a "memorial offering"?

[10:5]

The angel spoke about the prayers of Cornelius and his gifts to the poor as if they were a sacrifice that God had commanded the Israelites to give. Here the angel called what Cornelius had done a "memorial offering." A "memorial" is something that reminds someone about a person or about something that happened. A memorial offering was an offering that was burned. The aroma of the burnt offering was said to smell good to God. That is, God was pleased with the offering and accepted it. The memorial offering shows the person that God remembers them and hears their prayers. In this situation, God had heard the prayers of Cornelius and had seen what Cornelius had done.

See: [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#)

Where was Joppa?

[10:5]

See Map: Joppa

Why did the angel tell Cornelius to send for Peter?

[10:5]

The angel told Cornelius to send for Peter because he was the apostle Jesus called the rock (see: Matthew 16:18-19). Peter's name was Simon, but Jesus called him Peter. Peter was the name for "rock." Jesus was going to build his church upon Peter, the rock.

See: [Church](#); [Apostle](#); [Church](#)

Where was Peter?

[10:6]

Peter was visiting with a tanner named Simon. A tanner worked with leather skin.

What was a house servant?

[10:7]

A house servant was a person who helped with housework by preparing good and cleaning. Sometimes they helped a leader of an army and did not do the cleaning. They were trusted servants. Scholars think they took horses since it was fifty kilometers away, and they brought an extra horse for Peter to ride on the way back to Joppa.

See: [Serve](#)

See Map: Joppa

How was this man a devout soldier?

[10:7]

Scholars think this soldier worshipped God since Cornelius told them everything about his vision (see: Acts 10:8). For the servants and this soldier to talk with Peter about the vision, they needed to believe and worship God in the way Cornelius did. They also needed to listen to and follow the Holy Spirit.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Vision](#); [Holy Spirit](#)**10:9-16****What time was the “sixth hour”?**

[10:9]

The “sixth hour” was midday, about noon.

Why did Peter go up to the housetop to pray?

[10:9]

Peter went to the housetop to pray because he was able to pray to God alone there. The roofs were flat. People used an outer stairway to go up and down from the housetop. Often there was a cover to give people shade.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)**What was a “trance”?**

[10:10]

A “trance” (ἐκστασις/g1611) was something that happened to a person. Sometimes it was a dream. Peter’s trance was stronger than the vision God gave to Cornelius. Often, a person focused on what God showed him and he was no longer aware of anything near him.

See: [Vision](#)**Why were there different animals in this large sheet?**

[10:12]

The four-footed animals, things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky were the three groups of living things God created and delivered in Noah’s ark (see: Genesis 6:20). God was saying all of creation was open to Peter. The news about Jesus was going to all of creation. This includes Gentiles, Jews, slaves, free people, women, and men (see: Galatians 3:28).

See: [Serve](#); [Gentile](#); [Serve](#)

Why did the voice tell Peter to rise, kill, and eat?

[10:13]

God told Peter to rise, kill, and eat the unclean animals because he wanted people to know that it was not evil to eat these things. God did not want people to follow the Law of Moses anymore. God also wanted the Jews to know that the Gentiles could become Christians.

See: [Fellowship](#); [Fellowship](#)

Why did Peter not want to eat unclean food?

[10:14]

Peter did not want to eat unclean food because he always obeyed the law of Moses (see: Ezekiel 4:14). However, Peter did not know God's new and bigger plan. The new and bigger plan was that both Jews and Gentiles were joined together in some way and could both become Christians.

10:17-23**How many men looked for Peter?**

[10:17]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that three men looked for Peter. Some scholars note it was the same number Luke wrote in verse seven. Fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that two men looked for Peter. Some scholars say two men spoke to Peter and the third man was a guard. Some ancient copies did not say how many men looked for Peter. Some scholars say Luke did not write how many men there were in the same way he wrote verse seventeen. Scholars think Luke wrote that three men looked for Peter.

What nationality was Cornelius?

[10:22]

Cornelius was a Gentile from Italy (see: Acts 10:1).

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Italy

Who were the brothers from Joppa?

[10:23]

The brothers were Jewish Christian men from Joppa.

See: [Family of God](#)

See Map: Joppa

10:24-33**Why did Cornelius fall down at the feet of Peter?**

[10:25]

Cornelius fell down at Peter's feet and honored him because God sent Peter. Cornelius did not want to worship Peter but Peter wanted to be sure of this so he told Cornelius to get up. Peter was only a man in the same way Cornelius was a man (see: Acts 10:26).

See: [Worship](#)

To whom was Peter talking?

[10:26]

Peter was talking with Cornelius when they entered into the house. Then Peter addressed the crowd of relatives and close friends of Cornelius. They were Gentiles so Peter wanted to let them know he was not permitted to come inside a Gentile home. However, God changed this and Peter went into the house of a Gentile (see: Acts 10:28).

See: [Gentile](#)

How did Peter know God did not want him to call any person unclean or impure?

[10:28]

Peter knew God did not want him to call any person unclean because Peter believed the vision God gave him. The vision was a sheet with all kinds of animals, both pure and impure, that he saw coming from heaven. It was a sign of God accepting all people if they believed in Jesus (see: Acts 10:35).

See: [Sign](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Sign](#)

Whom did Cornelius see “in bright clothing”?

[10:30]

Cornelius saw an angel of God “in bright clothing” (see: Acts 10:3).

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was a tanner?

[10:32]

A tanner was someone who worked with leather to make it certain colors and thicknesses.

What did Luke write in verse 32?

[10:32]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words about Peter coming and speaking at the end of verse 32. Older and more copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

10:34-43

Why did Peter say “God is not partial”?

[10:34]

Peter said “God is not partial” because God is just. God knows what a person thinks. Peter thought about how God equally judges and loves the Jews and the Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Peter say Jesus will be the “Judge of the living and the dead”?

[10:42]

Peter said Jesus will be the “Judge of the living and the dead.” One day, Jesus will judge all people.

See: [Day of Judgment](#) ; [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

10:44-48**How did the Holy Spirit fall on the Gentiles?**

[10:44]

The Holy Spirit “fell” (ἐπιπίπτω/g1968) (see: Acts 10:44) on the Gentiles in the same way the Holy Spirit was “poured out” (ἐκχέω/g1632) (see: Acts 10:45) on the Gentiles to work in them. Some scholars think Peter was thinking about how the Holy Spirit came from heaven. Other scholars think this meant that people began to speak in tongues and began to praise God (see: Acts 2:4,11).

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#)

What was the gift of the Holy Spirit poured out on the Gentiles?

[10:44]

Some scholars think the gift of the Holy Spirit was the power of God to help people live in a way that honors God (see: John 14:15-18; 16:5-15). Other scholars think it was the power of God to tell other people in the world about Jesus (see: Acts 1:8). In this story, the power caused the Gentile listeners to speak in tongues and to praise God (see: Acts 10:46,43).

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Gentile](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#)

When did God save Cornelius and his household?

[10:44]

God saved Cornelius and his household when Peter they each believed in Jesus (see: Acts 11:14; 10:39-40,43). Before they were able to say they believed in Jesus, God gave them the Holy Spirit. That is, Peter did not even finish speaking. They believed in Jesus while Peter was still speaking.

See: Acts 11:17

See: [Angel](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Angel](#)

Who were the people who belong to the “circumcision group”?

[10:45]

The people who belonged to the “circumcision group” were the Jewish Christians who went with Peter from Joppa to the house of Cornelius. They were amazed God gave the Holy Spirit to the uncircumcised Gentiles in the same way God filled Jews with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see: Acts 2:4).

See: [Pentecost](#); [Gentile](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Pentecost](#)

See Map: Joppa

Why did Peter talk about baptizing Cornelius and his household?

[10:47]

Peter talked about baptizing Cornelius and his household because he saw the Holy Spirit work in these Gentiles. That is, they spoke in tongues in the same way the disciples did at Pentecost (see: Acts 2:4). Because of this, he knew they believed in Jesus in the same way Jewish disciples believed in Jesus (see Acts 11:16-17). Peter knew they must be baptized in the same way other Christians were baptized (see: Acts 2:37-41). They should be baptized because God accepted them (see: Acts 10: 35,46; 15:8).

See: [Pentecost](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Gentile](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Disciple](#); [Pentecost](#)

Why did these people ask Peter to stay with them for several days?

[10:48]

These people asked Peter to stay with them for several days because they wanted to learn and ask questions. They had much to learn about Jesus and how to live in a way that honors God.

Chapter 11

¹ Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they who belonged to the circumcision group criticized him; ³ they said, "You associated with uncircumcised men and ate with them!" ⁴ But Peter started to explain the matter to them in detail, saying, ⁵ "I was praying in the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision of a container coming down, like a large sheet let down from heaven by its four corners. It descended to me. ⁶ I gazed at it and I thought about it. I saw the four-legged animals of earth, wild beasts, things that crawled, and birds of the sky. ⁷ Then I heard a voice say to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat!'

⁸ I said, 'Not so, Lord; for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.'

⁹ But the voice answered again from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call defiled.' ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then everything was taken back up into heaven again.

¹¹ "Behold, right away there were three men standing in front of the house where we were; they had been sent from Caesarea to me. ¹² The Spirit commanded me to go with them, and that I should make no distinction regarding them. These six brothers went with me, and we went into the man's house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send men to Joppa and bring back Simon who is called Peter. ¹⁴ He will speak to you a message by which you will be saved—you and all your household.' ¹⁵ As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning. ¹⁶ I remembered the words of the Lord, how he said, 'John indeed baptized with water; but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ Then if God gave to them the same gift as he gave to us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could oppose God?"

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they said nothing in response, but they glorified God and said, "Then God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also."

¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word only to Jews. ²⁰ But some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, came to Antioch and spoke also to Greeks, proclaiming to them the gospel about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The hand of the Lord was with them; a great number believed and turned to the Lord. ²² News about them came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas as far as Antioch. ²³ When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad and he encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart. ²⁴ For he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and many people were added to the Lord. ²⁵ Barnabas then went out to Tarsus to search carefully for Saul. ²⁶ When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It came about, that for an entire year they gathered together with the church and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

²⁷ Now in these days some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, Agabus by name, stood up and indicated by the Spirit that a great famine would occur over all the world. This happened in the days of Claudius. ²⁹ So the disciples, as each one was able, determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brothers in Judea. ³⁰ They did this; they sent money to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 11

11:1-10

Who were the "brothers"?

[11:1]

The "brothers" were men and women who believed in Jesus.

See: [Family of God](#)

Where was Judea?

[11:1]

See Map: Judea

How did the Gentiles receive “the word of God”?

[11:1]

The Gentiles “received the word of God” when they believed God’s word about Jesus. That is, they believed Jesus is the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Word of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who was “the circumcision group”?

[11:2]

“The circumcision group” was Jewish Christians.

See: Acts 10:45

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

Why did the Jewish Christians think it was wrong to be with uncircumcised people and eat with them?

[11:3]

See: Acts 10:34.

What was a “trance” and what was a “vision”?

[11:5, 11:6]

See: Acts 10:10

Why did Peter add “wild beasts” to the animals Luke wrote about in Acts 10:12? Peter added “wild beasts” to the animals Luke wrote about in Acts 10:12 because Peter was thinking about how God created the animals (see: Genesis 1:25) when he said this. Elsewhere, Luke was thinking about the animals God delivered in Noah’s ark (see: Genesis 6:20; Acts 10:12).

Why did the voice tell Peter to get up, kill and eat?

[11:7]

See: Acts 10:13

Why did Peter refuse to kill and eat?

[11:8]

See: Acts 10:13.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did God say defiled food was clean?

[11:9]

God said defiled food was clean. That is, God said that unclean foods were now clean. God made a way for Jewish Christians to worship God with Gentile Christians and visit Gentile houses. That is, since Jews were able to eat the food Gentiles ate, they were able to do other things with Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#); [Worship](#); [Gentile](#)

11:11-18

Where was Caesarea?

[11:11]

See Map: Caesarea

Why did the Holy Spirit tell Peter to “make no distinction” about the men who came to him?

[11:12]

The Holy Spirit told Peter to “make no distinction” about the men who came to him. God wanted Peter to tell the Gentiles at Cornelius’ house about Jesus. God wanted him to do this even though they were Gentiles. He brought other Jewish Christians with him. Six of those Jewish Christians also went him to Jerusalem. They were also able to say what happened at Cornelius’ house.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Who were the six brothers who went with Peter into the house of Cornelius?

[11:12]

The six brothers were Jewish Christians from Joppa. They went with Peter into the house of Cornelius and saw what happened when the Holy Spirit came upon everyone and everyone spoke in tongues and praised God. They were able to say the good news about Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit were available to Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gentile](#)

Where was Joppa?

[11:13]

See Map: Joppa

What was the message Peter spoke to the people in the house of Cornelius?

[11:14]

Peter spoke about Jesus to the people in the house of Cornelius. That is, Peter told them about how Jesus healed people, but people killed Jesus and God made him alive again (see: Acts 10:38-40). Then Peter told them that Jesus is the one who all the prophets spoke about.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

How did the Holy Spirit come upon these people?

[11:15]

See: Acts 10:44-46.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Who is “the Lord” in verse sixteen?

“The Lord” in verse sixteen is Jesus. Jesus is Lord and he is the one who rules from heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Peter change his mind about salvation for the Gentiles?

[11:17]

Peter changed his mind about salvation for the Gentiles because he saw God give the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. Peter knew that if God did that, then Peter knew this is what God wanted.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gentile](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did God give “repentance for life to the Gentiles also”?

[11:18]

God gave “repentance for life to the Gentiles also.” That is, God gave them repentance through the Holy Spirit. If the Gentiles repented of their sins, then they were at peace with God and God gave them eternal life and a new life. God also did this for the Jews. God helped them to repent, believe in Jesus, and be at peace with God.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

11:19-30

Where were Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch?

[11:19]

See Map: Phoenicia; Cyprus; Antioch

Why did the Christian Jews speak only to Jews in the areas where they went?

[11:19]

The Christian Jews from Jerusalem spoke only to the Jews in the areas where they went because they did not think the gospel was for the Gentiles. However, other Christian Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene went and told the Gentiles about Jesus and the gospel.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

Who were “some of them” in verse 20?

[11:20]

“Some of them” in verse twenty were Greek-speaking Jews who believed in Jesus. They were not from Jerusalem but were from Cyprus and Cyrene.

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

Where is Cyrene?

[11:20]

See Map: Cyrene

Whom did the men from Cyprus and Cyrene speak to?

[11:20]

The men from Cyprus and Cyrene spoke about Jesus to both Jews and Gentiles. Luke wrote the word “also” because they treated the Jews and Gentiles the same. The gospel was for everyone.

See: [Gentile](#)

See Map: Cyprus; Cyrene

How was “the hand of the Lord was with them”?

[11:21]

Luke wrote that “the hand of the Lord was with them.” That is, when they taught people about Jesus, they had God’s power with them. God helped them. Because of this, many people believed and turned to the Lord Jesus.

How did people “turn to the Lord”?

[11:21]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Who was Barnabas?

[11:22]

Barnabas was a Christian leader named Joseph. He was from the Levite and he came from Cyprus. The apostles called him Barnabas, “son of encouragement” (see: Acts 4:36). He was a prophet and teacher (see: Acts 13:1). He was also an apostle but not one of the twelve apostles (see: Acts 14:14).

See: [Tribes of Israel](#); [Apostle](#); [Tribes of Israel](#)

Where was Antioch?

[11:22]

See Map: Antioch

How did Barnabus tell the people to “remain with the Lord with purpose of heart”?

[11:23]

Barnabus told the people to “remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.” That is, they completely served Jesus.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How was Barnabas “full of the Holy Spirit and of faith”?

[11:24]

See: Galatians 3:2

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Where was Tarsus?

[11:25]

See Map: Tarsus

Why did Barnabus bring Saul to Antioch?

[11:26]

Barnabus brought Saul to Antioch because he wanted Paul to serve in Antioch. Many people there believed in Jesus. Later the Christians in Antioch sent out people to tell others about Jesus.

See Map: Antioch

Why did people at Antioch first call the disciples “Christians”?

[11:26]

People at Antioch first called the disciples “Christians”(Χριστιανός/g5546) because the people at Antioch knew they followed Jesus, who is the “Christ”(Χριστός/g5547). Scholars think the people at Antioch mocked the disciples of Jesus or were persecuting them when they called these people Christians (see: Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). In ancient times, Christians did not call themselves Christians. Instead, they called themselves disciples, holy ones, or brothers. They started calling themselves Christians about 100 years after Jesus died.

See: [Family of God](#); [Disciple](#); [Holy Ones](#); [Family of God](#)

How did some prophets “came down” from Jerusalem?

[11:27]

Jerusalem was higher in elevation than Antioch. Some prophets went down the hill from Jerusalem rather than traveled south to get to Antioch.

See Map: Jerusalem; Antioch

Who were the prophets?

[11:27]

The prophets were Christians who had the gift of prophecy.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Who was Agabus?

[11:28]

Agabus was a Christian prophet from Jerusalem. God revealed to him bad things that will happen in the future.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

See: Acts 21:10

How did Agabus indicate “by the Spirit” a great famine?

[11:28]

Agabus indicated “by the Spirit” when the Holy Spirit helped Agabus to know to give a prophecy about the coming famine. This famine happened about 15 years after Jesus died.

See: [Famine](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Famine](#)

What was “all the world”?

[11:28]

“All the world” was Rome, Greece, and Egypt, and Judaea. That is, it was the whole Roman empire. It was not the entire world.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

What were the “days of Claudius”?

[11:28]

Claudius ruled the Roman Empire. He did this starting about 10 years after Jesus died and stopped about 20 years after Jesus died. There were several famines during this time.

See: [Famine](#); [Famine](#)

Where was Judea?

[11:29]

See Map: Judea

Why did God give Agabus a prophecy about the famine?

[11:29]

God gave Agabus a prophecy about the famine so the Christians in Antioch had time to prepare to help the Christians in Judea. The time allowed the Christians in Antioch to help them more than if they had not known the famine was going to happen.

See: [Famine](#) ; [Famine](#)

See Map: Judea

Chapter 12

¹ Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church so that he might mistreat them. ² He killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³ After he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. That was during the days of unleavened bread. ⁴ After arresting him, he put him in prison, assigning him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him; he was intending to bring him to the people after the Passover. ⁵ So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church. ⁶ On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷ Behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared by him, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him and said, "Get up quickly," and his chains fell off his hands. ⁸ The angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." Peter did so. The angel said to him, "Put on your outer garment and follow me." ⁹ So Peter followed the angel and went out. He did not know that what was done by the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ After they had passed by the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that led into the city; it opened for them by itself. They went out and went down a street, and the angel left him right away. ¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that the Lord has sent his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting." ¹² When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter's voice, out of joy she failed to open the gate; instead, she came running into the room; she reported that Peter was standing at the gate. ¹⁵ So they said to her, "You are insane." But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel." ¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. ¹⁷ Peter motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and he told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He said, "Report these things to James and the brothers." Then he left and went to another place. ¹⁸ Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter. ¹⁹ After Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death.

Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there. ²⁰ Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. They went to him with one purpose, and after persuading Blastus, the king's assistant, to help them, they asked for peace because their country received its food from the king's country. ²¹ On a set day Herod dressed himself in royal clothing and sat on a throne; he made a speech to them. ²² The people shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man!" ²³ Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God the glory; he was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴ But the word of God increased and multiplied.

²⁵ So when Barnabas and Saul had completed their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, ^[1] bringing with them John, also called Mark.

Footnotes

12:25 ^[1]Some ancient copies read,

Acts 12

12:1-4

Who was king Herod?

[12:1]

This King Herod was Herod Agrippa. The Jewish people liked this Herod. He wanted them to like him. Because of this, he began to persecute the Christian leaders (see: Acts 12:3).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How did king Herod “lay hands on” some of the church?

[12:1]

Herod laid hands on people. That is, he persecuted Christians

See: [King Herod](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [King Herod](#)

Who were “those in the church”?

[12:1]

“Those in the church” were people who believed in Jesus.

See: [Church](#)

What did Herod plan to do to Peter?

[11:3]

Herod planned to kill Peter. He planned to bring Peter before the people and kill him in the way he killed James. Herod wanted people to see Peter being killed.

See: [King Herod](#)

What were the “days of unleavened bread”?

[12:3]

The “days of unleavened bread” were seven days during the festival of Passover. Scholars say the seven days were after the night of Passover.

See: [Passover](#); [Passover](#)

How many soldiers were in a squad?

[12:4]

There were four soldiers in a squad. There were a total of sixteen soldiers who guarded Peter.

What was the Passover?

[12:4]

See: [Passover](#)

12:5-11

How did God answer the prayers of the church for Peter?

[12:5]

Some scholars think Luke did not write how God answered the prayers of the church for Peter. Other scholars think the prayers for Peter made God want to send an angel to rescue Peter.

See: Acts 16:25-26

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

What was an angel?

[12:7]

See: [Angel](#)

How did a light come into the prison cell?

[12:7]

Luke did not write how a light came into the prison cell. Scholars think different things.

1. The light was part of the glory of God (see: Luke 2:9).
2. The light was from the glory of God that shone through the angel.
3. The light was from the angel.

See: [Angel](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Angel](#)

How did the light help Peter?

[12:7]

The light helped Peter find his clothes and sandals and put them on before they left the prison cell. It was very dark in the night of the prison and the angel wanted Peter to get up quickly before the guards woke up.

See: [Angel](#)

What was an outer garment?

[12:8]

An outer garment was worn for going outside a house or building. It is a type of coat.

What was a vision?

See: [Vision](#)

What was an iron gate?

[12:10]

An iron gate was a heavy, metal gate that allowed people to go in and out of a city.

How did Peter come to himself?

[12:11]

Peter “came to himself” when he knew his release from prison was real. That is, he knew he was not dreaming and he was thinking clearly. He was not confused. Peter knew God sent an angel.

See: [Angel](#)

12:12-19

Why did Luke write both names of Mary’s son?

[12:12}

Luke wrote both names of Mary’s son because he had both a Jewish name, John, and a Roman name, Mark. There were other people in Acts who had two names. Saul was also Paul (see: Acts 13:9). Scholars think this John Mark was the same Mark in other places in the Bible (see: Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13). Scholars also think Mark wrote the gospel of Mark.

See: [Gospel](#)

How did the servant girl know Peter's voice?

[12:14]

The servant knew Peter's voice because Peter was from Galilee. People in Galilee spoke in the same way and this was different than how other people spoke (see: Matthew 26:73). She also knew the sound of Peter's voice because she heard him speak before this.

See Map: Galilee

Why did the people not think it was Peter who was at the door?

[12:15]

Some scholars think the people did not think it was Peter who was at the door because they did not know Peter escaped from prison even though they prayed for him. They prayed for James but Herod killed him. Other scholars think they did not believe what a woman said about Peter in the same way the disciples did not believe the women who told them that Jesus was alive again (see: Luke 24:9-11).

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [King Herod](#); [Disciple](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did the disciples say, "it is his angel"?

[12:15]

Some scholars think the disciples believed it was Peter's spirit that was outside the house. They thought Peter became an angel. In ancient times, some Jewish people wrongly thought that certain people become angels after they die. Other scholars think the disciples thought the angel was an angel who protected Peter. They believed there were angels guarding people (see: Psalm 91:11; Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:4; Acts 12:7-10).

See: [Disciple](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did Peter want the people to be silent?

[12:17]

Peter wanted the people to be silent so they will not wake the neighbors or attract attention for any guards trying to find him. Perhaps the Jewish leaders lived near this house. Peter did not want to go back to prison and be killed. Also, Peter needed them to listen to him. The people were very excited to see Peter alive and free, and to know God rescued Peter.

Why did Peter want them to tell James and the brothers what happened to him?

[12:17]

Peter wanted James and others to know that he escaped prison. This is because they were Christian leaders in this area (see Acts: 15:13; 21:18).

See: [Family of God](#)

Why did Peter leave so soon?

[12:17]

Luke did not write why Peter left so soon. Scholars give several reasons.

1. Peter thought it was not safe for him to stay at the house very long.
2. He left for Antioch and told people in Antioch about Jesus (see: Galatians 2:11-14).
3. He went to Lydda and Joppa (see: Acts 10:9-48).
4. He was out of the area for a while but he came back to Jerusalem to meet with other Christian leaders (see: Acts 15:1-7).

See Map: Antioch; Lydda; Joppa

Why did Herod kill the guards?

[12:19]

Herod killed the guards because Roman law allowed the same penalty for the guards the prisoner was going to have if the guards let the prisoner escape. They failed to keep Peter in prison and Peter was going to be executed. Therefore, Herod carried out Peter's penalty on the guards. The guards were killed.

See: [King Herod](#)

Why did Herod go to Caesarea?

[12:19]

Herod went to Caesarea for two reasons.

1. He went to make celebrations in honor of Caesar. This was why many important officials from the region were there.
2. He went to help settle a trade disagreement between his country and the cities of Tyre and Sidon. The people of those cities persuaded King Herod's assistant, Blastus, to help them settle the dispute because their food came from the place Herod Agrippa ruled. The food was mostly wheat from Galilee. During the festival, Herod spoke so that people would know that there was peace between himself and the cities of Tyre and Sidon.

See: [King Herod](#)

See: Map: Judea; Caesarea; Tyre; Sidon; Galilee

12:20-25

Why did the people think Herod was a god and not a man?

[12:22]

The people thought Herod was a god and not a man because his royal clothing was made from silver that shone brightly and beautifully. It made the people afraid. Also, the people from Tyre and Sidon praised him in the same way they praised a god.

See: [Praise](#); [False gods](#); [Praise](#)

See Map: Tyre; Sidon

What did the angel do to Herod?

[12:23]

The angel made Herod become sick and die. Herod accepted the praise of being a god and did not give God the glory for being God. Another ancient Jewish writer wrote that Herod did not tell the people to stop praising him.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [King Herod](#); [Praise](#); [False gods](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

What were the "worms"?

[12:23]

The "worms" (σκωληκόβρωτος/g4662) were crawling insects. Some ate plants (see: Exodus 16:20) but others ate meat (see: Job 7:5). Sometimes they were inside a person's body and made the person ill. Some scholars think they were a metaphor. Luke wrote that Herod died from a disease. Other scholars think Luke wanted to say God judged Herod (see: Isaiah 66:24).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [King Herod](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How did Herod die?

[12:23]

Herod died from the angel's blow to him. The angel either hit him or made him sick. Another ancient Jewish writer wrote that it took five days for Herod to die. Luke did not write how long it took for Herod to die but he wrote about how Herod died. When Luke wrote about Herod eating worms, he wanted people to know that Herod died in a terrible way. It was very painful for Herod to die in this way.

See: Deuteronomy 32:39; Luke 1:20; 19:44; Acts 5:1-11; 8:10,20-23

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

How did the word of God increase and multiple?

[12:24]

The word of God increased and multiplied. This is a metaphor. More and more people believed in Jesus (see: Acts 6:7).

See: [Word of God](#)

What was the mission of Barnabas and Saul?

[12:25]

Paul and Silas served God in a certain way. The Christians in Antioch gave Barnabas and Saul money to bring to the poor Christians in Judea (see: Acts 11:29-30) to help them because they were about to have a famine.

See: [Famine](#)

See Map: Antioch; Judea

Did Luke write that Barnabas and Saul returned from or to Jerusalem?

[12:25]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that Barnabas returned from Jerusalem. Older and more ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem. Scholars think Luke wrote that Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Chapter 13

¹ Now in the church in Antioch, there were some prophets and teachers. They were Barnabas, Simeon (who is called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch), and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, to do the work to which I have called them." ³ After they had fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on these men, they sent them off.

⁴ So Barnabas and Saul, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; from there they sailed away to Cyprus. ⁵ While they were in the city of Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John for an assistant. ⁶ When they had gone through the whole island to Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus. ⁷ This magician associated with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul, because he sought to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas "the magician" (that is how his name is translated) opposed them; he tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, stared at him intensely ¹⁰ and said, "You son of the devil, you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness. You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness. You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you?" ¹¹ Now look, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will become blind. You will not see the sun for a while." Immediately there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness; he started going around seeking people to lead him by the hand. ¹² After the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

¹³ Now Paul and his friends set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ Paul and his friends traveled from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. There they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. ¹⁵ After the reading of the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, "Brothers, if you have any message of encouragement for the people here, say it." ¹⁶ So Paul stood up and motioned with his hand; he said, "Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they stayed in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm he led them out of it. ¹⁸ For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. ¹⁹ After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave our people their land for an inheritance. ²⁰ All these events took place over 450 years. After all these things, God gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then the people asked for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, to be king for forty years. ²² After God removed him from the kingship, he raised up David to be their king. It was about David that God testified, saying, 'I have found David son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who does all I want him to do.' ²³ From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised to do. ²⁴ Before the arrival of Jesus, John proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ As John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But listen, one is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' ²⁶ Brothers, children of the offspring of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, it is to us that the message about this salvation has been sent. ²⁷ For they who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize him, and they fulfilled the voices of the prophets that are read every Sabbath by condemning him. ²⁸ Even though they found no reason for the death penalty, they called on Pilate to kill him. ²⁹ When they had completed all the things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead. ³¹ He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These people are now his witnesses to the people. ³² So we tell you the good news: The promise that came to our fathers ³³ God has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm:

'You are my Son,
today I have become your Father.'

³⁴ As to his raising him from the dead, never to return to decay, he has spoken in this way:

'I will give you the holy and sure blessings
promised to David.'

³⁵ This is why he also says in another Psalm,

'You will not allow your Holy One
to see decay.'

³⁶ For when David had served the purpose of God in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was laid with his fathers and his body experienced decay. ³⁷ But he whom God raised up experienced no decay. ³⁸ So let it be known to you, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. The law of Moses could not make you righteous. ³⁹ But by this man God makes righteous everyone who believes. ⁴⁰ So then be careful that the thing the prophets spoke about does not happen to you:

⁴¹ 'Look, you despisers,
and be astonished and then perish;
For I am doing a work in your days,
a work that you would never believe,
even if someone announces it to you.'"

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas left, the people begged them that they might speak these same words again the next Sabbath. ⁴³ When the synagogue meeting ended, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who were speaking to them and persuading them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with envy and spoke against the things that were said by Paul and insulted him. ⁴⁶ But Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you push it away from yourselves and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, see, we will turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For so has the Lord commanded us, saying,

'I have appointed you as a light for the Gentiles,
that you should bring salvation
to the uttermost parts of the earth.'"

⁴⁸ As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. As many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region. ⁵⁰ But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and threw them out of their region. ⁵¹ But Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet against them. Then they went to the city of Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Footnotes

13:18 ^[1] Some ancient copies read,

Acts 13

13:1-12

Where was Antioch?

[13:1]

See Map: Antioch

What was a prophet?

[13:1]

See: [Prophet](#)

What was a foster brother?

[13:1]

A foster brother was a boy who was raised with a family that was not his family. This foster brother was a friend or companion to the son of the king. Manaen was a close childhood friend of King Herod the Tetrarch.

See: [King Herod](#)

Who was Herod the Tetrarch?

[13:1]

See: [King Herod](#)

Why did Luke write Christians fasted two times?

[13:2, 13:3]

Luke wrote Christians fasted two times because the Christians fasted in two ways.

1. Christians in Antioch worshiped God by fasting in the same way priests and others who served in the temple in Jerusalem did.
2. Christians fasted, prayed, and laid on hands when the Holy Spirit chose leaders to serve.

See: [Temple](#); [Worship](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Temple](#)

Who worshiped the Lord and fasted?

[13:2, 13:3]

Luke did not write who worshiped the Lord and fasted. Some scholars think the Jews usually used the word "worshiped" when they were talking about the priests and Levites when these people served in the temple. Therefore, Luke was writing about the prophets and teachers. Other scholars think the priests and Levites were no longer the only ones who served and worshiped God. Everyone in the church served and worshiped God (see: Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5). Thus, "they" were everyone in the church.

See: [Church](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Temple](#); [Prophet](#); [Church](#)

How did the Christians set apart Barnabas and Saul?

[13:2]

The Christians set apart Barnabas and Saul when they separated or divided Barnabas and Saul from the others for the work of telling people about Jesus. The Christians also fasted, prayed, and laid on hands because the church wanted Barnabas and Saul to do this for God.

See: [Laying on of Hands](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Laying on of Hands](#)

What was the work the Holy Spirit called them to do?

[13:2]

Luke wrote about the work the Holy Spirit called them to do. The work was to go out and tell people about Jesus and the gospel.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Cyprus, Perga, Asia Minor

Why did the leaders lay their hands on Barnabas and Saul?

[13:3]

The leaders put their hands on Barnabas and Saul because they prayed for them to have God's blessing and power. It was also a sign that they supported these men (see: Acts 6:6; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Heb. 6:2).

See: [Sign](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Sign](#)

How did the Holy Spirit send out Barnabas and Saul?

[13:4]

Luke did not write how the Holy Spirit sent out Barnabas and Saul. There were several ways the Holy Spirit led Christians.

1. Speech (see: Acts 13:2).
2. Prophecy (see: Acts 21:10-11).
3. Vision (See: Acts 16:6-10).
4. The Holy Spirit sent them out from the church in Antioch.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Vision](#); [Church](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Antioch

Where was Seleucia?

[13:4]

See Map: Seleucia

Where was Cyprus?

[13:4]

See Map: Cyprus

Why did Barnabas and Saul go to Cyprus?

[13:4]

There were several reasons why Barnabas and Saul went to Cyprus.

1. Barnabas was from Cyprus
2. It was easy to travel there.
3. Barnabas and others already told Jews there about Jesus (see: Acts 11:19-20).
4. Christians were there (see: Acts 21:16).
5. The Holy Spirit led them to go there.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Cyprus

Where was Salamis?

[13:5]

See Map: Salamis

What is the word of God?

[13:5]

See: [Word of God](#)

What was a synagogue?

[13:5]

See: [Synagogue](#)

Where was Paphos?

[13:6]

See Map: Paphos

What was a magician?

[13:6]

A magician did things using sorcery. This was evil. The Law of Moses commanded Jews not to do this (see: Leviticus 19:31). This was why Luke wrote Bar-Joshua was a false prophet (see: Acts 13:6).

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

What was a proconsul?

[13:7]

A proconsul was a Roman leader who was given permission to rule a certain area.

How was Paul filled with the Holy Spirit?

[13:9]

Paul was filled with power from the Holy Spirit. Paul needed power from the Holy Spirit to defeat the evil power of the magician.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why was the magician a “son of the devil”?

[13:10]

The magician was a “son of the devil” because he did the same things the devil did and he served the devil.

See: [Sorcery](#); [Sorcery](#)

Why was the magician full of “deceit and wickedness”?

[13:10]

The magician was full of “deceit” because he said wrong things about God and Jesus. That is, he made people believe wrong things about God and Jesus. He was also full of “wickedness” because he made people do wrong things the devil wanted them to do.

See: [Sorcery](#); [Sorcery](#)

How was the magician an “enemy of every kind of righteousness”?

[13:10]

This magician was an “enemy of every kind of righteousness” because he did not love or do the things God wanted him to do. Instead he “made crooked”(διαστρέφω/g1406) the “straight paths of the Lord”. That is, he stopped people from doing the things God wanted people to do.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What were the “straight paths of the Lord”?

[13:10]

The “straight paths of the Lord” were the right and true ways of God. This is a metaphor. Luke was writing about doing the right thing and obeying God.

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

What was the “hand of the Lord”?

[13:11]

“The hand of the Lord” was a metaphor. Luke was writing about God judging the magician. God caused him to be blind for a time. The words, “Now look,” told the magician that God revealed this judgement to Paul.

God also made Paul temporarily blind. The result was he was later able to see the truth about Jesus. God also healed his eyes. God sometimes struck people with blindness to stop them from doing evil or to get their attention (see: Genesis 19:11; 2 Kings 6:18-20, Acts 9:8-9).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did the proconsul believe in Jesus?

[13:12]

The proconsul believed in Jesus because he was amazed at the teaching about Jesus. Luke did not write that this man believed because of the power of God working through Paul. However, the teaching about Jesus included stories about Jesus healing people and becoming alive again. Scholars also think Paul talked about his own story about God blinding him on the way to Damascus (see: Acts 9:3-9).

This proconsul was an intelligent man (see: Acts 13:7). That is, he believed because of other things about Jesus and he knew Jesus is Lord and Savior. So the power of God over the magician helped him to believe in Jesus. When someone showed other people that Jesus had power over the devil, this helped people in Jesus (see: Mark 1:22, 27).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Lord](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

See Map: Damascus

13:13-16

Where were Paphos, Perga, and Pamphylia?

[13:13]

See Map: Paphos; Perga; Pamphylia

Why did John leave Barnabas and Paul and return to Jerusalem?

[13:13]

Luke did not write why John left Barnabas and Paul and returned to Jerusalem. Paul said John deserted them in Pamphylia (see: Acts 15:38), but years later Paul wrote Mark was useful (see: 2 Timothy 4:11). Some scholars think John Mark was not ready for the persecution that came when they told people about Jesus. Other scholars think John Mark wanted Barnabas to be the leader instead of Paul. Up to this time

Luke always listed Barnabas first and then Saul. Now Luke wrote about Paul and “his friends.” All of them continued to serve. Barnabas took John Mark with him and Paul took Silas (see: Acts 15:39).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Where was Antioch of Pisidia?

[13:14]

See Map: Antioch of Pisidia

What was a synagogue?

[13:14]

See: [Synagogue](#)

What was the Sabbath?

[13:14]

See: [Sabbath](#)

What were the law and the prophets?

[13:15]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How did the leaders of the synagogue sent a message to them?

[13:15]

The rulers of the synagogue sent someone to Paul and his friends inside the synagogue. The messenger told them the message during the synagogue meeting. The leaders of the synagogue did not sent a message to them over a longer distance or outside of the synagogue.

See: [Synagogue](#)

Why did Paul motion with his hand?

[13:16]

Paul motioned with his hand. People often did this to invite other people to listen. Also, Paul wanted people to be silent so they would pay attention to the things he said.

Who were those who honored God?

[13:16]

Those who honored God worshiped the God of Israel and obeyed the Law of Moses. However, they were not Jews themselves. People called them “God-fearers.” They were not born Jews and they did not become circumcised.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

13:17-22

What happened to the Israelites in Egypt?

[13:17]

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt until God used Moses to free them from the Egyptians.

See: [Serve](#)

See Map: Egypt

What was God's "uplifted arm"?

[13:17]

God's "uplifted arm" was a metaphor to say God has great power. God led the Israelites out of slavery.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What were the seven nations in the land of Canaan?

[13:19]

The seven nations in the land of Canaan were the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (see: Deuteronomy 7:1). Each nation was larger and stronger than the Israelites.

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

See Map: Canaan

Why did God drive out the seven nations from Canaan?

[13:19]

God drove out the seven nations from Canaan to give the Israelites an inheritance. This land promised to their ancestor Abraham (see: Genesis 15:18). Also, the nations from Canaan were evil so God punished them (see: Leviticus 18:24-25).

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

See Map: Canaan

What events made up the 450 years?

[13:19]

The 450 years included the time Israel spent in Egypt, 400 years, and the time they travelled in the wilderness, 40 years, and about 10 years of time it took to control Canaan. The time to control Canaan was the time they entered into Canaan to when they finished dividing the land among the tribes of Israel.

See: [Tribes of Israel](#); [Tribes of Israel](#)

See Map: Canaan

What was a judge?

[13:20]

A judge was someone who helped lead or rule the Israelites in the Promised Land before there were kings in Israel

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

Why was Samuel at the time when the period of the Judges ended?

[13:20]

God began to do something different with Israel after Samuel. Samuel was a priest, a prophet, and the last judge of Israel. Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel (see: 1 Samuel 2:35; 3:20; 7:15-17).

See: [Appoint](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Appoint](#)

Why did the people ask for a king to rule over them?

[13:21]

The people asked for a king to rule over them because they rejected the judges. When they asked for a man to be king, they rejected God who was their king (see: 1 Samuel 8:6-7).

Why did God remove Saul from being king?

God removed Saul from being king because he did not obey the Lord (See: 1 Samuel 13:13-14; 15:23,26-28).

Why did Paul call David a man after God's heart?

[13:22]

Paul called David a man after God's heart because David did the things God wanted him to do. God was in the process of replacing King Saul with a new king, David.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

13:23-37

How did Paul know Jesus was a descendant of King David?

[13:23]

Paul was a Jewish teacher and he knew the promise of God to David that one of David's descendants rule forever (see: 2 Samuel 7:12-14). Because of this, the Jews kept records of everyone's ancestors.

See: Luke 3:23-38; Matthew 1:1-17

See: [Son of David](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Son of David](#)

What was a savior?

[13:23]

See: [Savior](#)

What John was Luke writing about?

[13:24]

Luke wrote about John the Baptist. The Jews in Palestine knew John the Baptist at that time. John the Baptist was not the messiah, but he came before the messiah to prepare people to receive the messiah. John the Baptist preached repentance from sins and he baptized people for this repentance (See: Mark 1:4-5).

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Who is the "one"?

[13:25]

John spoke of the "one" to come after him who will be Jesus (see: Isaiah 40:3; Mark 1:3). John said this "one" is far greater than he was. Jesus is so much greater than John and John thought he was not even able to be his servant (see: Mark 1:7). John baptized with water, but this "one" that comes after John will baptize with the Holy Spirit (see: Mark 1:8).

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Who were children of the offspring of Abraham?

[13:26]

The children of the offspring of Abraham were the Jews. Paul spoke to both the Jews and Gentiles who were with the Jews in the synagogue and who worshiped God.

See: [Worship](#); [Synagogue](#); [Worship](#)

What was the message of salvation?

[13:26]

The message of salvation is the gospel

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How did the people and rulers of Jerusalem fulfill the voices of the prophets?

[13:27]

The people and rulers of Jerusalem fulfilled the voices of the prophets when they did not recognize Jesus. That is, they did not believe Jesus was the messiah, so they rejected Jesus (see: John 12:37-40; Romans 9:33). This was what the prophets prophesied would happen.

See: Isaiah 6:10; 2 Corinthians 4:4

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Who was Pilate?

[13:28]

Pilate was the Roman leader who ruled Judea when Jesus was alive on the earth.

See Map: Judea

What were “all the things that were written about him”?

[13:29]

“All the things that were written about him” were the things that happened to Jesus. These things were written about in the Old Testament, long before Jesus lived on the earth.

See: Isaiah 53:3-5,7; Psalm 22; 69; Zechariah 12:10

Why was Jesus on a “tree”?

[13:29]

When Luke wrote about a tree, he was writing about the cross.

See: Galatians 3:13

See: [Cross](#)

How did Jesus become alive again?

[13:30]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Where was Galilee?

[13:31]

See Map: Galilee

What did the people do after they saw Jesus alive again?

[13:31]

The people who saw Jesus alive again told other people about Jesus, his resurrection, and the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was the “promise that came to our fathers”?

[13:32]

The “promise that came to our fathers” were the promises God made to Abraham, Moses, and David.

See: Galatians 3:8-9; Isaiah 55:3

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Where did God say, “I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David”?

[13:34]

God said, “I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David,” to the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 55:3). Paul was thinking about Isaiah 55:3 when he repeated the second Psalm. David wrote about God saying he is the Father of his Son Jesus in the second Psalm (see: Acts 4:25-26).

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

When did God “become” the Father of the Son?

[13:33]

God has always been the Father of the Son. That is, Jesus was already God’s Son even before God and Jesus made the world (see: John 17:5; 1:1-3). Paul did not say the word “become”(γεννάω/g1080) to say God became the father of Jesus when Jesus came into the world, or when Jesus was baptized, or even when Jesus became alive again. Paul wrote God powerfully “declared” or “said”(ὁρίζω/g3724) Jesus is the Son of God when he made Jesus alive again (see: Romans 1:4).

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

See: Matthew 3:17; 17:5

Why did Jesus’ body not decay?

[13:35]

Jesus’ body did not decay because it was dead only three days.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

13:38-43

How did Jesus forgive sins?

[13:38]

See: John 3:16

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why were Christians justified?

[13:39]

See: Romans 8:1-4; 10:9-10

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

Why did Paul say “the prophets”?

[13:40]

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did Paul say the same thing Habakkuk wrote?

[13:40]

Paul said the same thing the prophet Habakkuk wrote. He did not want people to reject Jesus in the way the Israelites of Habakkuk’s day rejected God.

What were “devout proselytes”?

[13:43]

“Devout proselytes” were Gentiles who became Jews. They worshiped God, obeyed the Law of Moses, and were circumcised.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How did someone “continue in the grace of God”?

[13:43]

Luke wrote about continuing in the grace of God. Scholars think the people continued to believe in the gospel about Jesus.

See: [Grace](#); [Grace](#)

13:44-52

What was the word of the Lord?

[13:44]

See: [Lord](#); [Lord](#)

Why were the Jews envious?

[13:45]

The Jews were envious because they saw large crowds listening to Paul and Barnabas. They wanted the people to listen to them instead of Paul and Barnabas. Some Jews believed in Jesus but many did not. This is because some people did not want God to be at peace with Gentiles who did not obey the Law of Moses (see: Acts 13:39).

Why did Paul speak the word of God to the Jews first and then the Gentiles?

[13:46]

Paul spoke the word of God to the Jews first because God gave them promises, the covenants, the Law of Moses, and the temple (see: Romans 9:4). Also, Jesus was a Jew (see: Romans 9:5). Paul wanted the Jews to know their Messiah, Jesus. Also, God wanted the Jews to help the Gentiles know about God. However, because most of the Jews did not believe in Jesus, they were not able to do this.

See: Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; Galatians 2:7).

See: [Gentile](#); [Covenant](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Temple](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gentile](#)

How did the Gentiles glorify the word of the Lord?

[13:48]

The Gentiles glorified the word of the Lord when they believed in Jesus. They praised God that they were worthy to have God save them.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Word of God](#); [Praise](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What is “eternal life”?

[13:48]

See: [Eternal Life](#)

How did God appoint people to eternal life?

[13:48]

God appointed people to eternal life. Scholars think God chose who would have eternal life in some way. Scholars disagree about how and when God did this.

See: [Eternal Life](#)

How did the “word of the Lord” spread?

[13:49]

The “word of the Lord” spread. That is, Christians told other people about Jesus and more people knew about Jesus. As Christians began to do this, more and more people learned about Jesus and God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did the Jews incite leading men and women?

[13:50]

The Jews incited leading men and women. That is, they made these people angry. This is because these Jews rejected Jesus and they did not want people to believe in Jesus. These Jews did not want more Jews to become Christians so they tried to get people to force Paul and Barnabas out of the city.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul and Barnabas shake the dust off of their feet?

[13:51]

Jesus told his followers to shake the dust off their feet or sandals to warn people about rejecting his followers (see: Luke 9:5; 10:11). This was a sign that there will be judgment against their actions. Paul and the others did this against the Jews and the leaders who forced them out of the city.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Where was Iconmium?

[13:51]

See Map: Iconium

How were the disciples filled with joy and the Holy Spirit?

[13:52]

The disciples were filled with joy by the power and work of the Holy Spirit inside them. When people persecuted them, the Holy Spirit helped them to have joy.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

Chapter 14

¹ It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a way that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. ² But the Jews who were disobedient stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and made them bitter against the brothers. ³ So they stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly with the Lord's power, while he gave evidence about the message of his grace. He did this by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas. ⁴ But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. ⁵ Both Gentiles and Jews (together with their leaders) made an attempt to mistreat them and to stone them, ⁶ but as soon as they learned about this, they fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region, ⁷ where they continued to proclaim the gospel.

⁸ At Lystra a certain man sat, powerless in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ⁹ This man heard Paul speaking. Paul fixed his eyes on him and saw that he had faith to be made well. ¹⁰ So he said to him in a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet." Then the man jumped up and walked around.

¹¹ When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the dialect of Lycaonia, "The gods have become like men and come down to us." ¹² They called Barnabas "Zeus," and Paul "Hermes," because he was the main speaker. ¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and wreaths to the gates; he and the multitudes wanted to offer sacrifice. ¹⁴ But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothing and quickly went out into the crowd, crying out, ¹⁵ "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are human beings, with the same nature as you. We are telling you good news that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them. ¹⁶ In the past ages, he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷ But still, he did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you the rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness." ¹⁸ Even with these words, Paul and Barnabas barely kept the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and persuaded the crowds. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking that he was dead. ²⁰ Yet as the disciples were standing around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day, he went to Derbe with Barnabas. ²¹ After they had proclaimed the gospel in that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch. ²² They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations." ²³ When they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord, in whom they had believed. ²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵ When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had now completed. ²⁷ When they arrived in Antioch and gathered the church together, they reported all the things that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. ²⁸ They stayed for a long time with the disciples.

Acts 14

14:1-7

Where was Iconium?

[14:1]

See Map: Iconium

What was a synagogue?

[14:1]

See: [Synagogue](#)

What did the Jews and Greeks believe?

[14:1]

Scholars think that the Jews and Greeks believed the message about Jesus. That is, Jesus was the one God had promised to send to save people from their sins.

See: [Sin](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#)

What was “a great multitude”?

[14:1]

A great multitude means a very large number. Some scholars think there were several hundreds of people who believed in Jesus.

Who were disobedient Jews and what did they do?

[14:2]

When Luke wrote about Jews who were disobedient, he was speaking about Jews who refused to believe the message about Jesus. When Luke wrote that these Jews made the minds of the Gentiles “bitter”(κακώω/g2559) against the brothers, he meant the Jews turned the Gentiles away from believing the truth about Jesus.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

How did Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly with the Lord’s power?

[14:3]

Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly with the Lord’s power. That is, Paul and Barnabas spoke without being afraid of who might hear them. Scholars think that Jesus gave Paul and Barnabas power to keep on teaching and preaching.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

What was the message of God’s grace?

[14:3]

The message of God’s grace was the gospel.

See: [Grace](#); [Grace](#)

What were signs and wonders?

[14:3]

See: [Sign](#)

What was an apostle?

[14:4]

See: [Apostle](#)

Where were Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe?

[14:6]

See Map: Lycaonia; Lystra; Derbe

What was the gospel?

[14:7]

See: [Gospel](#)

14:8-18

How did the man have faith to be made well?

[14:9]

The man had faith to be made well. Scholars think that Paul saw something and he knew the man believed in Jesus. They think the Holy Spirit helped Paul to know that the man believed Jesus was going to make him well.

See: Acts 3:1-10

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Who were Zeus and Hermes?

[14:12]

In ancient times, some people worshipped the Greek gods. The king of the Greek gods was Zeus, and Hermes was the god who delivered messages to the people from Zeus. After the healing miracle, the people began to call Paul “Hermes” because he did most of the speaking. They also called Barnabas “Zeus”.

See: [Miracle](#); [Miracle](#)

Why did Paul and Barnabas tear their clothes?

[14:14]

Scholars think Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes as a sign of strong disapproval of what the people wanted to do. Paul and Barnabas wanted the crowds to know that they were just men and that the actions of the crowd were blaspheming God.

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

Why did Paul tell the crowd that they should turn from these useless things?

[14:15]

When Paul urged the crowd to “turn from these useless things,” he wanted them to stop worshipping those things. Scholars think Paul was speaking about the idols because they had no power and were not real.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How did God allow all the nations to walk in their own ways?

[14:16]

God allowed the nations to walk in their own ways. God allowed the Gentile nations to live in the way they wanted to live. That is, he allowed them to live without the Law of Moses. He allowed them to sin because they wanted to sin. The nations worshipped many things, but not the one true God.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Advice to translators: When speaking about the nations here, it means the people who lived in those nations.

14:19-28

Where were Antioch and Iconium?

[14:19]

See Map: Antioch; Iconium

What was a disciple?

[14:20]

See: [Disciple](#)

Where was Derbe?

[14:20]

See Map: Derbe

How did Paul and Barnabas strengthen “the souls of the disciples”?

[14:22]

Paul and Barnabas strengthened the souls of the disciples. Scholars think that Paul and Barnabas taught people about the Bible to remind the disciples about the truth about God and God’s promises. When they did this, Paul and Barnabas encouraged the disciples to make choices to trust God even when they were persecuted.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What was the kingdom of God about which Paul and Barnabas spoke?

[14:22]

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

How does someone enter into the Kingdom of God through many sufferings?

[14:22]

Scholars think Paul and Barnabas taught that many Christians will experience suffering and persecution while they are living in this present world. Jesus himself said, “In this world you will have tribulation” (see: John 16:33). They think that Paul and Barnabas meant that when Jesus returns to the earth to rule, Christians will no longer experience the world’s sufferings.

See: [Tribulation](#); [Tribulation](#)

What was an elder?

[14:23]

See: [Elder](#)

What was fasting?

[14:23]

See: [Fasting](#)

What did it mean that Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders to the Lord?

[14:23]

When they “entrusted”(παρατίθημι/g3908) the elders to the Lord, Paul and Barnabas committed the care of the elders to Jesus. That is, they asked Jesus to protect the elders as they served the growing number of Christians.

See: [Elder](#)

Where were Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, and Attalia?

[14:24]

See Map: Pisidia; Pamphylia; Perga; Attalia

What was meant by the words, “committed to the grace of God”?

[14:26]

Paul and Barnabas were first committed to the grace of God for their work among the Jews and Gentiles beyond Antioch with prayer, fasting and the laying on of hands of the Christians in Antioch (see: Acts 13:2,3). That is, they were set apart to do the work to which God had called them.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Fasting](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

See Map: Antioch

What was a church?

[14:27]

See: [Church](#)

What was a “door of faith for the Gentiles”?

[14:27]

When Luke wrote about a “door of faith for the Gentiles,” this was a metaphor. He was writing that God opened the hearts and minds of the Gentiles to understand the gospel and believe in Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Mind](#); [Gentile](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and taught the brothers, saying, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² This brought Paul and Barnabas into a sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas, along with some others from among them, were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders about this question. ³ They therefore, being sent by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria and announced the conversion of the Gentiles. They brought great joy to all the brothers. ⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all the things that God had done with them. ⁵ But certain men who believed, who belonged to the group of Pharisees, stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses." ⁶ So the apostles and the elders gathered together to consider this matter.

⁷ After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us. ⁹ He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now therefore why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were."

¹² All the multitude kept silent while they listened to Barnabas and Paul report the signs and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles through them. ¹³ After they stopped speaking, James answered, saying,

"Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has told how God first graciously helped the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his name. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,

¹⁶ 'After these things I will return,
and I will build again the tabernacle of David,
which has fallen down;
I will set up and restore its ruins again,
¹⁷ so that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,
including all the Gentiles called by my name.'
¹⁸ This is what the Lord says,
who has done these things
that have been known from ancient times. ^[1]

¹⁹ Therefore, I have decided that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God. ²⁰ But we will write to them that they must keep away from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, and from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has been proclaimed in every city from ancient generations and he is preached in the synagogues every Sabbath."

²² Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, who were leaders of the brothers, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.

²³ They wrote this with their hands,

"From the apostles and elders, your brothers,
to the Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:
Greetings!

²⁴ Because we have heard that certain men have gone out from us, with no orders from us, and have disturbed you with words that upset your souls, ²⁵ it seemed good to us, who have come to one mind, to choose men and to send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who will report to you the same things in their own words. ²⁸ For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: ²⁹ that you abstain from things

sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you avoid these things, you will do well.
Farewell."

³⁰ So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; after they gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. ³¹ When they had read it, they rejoiced because of the encouragement. ³² Judas and Silas, also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many words and strengthened them. ³³ After they had spent some time there, they were sent away in peace from the brothers to those who had sent them. ³⁴^[2]³⁵ But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching (along with many others) the word of the Lord.

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return now and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to also take with them John, who was called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought it was not good to take Mark, who had left them in Pamphylia and did not go further with them in the work. ³⁹ Then there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰ But Paul chose Silas and left, after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ Then he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Footnotes

15:18 ^[1] There are some copies of the ancient Greek text that have a slightly different meaning,

15:34 ^[2] The best ancient copies do not have verse 34 (See: Acts 15:40),

Acts 15

15:1-5

Who were the brothers?

[15:1]

The brothers were Gentile Christians.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

What did it mean to be "circumcised according to the custom of Moses"?

[15:1]

The "custom of Moses" referred to the Law of Moses. Some of the Jewish leaders were teaching that Gentiles could not be saved unless they, too, were circumcised according to the law of Moses.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Gentile](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Luke write that people went up to Jerusalem?

[15:2]

Luke wrote people went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. Therefore, people said they went up to Jerusalem.

See Map: Antioch; Jerusalem

Where were Phoenicia and Samaria?

[15:3]

See Map: Phoenicia; Samaria

What were “all the things God had done” that Paul and Barnabas reported?

[15:4]

Some scholars think Luke was writing about the following events:

1. God filled the disciples with the Holy Spirit and with joy (see: Acts 13:52).
2. God did miracles (see: Acts 14:3).
3. Christians were persecuted (see: Acts 10:14; 15:26).
4. Christians became leaders in churches (see: Acts 14:23).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Disciple](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did some Jews want to circumcise Gentile Christians?

[15:5]

Some scholars think that some Jews wanted to circumcise Gentile Christians men because they believed that Gentiles had to be circumcised to be at peace with God. They thought Christians needed to follow the Law of Moses. Other scholars think some of the Jews wanted to circumcise the Gentile Christian men to show that they were joined together with Jewish Christians.

See: [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Gentile](#)

15:6-12

Why did Peter say, “making their hearts clean by faith”?

[15:9]

Peter said, “making their hearts clean by faith.” Scholars think Peter wanted people to know that God cleansed the Gentile Christians because they believed in Jesus and not because they followed the Law of Moses and were circumcised. They did not need to do these things to be at peace with God.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Peter ask the Jewish Christians, “why do you test God”?

[15:10]

Peter asked the Jewish Christians why they tested God. Some scholars think Peter told people that all Christians are at peace with God because they believe in Jesus. Here, Peter asked the Jewish Christians if they were putting God to the test to see if God really saved Gentiles simply by faith. Other scholars think Peter was asking the Jewish Christians if they were trying to make God angry by suggesting the Gentiles had to follow the Law of Moses to become Christians.

See: [Gentile](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Gentile](#)

What was a yoke?

[15:10]

When Peter spoke about a “yoke,” this was a metaphor. A “yoke” was a thick wooden beam that was set across the neck and shoulders of animals. This allowed the animals to pull heavy loads in a cart, or to pull a plow. Peter spoke about the Law of Moses as a yoke. He wanted to say that it was very hard to try to obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did it mean to be “saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus”?

[15:11]

Peter wanted people to know that someone has peace with God because they believe in Jesus. They did not need to do certain things to be at peace with God. They do not need to follow the Law of Moses. When God does this, he is gracious.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What were signs and wonders?

[15:12]

See: [Sign](#)

15:13-21

Why did James speak about Peter using the name Simon?

[15:14]

James spoke about Peter using the name Simon because Simon was Peter's name in Hebrew.

Why did James say, "take from them a people for his name"?

[15:14]

James said, "take them a people for his name." Some scholars think James was speaking about the Gentiles becoming God's people. Other scholars think James wanted to say that both Jews and Gentiles could be Christians. This honored God.

See: [People of God](#); [Gentile](#); [People of God](#)

Why did James say the same thing Amos wrote?

[15:15]

James said the same thing Amos wrote (see: Amos 9:11-12). He wanted people to know that even the prophets of the Old Testament spoke about Gentiles being called by God's name. That is, Amos prophesied that the Gentiles would one day worship God and be at peace with God.

See: [Worship](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Prophecy \(Prophesy\)](#) ; [Worship](#)

What are the things that have been known from ancient times?

[15:18]

Luke wrote about things that have been known from ancient times. Scholars think Luke wanted people to know that God knew everything that would happen before he even made of the world. This included knowing that both Jews and Gentiles would worship God (see: Ephesians 1:4-5).

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

What was the "pollution of idols"?

[15:20]

Luke wrote about the "pollution of idols." Scholars think Luke was writing about the animals used for sacrifices when people worshipped idols. James' did not want the Gentile Christians to eat these foods. This was not because it was wrong to eat these foods because they were unclean. However, it was wrong to eat these foods if it offended the Jewish Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 10:27-29).

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Gentile](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What was "sexual immorality"?

[15:20]

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What was “meat of strangled animals”?

[15:20]

“Meat of strangled animals” was meat from animals people killed but they did not drain the animal’s blood. The Jews drained blood. This is the Law of Moses commanded people to eat blood (see: Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:10-14).

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did James want the Gentiles Christians to keep away “from blood”?

[15:20]

Some scholars think James did not want the Gentile Christians to eat blood. Other scholars think James wanted the Gentile Christians to hurt or kill other people.

Why did James say Moses was proclaimed from ancient times and in the synagogues every Sabbath?

[15:21]

James said that Moses was proclaimed from ancient times and in the synagogue every Sabbath. Scholars think that even though the Jewish Christians knew they did not need to follow the Law of Moses, they still felt they should do some of the things in the Law of Moses. They thought they should eat in the way taught in the Law of Moses. They think James wanted the Gentile Christians to respect the Jewish Christians and not offend the Jewish Christians.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sabbath](#); [Law of Moses](#)

15:22-29

Who was Judas?

[15:22]

Judas Barsabbas known as a Christian prophet who was a leader in the Jerusalem church.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Who were the Gentile brothers?

[15:22]

The Gentile “brothers”(ἀδελφός/g0080) included both Christian men and women.

See: [Family of God](#)

Why did James say, “all of us have agreed”?

[15:25]

James said, “all of us have agreed.” Scholars think that after hearing what everyone said, the leaders all agreed with Paul and Barnabas. Because of this, the leaders send other people to help Paul and Barnabas.

Why did Luke write it “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us”?

[15:28]

Some scholars think the words, “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” meant that because the leaders agreed about the Gentile Christians. They believed the Holy Spirit was helping them when they gathered together. That is, the Holy Spirit helped them to agree with one another.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did they write for Gentile Christians not to do four things?

[15:29]

See: Acts 15:13-21.

15:30-35

How was it that Judas and Silas “encouraged the brothers with many words”?

[15:32]

Scholars think Judas and Silas stayed in Antioch for a short time to instruct the Christians there from the scriptures and urge them to follow the teachings of Jesus. These scholars think Judas and Silas wanted to strengthen the faith of the Christians in Antioch.

See Map: Antioch

How were Paul and Silas “sent away in peace”?

[15:33]

In ancient times, it was common for people to welcome a visitor in peace and to also send them on a journey in peace. The Christians in Antioch were sending greetings with Paul and Silas back to the Christians in Jerusalem. They sent them on their way in peace.

See Map: Jerusalem; Antioch

Did Luke write the words in verse 34?

[15:34]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words in verse 34. Fewer ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 34. Scholars think Luke did not write these words. They think someone added these words to help people understand how Silas remained at Antioch.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How does someone “proclaim the word of the Lord”?

[15:35]

Scholars think that to “proclaim the word of the Lord” meant that Paul and Barnabas taught people about the gospel and the messiah (see: Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Word of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

15:36-41

Where were Pamphylia, Cyprus, Syria, and Cilicia

[15:38, 15:39, 15:41]

See Map: Pamphylia; Cyprus; Syria; Cilicia

How did the church at Antioch entrust Paul to the grace of the Lord?

[15:40]

Some scholars say the church at Antioch entrusted Paul to the grace of the Lord by trusting that God would lead and protect Paul. This is because they knew God is kind and powerful. Other scholars think the church also entrusted Silas to the grace of the Lord.

See: [Lord](#); [Grace](#); [Lord](#)

See Map: Antioch

Chapter 16

¹ Paul also came to Derbe and to Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple named Timothy was there, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brothers who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted him to travel with him, so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they were going along through the cities, they were passing along the decrees to obey that were decided on by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

⁶ Paul and his companions went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, since they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came near Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus prevented them. ⁸ So passing by Mysia, they came down to the city of Troas. ⁹ A vision appeared to Paul in the night: A man of Macedonia was standing there, begging him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ When Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

¹¹ Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day we came to Neapolis. ¹² From there we went to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the most important city in the district and a Roman colony, and we stayed in this city for several days.

¹³ On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, listened to us. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her house were baptized, she pleaded with us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay in my house." And she persuaded us.

¹⁶ It came about that, as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave girl who had a spirit of divination encountered us. She brought her masters much gain by fortunetelling. ¹⁷ This woman followed after Paul and us and shouted, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸ She did this for many days. But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out at that same hour.

¹⁹ When her masters saw that their hope of profit was now gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰ When they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are causing trouble in our city. They are Jews. ²¹ They proclaim customs that are not lawful for Romans to accept or practice."

²² Then the crowd rose up together against Paul and Silas; the magistrates tore their garments off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods. ²³ When they had laid many blows upon them, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to guard them securely. ²⁴ After he got this command, the jailer threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷ The jailer was awakened from sleep and saw the open prison doors; he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped.

²⁸ But Paul shouted with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, because we are all here."

²⁹ The jailer called for lights and rushed in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² They spoke the word of the Lord to him, together with everyone in his house. ³³ Then the jailer took them at the same

hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately. ³⁴ Then as he brought Paul and Silas up into his house and he set food before them, he rejoiced greatly with those of his house, that he had believed in God.

³⁵ Now when it was day, the magistrates sent word to the guards, saying, "Let those men go."

³⁶ The jailer reported the words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent word to me to let you go. Now therefore come out, and go in peace."

³⁷ But Paul said to them, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens—and they threw us into prison. Do they now want to send us away secretly? No! Let them come themselves and lead us out."

³⁸ The guards reported these words to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid. ³⁹ The magistrates came and apologized to them and brought them out, asking them to go away from the city. ⁴⁰ So Paul and Silas went out of the prison and came to the house of Lydia. When Paul and Silas saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed from the city.

Acts 16

16:1-5

Where were Derbe and Lystra?

[16:1]

See Map: Derbe; Lystra

Why did Paul circumcise Timothy?

[16:3]

Paul wanted Timothy to be circumcised. Scholars think this is because Timothy's mother was Jewish, Timothy was also a Jew even though his father was a Greek. Because he was not circumcised, the Jews rejected Timothy. Paul wanted Timothy to be circumcised so that the Jews would allow him to teach into the synagogues.

See: [Synagogue](#); [Synagogue](#)

What "instructions" did Paul deliver to the churches that they should obey them?

[16:4]

Paul delivered the "decisions" (δόγμα/g1378) about how to live as Christians from the things the Christian leaders taught in Jerusalem.

16:6-10

Where were Phrygia and Galatia?

[16:6]

See Map: Phrygia; Galatia

How was Paul forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in Asia?

[16:6]

Scholars think there may have been various ways in which Paul and Barnabas were forbidden the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word of God in Asia. They think the Holy Spirit helped Paul to know this in some way.

See: [Word of God](#); [Word of God](#)

See Map: Asia; Mysia; Bithynia; Troas

What did Luke mean by writing “Spirit of Jesus”?

[16:7]

Most scholars think that when Luke wrote about the “Spirit of Jesus” he was referring to the Holy Spirit. These scholars think Luke was writing about one Spirit when he wrote about either the “Spirit of Jesus”, the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God.

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

What was a “vision”?

[16:9]

See: [Vision](#)

Why did Luke write “immediately”?

[16:10]

Luke wrote “immediately”(εὐθέως/g2112) because Paul and his friends immediately obeyed God and went to Macedonia.

Why did Luke start writing “we” instead of “they”?

[16:10]

Luke started writing “we” instead of “they” because Luke joined Paul and his friends at that time. Luke then saw the things about which he wrote.

16:11-15

What was a “place of prayer”?

[16:13]

In ancient Israel, places of prayer were often rock enclosures with trees surrounding them. Some scholars think Paul and his companions may have noticed a place to sit near the water that they thought could be used for prayer.

See Map: Troas; Samothrace; Neapolis; Philippi

Who was Lydia?

[16:14]

Lydia was a Gentile woman who wanted to worship God in the way Jews worshiped God. She was from Thyatira, a place famous for making purple dyes.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

See Map: Thyatira; Asia

What was meant by the words, “The Lord opened her heart”?

[16:14]

When Luke wrote that God opened Lydia’s heart, he used a metaphor. It meant that God helped Lydia to understand all that Paul taught and that God greatly encouraged her through Paul’s words.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did it mean that “she and her house were baptized”?

[16:15]

The words, “she and her house were baptized” meant that Lydia and all who lived in her house were baptized. This would have included any servants, children and relatives.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord”?

[16:15]

Scholars think Lydia was saying, “if you have judge me to be a woman believer in Jesus.” That is, she told Paul that she believed in Jesus and was a Christian.

16:16-24

What was a “spirit of divination”?

[16:16]

Some scholars think the girl that “spirit of divination” was a demon who told the future. Scholars think the girl had no control over how the demon spoke through her, and that the demon used many kinds of voices to speak through her.

See: [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Sorcery](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#)

Why did the demon possessed woman shout out that Paul and his friends proclaimed the way of salvation?

[16:17]

Scholars think the demon possessed woman shouted that Paul and his friends proclaimed the way of salvation for several reasons:

1. Some scholars think she did not glorify or respect God. When she said Paul and his friends were servants of the Most High God she was not thinking about the one God of the Bible. She was thinking about many false gods where one god was greater than the other gods.
2. Some scholars think the girl shouted out that Paul spoke about “a way of salvation”, and not “the way of salvation.” They think she spoke the truth but only some things she said were true.
3. Some scholars think she was trying to get people not to serve Paul and his friends. That is, she wanted people to watch her and not to listen to what Paul said about Jesus.
4. Some scholars think the demons said similar things to Jesus (see: Luke 4:41). Perhaps they did this to confuse people.

See: [False gods](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Demon Possession \(Casting Out Demons\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [False gods](#)

Why did Paul command the spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ”?

[16:18]

Scholars think that when Paul commanded the spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ” to come out, he wanted people to know that Jesus gave him permission and power to do these things. This honored Jesus.

See: [Name](#)

What was the marketplace?

[16:19]

Most ancient cities had a city square in the center of town called a marketplace. The marketplace was where people gathered to buy things, to talk, and to plan things. Sometimes leaders resolved arguments between people in the marketplace.

Who were the magistrates?

[16:20]

Magistrates were leaders of a city. They could decide what to do if there was a problem or trouble in the city. They could also decide how a person should be punished if the person did something wrong.

Why did the magistrates tear the garments off of Paul and Silas?

[16:22]

The magistrates tore the garments off of Paul and Silas because they planned to beat Paul and Silas. People who were beaten were struck with whips or rods on their bare backs.

What were the “stocks” fastened to Paul and Silas’ feet when they were put in prison?

[16:24]

The “stocks”(ξύλον/g3586) fastened to Paul and Silas’ feet were wooden blocks that locked their feet into one position. This made it very difficult for them to walk.

16:25-34**Why was the jailer about to kill himself?**

[16:27]

The jailer was about to kill himself because he knew the penalty for allowing prisoners to escape was death (see: Acts 16:12). Scholars think he did not want to be dishonored.

Why did the other prisoners not escape?

[16:28]

Scholars give several reasons why the other prisoners did not escape.

1. They were afraid of the prison guards.
2. They wanted to hear Paul and Silas talk about salvation from Jesus because they heard Paul and Silas pray and sing to God.
3. Perhaps the jailer secured the other prisoners before he fell down and talked to Paul and Silas.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did the jailer ask how to be saved?

[16:30]

Some scholars say the jailer might have heard the girl’s announcement that Paul and Silas knew the way of salvation. Also, he just experienced an earthquake that opened all the prison doors, yet no one escaped. Scholars think the jailer was full of fear. He wanted to know how to be at peace with God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What did Paul tell the jailer in order for him to be saved?

[16:31]

Paul told the jailer how to be at peace with God. All he needed to do was to believe in Jesus. Paul told the jailer about the forgiveness of sins found in Jesus.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What did it mean that the jailer and his household were baptized immediately?

[16:33]

Scholars think that when the jailer took Paul and Silas to cleanse their wounds, he likely took them to a well in the prison courtyard. While there, Paul and Silas baptized the jailer and his family in the water of the same well.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How did the jailer and his household rejoice greatly?

[16:34]

The jailer and his household rejoiced greatly with a meal at his house for Paul and Silas. They rejoiced because they had believed in God and they now had peace with God.

16:35-40**Why did the magistrates command the jailer to release Paul and Silas the next day?**

[16:35]

Scholars give several reasons why the magistrates commanded the jailer to release Paul and Silas the next day.

1. They thought the earthquake was a sign from their false gods.
2. Lydia persuaded the magistrates to release Paul and Silas.
3. They thought the shame from beating Paul and Silas and putting them in prison would make Paul and Silas stop talking and causing trouble in Philippi.

See: [False gods](#); [False gods](#)

See Map: Philippi

Why did Paul want the magistrates to lead them out of prison?

[16:37]

During that time, when the magistrates led a person out from the prison, it showed that the person had been treated unjustly. That is, they were accused falsely. Paul knew if the magistrates led them out from the prison, they would still have a good reputation with the people of Philippi.

Why did the magistrates ask Paul and Silas to leave Philippi?

[16:39]

Scholars think the magistrates asked Paul and Silas to leave Philippi because they did not want the crowds to cause another riot. Other scholars think the magistrates did not want the crowd to favor Paul and Silas and turn against the magistrates. Also, they did not want Paul and Silas to report that the magistrates beat Roman citizens and put them in prison without a trial.

See: [Citizen](#)

How did Paul and Silas encourage the Christians at Lydia's house?

[16:40]

Scholars think the Christians at Lydia's house were encouraged because they saw that God answered their prayers for the release of Paul and Silas.

Chapter 17

¹ Now when they had passed through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to the city of Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² Paul, as his custom was, went to them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures. ³ He was opening the scriptures and explaining that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead. He said, "This Jesus whom I proclaim to you is the Christ." ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, including a large number of devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women. ⁵ But the unbelieving Jews, being moved with jealousy, took certain wicked men from the marketplace, gathered a crowd together, and set the city in an uproar. Assaulting the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring Paul and Silas out to the people. ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain other brothers before the officials of the city, crying, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. ⁷ These men whom Jason has welcomed act against the decrees of Caesar; they say that there is another king—Jesus." ⁸ They troubled the crowd and the officials of the city who heard these things. ⁹ But after they took security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

¹⁰ That night the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ Now these people were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. ¹² Therefore many of them believed, including some influential Greek women and many men. ¹³ But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God at Berea, they went there and stirred up and troubled the crowds. ¹⁴ Then immediately, the brothers sent Paul to go to the sea, but Silas and Timothy stayed there. ¹⁵ Those who were leading Paul took him as far as the city of Athens. As they left Paul there, they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible.

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned every day in the synagogue with the Jews and others who worshiped God, as well as in the marketplace with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ But also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. Some said, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others said, "He seems to be one who calls people to follow strange gods," because he was proclaiming the gospel about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ They took Paul and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know this new teaching which you were speaking? ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. Therefore, we want to know what these things mean." ²¹ (Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening about something new.)

²² So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said,

"You men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I announce to you.

²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples built with hands. ²⁵ Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives people life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of people to live on the surface of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas, ²⁷ so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For in him we live and move and have our being, just as one of your own poets has said, 'For we also are his offspring.'

²⁹ "Therefore, since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the qualities of deity are like gold, or silver, or stone—images created by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ Therefore God overlooked the times of ignorance, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent. ³¹ This is because he has set a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed. God has given proof of this man to everyone by raising him from the dead."

³² Now when the men of Athens heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked Paul; but others said, "We will listen to you again about this matter." ³³ After that, Paul left them. ³⁴ But certain men

joined him and believed, including Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Acts 17

17:1-9

Where were Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica?

[17:1]

See Map: Amphipolis; Apollonia; Thessalonica

Why did Luke write that Paul reasoned from the scriptures for three Sabbath days?

[17:2]

Luke wrote that Paul reasoned from Scripture for three Sabbath days. Scholars think that the regular meaning of “three Sabbath days” during Paul’s time meant three weeks of time. Paul taught people about Jesus from the Old Testament for three weeks.

See: [Sabbath](#); [Sabbath](#)

Why did Paul say “it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again”?

[17:3]

Paul said “it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again” because the Old Testament prophets spoke of these events, and Jesus himself also spoke of these events.

See: Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Luke 18:31-33; 24:25-26

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What was meant by the words, “not a few of the leading women”?

[17:4]

The words “not a few of the leading women” meant a large number of women. These women were likely wives of the city’s leaders.

Why were the unbelieving Jews jealous of Paul and Silas?

[17:5]

Scholars think the unbelieving Jews were jealous of Paul and Silas because many more Gentiles than Jews believed in Jesus. More people became Christians. Perhaps the unbelieving Jews were also afraid they will lose control of their synagogue.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Advice to translators: The unbelieving Jews were Jews who rejected Jesus. They were not Christians.

How did the unbelieving Jews create an uproar?

[17:5]

There were several things the unbelieving Jews did to create an uproar.

1. They went to the marketplace and gathered wicked men to cause trouble. These wicked men did not work in the marketplace. They were always there wanting to do wrong things.
2. The wicked men helped them start a riot in the city.

3. They went to the house of Jason and broke down the door of his house. They then dragged him and other Christians in front of the city leaders. Paul and Silas were in another part of the city.
4. They made the crowd and the city leaders angry by shouting lies against Paul and the Christians.

Who was Jason?

[17:6]

Jason was a relative of Paul and scholars think Paul and Silas stayed with him while they were in Thessalonica.

See Map: Thessalonica

What did it mean to “act against the decrees of Caesar”?

[17:7]

When Paul and Silas were accused of acting “against the decrees of Caesar” it meant they were accused of rebelling against all the Roman laws. This is because Jesus is a king. However, Jesus is not a king in the same way that the Roman Caesar was a king. People said that Paul and Silas were trying to get people to serve a different king other than Caesar. They wanted Paul and Silas to be arrested.

Why did the city leaders make Jason pay money as a security?

[17:9]

The leaders of the city made Jason pay a security. That is, Jason assured the city leaders that Paul and Silas would leave the city and not to return.

17:10-15

How were the people in Berea more noble than the people in Thessalonica?

[17:11]

When Luke said that the people in Berea were more noble than the people in Thessalonica, he meant they wanted to learn about Jesus from Paul and Silas. That is, they wanted Paul and Silas to teach them about the Bible.

See Map: Berea; Thessalonica

What was meant by the words, “examining the scriptures daily”?

[17:11]

When Luke said that the Bereans “examined”(ἀνακρίνω/g0350) the scriptures daily, he meant they examined the Bible and compared the Bible to the things Paul and Silas taught. They wanted to prove that Paul and Silas taught the same thing the Bible taught. They wanted to know if Paul said correct things about Jesus.

How was it that the Jews from Thessalonica “stirred up and troubled the crowds”?

[17:13]

When Luke wrote that the Jews from Thessalonica “stirred up and troubled the crowds” he meant they caused confusion among the people. That is, they kept insisting that people follow the Law of Moses instead of what Paul and Silas taught.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

See Map: Thessalonica

Where was Athens?

[17:15]

See Map: Athens

17:16-21

Why did idols “provoke” Paul’s spirit?

[17:16]

Idols “angered” (παροξύνω/g3947) Paul because idols made Israel sin against God (see: 2 Kings 17:12). Also, the Christian leaders in Jerusalem did not want Christians to worship idols (see: 15:29).

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What was the marketplace?

[17:17]

See: Acts 16:19

What were philosophers?

[17:18]

Philosophers were people who loved wisdom. Philosophers taught different things about the world. In ancient Israel, many philosophers went to Athens. Paul warned that things they taught Christians were the wrong things and stopped Christians from believing the right things (see: Colossians 2:8).

See Map: Athens

What did Epicureans believe?

[17:18]

Epicureans followed a man named Epicurus who lived about 300 years before Paul. They taught certain things. They believed several things differently from Jews and Christians.

1. They taught that people should avoid pain .
2. They taught that God or other gods did not do anything with people. There were no miracles or prophecy. They did not think God or other gods controlled anything.
3. When a person died, nothing happened.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Miracle](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What did Stoics believe?

[17:18]

Stoics followed a man named Zeno who lived about 300 years before Paul. They believed several things differently from Jews and Christians.

1. They believed that some power created things and people.
2. They wanted people to think the same way gods thought.
3. They followed their conscience.
4. They did not want to feel pleasure, pain, joy, and sadness.

See: [Conscience](#)

What was a babbler?

[17:18]

A babbler was a bird pecking grain. It was a metaphor to say Paul was not a real teacher and a worthless person.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was meant by the words “follow strange gods”?

[17:18]

People said that Paul followed strange gods. They said that Paul was teaching about foreign gods. In the ancient world, people did not worship foreign gods. When someone did this, people thought they rejected the nation where they lived.

See: [False gods](#)

What was the Areopagus?

[17:19]

The Areopagus was the highest court in Athens. It was on the hill of Ares or Mars Hill.

See Map: Athens; Ares; Mars Hill

Why did they take Paul to the Areopagus?

[17:19]

They took Paul to the Areopagus because of the things he said about Jesus and becoming alive again. They wanted to know about the things Paul taught. They were polite to Paul. They always wanted to hear new things.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

17:22-31**Why did Paul say they were “religious”?**

[17:22]

Paul said these people were “religious”(δαιοδάρμων/g1174). That is, they worshipped and obey their false gods. Some scholars think Paul said something good about them. That is, they honored their gods and built altars for their gods. Other scholars think Paul said this so they will listen to him. He did not say that because he thought they were right.

See: [Altar](#); [False gods](#); [Altar](#)

Why did they build an altar to an unknown god?

[17:23]

They built an altar to an unknown god because they believed some god controlled the world. Because of this, they knew there may be a god who made all things. However, they did not understand anything else about this god.

See: [False gods](#); [False gods](#)

What did Paul have to say about the altar that said, “To an Unknown God”?

[17:24, 17:25, 17:26, 17:27]

Paul saw the altar with the words "To an Unknown God" written on it. After he saw this, he wanted to teach them about God. People can know about God. However, God is not one god of many God. There is only one God.

How did Paul try to correct the wrong thinking with regard to the various altars?

[17:24, 17:25, 17:26, 17:27]

Paul told them it was wrong to worship idols. This was taught in the Old Testament.

1. God created everything (see: Genesis 1:1).
2. God is ruler over everything (see: Isaiah 45:23; Daniel 5:23).
3. God is too great to live in a temple (see: 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 57:15; 66:1-2).
4. People do not need to serve God in the way pagans served gods with sacrifices. God does not need anything. God gives everything people need (see: Psalm 50:8-13; Genesis 2:7; James 1:17).

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Altar](#); [Temple](#); [Pagan](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Did Luke write the word blood in verse 26?

[17:26]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the word blood in verse 26. Older ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Luke wrote this word. Paul was thinking about Adam when he said God made every nation of people (see: Luke 3:38; Genesis 3:20). Everyone is a descendant of Adam (see: Genesis 3:20).

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Why did Paul say the same thing a pagan poet said?

[17:28]

Paul said the same thing a pagan poet said because that pagan poet was right when he wrote God gave life to people. God makes everyone alive (see: Job 12:10). However, the pagan poet was wrong about many other things. Paul only repeated the part where the pagan was right.

See: [Pagan](#)

What was a deity?

[17:29]

Deity was a word for a divine being. It can be used to talk about the one true God or false gods.

See: [False gods](#); [False gods](#)

Why did God overlook times of ignorance?

[17:30]

God overlooked times of ignorance. That is, God does not judge people when they know they are doing something wrong. This is because he loves people in the world and he did not judge them yet. People were said to be ignorant because they did not know God created them and that he rules everything. They did not know it was wrong to worship idols. However, Jesus came and God wanted everyone to repent. That is, God wanted people to stop worshipping idols and worship God.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How will God judge all the people in the world in righteousness?

[17:31]

God will judge all the people in the world according to his righteousness when he judges everyone through Jesus. That is, the same righteous standard will be used by God to judge all peoples of the world.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Who is the man God “has chosen”?

[17:31]

Paul spoke about the man God has chosen. Paul was speaking about Jesus. God has “chosen”(ᾠρίσεν/g3724) to judge the world through Jesus. Paul taught that God chose Jesus to be the judge by raising him from the dead.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

17:32-34

Why did some of the men of Athens mock Paul when he said God made Jesus alive again?

[17:32]

Some of the men of Athens mocked Paul when he said God made Jesus alive again because they believed that God will not judge and God did not do miracles. They also thought the world will never end.

See: [Miracle](#) ; [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Miracle](#)

See Map: Athens

What was an Areopagite?

[17:34]

An Areopagite was a member of the Areopagus court. Some scholars think Dionysius was one of the twelve judges of the Athenian court.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

See Map: Athens

Chapter 18

¹ After these things Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to them, ³ and because he worked at the same trade, he stayed with them and labored, for they were tentmakers by trade. ⁴ So Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks. ⁵ Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶ But when the Jews opposed and insulted him, Paul shook out his garment at them and said to them, "May your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." ⁷ Then he left from there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a man who worshiped God. His house was next to the synagogue. ⁸ Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians who heard about it believed and were baptized. ⁹ The Lord said to Paul in the night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent." ¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one will try to harm you, for I have many people in this city." ¹¹ Paul lived there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹² But when Gallio became governor of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one mind against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat; ¹³ they said, "This man persuades people to worship God contrary to the law." ¹⁴ Yet when Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "You Jews, if indeed it were a matter of wrong or a wicked crime, it would be reasonable to put up with you. ¹⁵ But since these are questions about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I do not wish to be a judge of these matters." ¹⁶ Gallio made them leave the judgment seat. ¹⁷ So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio did not care what they did.

¹⁸ Paul, after staying there for many more days, left the brothers and sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. Before he left the seaport, Cenchræe, he had his hair cut off because of a vow he had taken. ¹⁹ When they came to Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked Paul to stay a longer time, he declined. ²¹ But taking his leave of them, he said, "I will return again to you if it is God's will." He then set sail from Ephesus.

²² When Paul had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the Jerusalem church and then went down to Antioch. ²³ After having spent some time there, Paul departed and went through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

²⁴ Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, came to Ephesus. He was eloquent in speech and mighty in the scriptures. ²⁵ Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord. Being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ Apollos began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ When he desired to pass over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples in Achaia to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who believed by grace. ²⁸ Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 18

18:1-11

Why did Paul leave Athens?

[18:1]

Luke did not write why Paul left Athens. Some scholars think Paul was not able to make tents there because Athens was not a city where people made tents. Other scholars think Corinth needed someone to preach the gospel. Also, Corinth was a city where people made tents.

See: [Gospel](#)

See Map: Athens

Where was Corinth?

[18:1]

See Map: Corinth

Where were Pontus, Italy, and Rome?

[18:2]

See Map: Pontus; Italy; Rome

Who was Claudius?

[18:2]

Claudius was the fourth Roman Emperor. He ruled the Roman Empire about 10 years after Jesus died. He allowed the Jews to obey the Law of Moses and to do things the religious things the Jews did.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Claudius make all the Jews leave Rome?

[18:2]

The Roman Emperor Claudius made all the Jews leave Rome because the Jews caused many riots in Rome. Scholars do not know if Aquila and Priscilla participated in those riots at Rome or if they did not.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

Why did Paul go to Aquila and Priscilla?

[18:2, 18:3]

Some scholars think Paul went to Aquila and Priscilla because they were Christians. Perhaps they helped start the church in Rome. Other scholars think they were not Christians and Paul went to them because they also made tents. Then Paul taught them and they became Christians. Aquila and Priscilla helped Paul many times.

See: Acts 18:18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19).

See Map: Rome

How did the church in Corinth begin?

[18:4] The church in Corinth began when Paul persuaded Jews and Greeks to believe that Jesus is the messiah. Paul talked to these Jews and Greeks at the synagogue in Corinth. At first, the synagogue allowed Paul to tell people about Jesus. Later, they did not want Paul to talk about Jesus.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Synagogue](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Did Luke write that the Holy Spirit led Paul?

[18:5] Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words, the Holy Spirit led Paul in verse. However, more and older copies of the Greek News Testament have the words, Paul was devoted to the word. Scholars think Luke wrote that Paul was devoted to the word.

See: [Word of God](#)

Where was Macedonia?

[18:5]

See Map: Macedonia

Why did Paul shake out his garment at the Jews who opposed and insulted him?

[18:6] Paul shook out his garment at the Jews who opposed and insulted him. This was a sign that he stop talking to them about Jesus. Paul also warned them God will judge them. However, God will not judge Paul because Paul warned them. This was similar to what God told Ezekiel to do (see: Ezekiel 3:16-21).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Advice to translators: A garment was a piece of clothing.

What did Paul do when Silas and Timothy went to Corinth?

[18:7, 18:8]

Paul stopped making tents and give all of time to telling people about Jesus when Silas and Timothy went to Corinth. They were in Corinth with Paul. Some scholars think Silas and Timothy brought money so that Paul did not need to make tents. Other scholars think Silas and Timothy worked and made enough money so that Paul did not need to make tents.

See Map: Corinth

What was a vision?

[18:9]

See: [Vision](#)

Why did the Lord speak to Paul in a vision at night?

[18:9]

The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision at night because Paul was afraid he would have to leave Corinth. Persecution in other cities forced Paul to leave when he wanted to continue serving God. However, Paul was not afraid to suffer (see: 21:10-14). Also, the vision helped Paul know he pleased God by the way he served God in Corinth.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

18:12-17

Who was Gallio?

[18:12]

Gallio was the leader of Achaia in Greece for two years. He began ruling about 20 years after Jesus died. He was killed by a Roman emperor.

See Map: Achaia; Greece

What was the judgement seat?

[18:12]

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did the Jews bring Paul before Gallio?

[18:12]

The Jews brought Paul before Gallio because they wanted to persuade him to judge against Paul. However, their plan failed. The Lord's promise in the vision to protect Paul at Corinth came true.

See: [Vision](#); [Vision](#)

See Map: Corinth

Which law did the Jews talk about?

[18:13]

Some scholars think the law the Jews talked about was the Law of Moses. They wanted the governor to allow them to follow the Law of Moses. Other scholars think the Jews talked about Roman laws. Roman laws allowed the Jews to worship God and follow the Law of Moses. If these Jews were able to convince Gallio the Christians were different from the Jews, then Roman law would not allow Christians to worship God. Other scholars think the Jews talked about both the law of Moses and Roman laws.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Who was Sosthenes?

[18:17]

Sosthenes was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth. If he was the same person in 1 Corinthians 1:1, then he became a Christian at sometime and later he helped Paul write the first letter to the Corinthian church.

See: [Synagogue](#)

Why did people beat Sosthenes?

[18:17]

Scholars give several reasons why people beat Sosthenes.

1. Some scholars think the Jews beat Sosthenes because he was not able to persuade Gallio to judge Paul.
2. Some scholars think the Jews beat Sosthenes because he became a Christian.
3. Some scholars think the Gentiles beat Sosthenes because they did not like Jews.

See: [Gentile](#)

18:18-23

Why did Paul do a third missionary journey?

[18:8]

This was the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey. He wanted to visit and help the churches he established in his first and second missionary journeys. He wanted them to know he did not forget about them.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Syria; Cenchrea; Ephesus; Caesarea; Antioch; Galatia; Phrygia

What vow did Paul take?

[18:8]

Scholars have several ideas of what vow Paul took.

1. Some scholars think Paul made a Nazarite vow (see: Numbers 6)
2. Some scholars think Paul made a vow of thanksgiving because God protected him in Corinth.

3. Sometimes ancient sailors shaved their heads after living through a difficult journey. This was a type of vow.
4. Some scholars think Paul made a private vow.

See: [Vow](#)

Why did Paul say “if it is God’s will”?

[18:21]

Paul said “if it is God’s will” because he always depended on God leading him by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit sent Paul to a certain place (see: Acts 13:2). Other times God allowed Paul to visit churches he wanted to visit (see: Acts 15:36). Paul wanted to do God’s will.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

18:24-28

Where was Alexandria?

[18:24]

See Map: Alexandria

What spirit was Apollos fervent in?

[18:24]

Scholars think Apollos was fervent in his own spirit. This was a metaphor. He loved to speak about Jesus and was excited to speak about Jesus (see: Romans 12:11). Fewer scholars think Luke was writing about the Holy Spirit. Fewer scholars think Luke was writing about both Apollos’ spirit and the Holy Spirit.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Priscilla and Aquila tell Apollos the way of God more accurately?

[18:26]

Some scholars think Priscilla and Aquila told Apollos the way of God more accurately by telling him about Christian baptism in water. The Holy Spirit already live him. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit did not yet live in Apollos but Priscilla and Aquila explained that to him (see: 2:1-4). In the same way, many of the five-hundred who saw Jesus alive again did not go to Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit began to live in the apostles and other Christians (1 Corinthians 15:6).

See: [Apostle](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Pentecost](#); [Apostle](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

Chapter 19

¹ It came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to the city of Ephesus, and found certain disciples there. ² Paul said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

They said to him, "No, we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit."

³ Paul said, "Into what then were you baptized?"

They said, "Into John's baptism."

⁴ So Paul replied, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance. He told the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ When the people heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Then when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. ⁷ In all they were about twelve men.

⁸ Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some Jews were hardened and disobedient, they began to speak evil of the Way before the crowd. So Paul left them and took the disciples with him, reasoning with them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. ¹¹ God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses left them and the evil spirits came out of them.

¹³ But there were Jewish exorcists traveling through the area. They called on the name of the Lord Jesus so they could have power over evil spirits when they said, "By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims, I command you to come out." ¹⁴ The Jewish high priest, whose name was Sceva, had seven sons who were doing this.

¹⁵ An evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" ¹⁶ The evil spirit in the man leaped on the exorcists and subdued them and beat them up. Then they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. They became very afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was honored. ¹⁸ Also, many of the believers came and confessed and gave a full account of the evil things they had done. ¹⁹ Many who practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. When they counted the value of them, it was fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways.

²¹ Now after these things were completed, Paul decided in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to Jerusalem; he said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²² Paul sent to Macedonia two of those who served him, Timothy and Erastus. But he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

²³ At about that time there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way. ²⁴ A certain silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in much business for the craftsmen. ²⁵ So he gathered together the workmen of that occupation and said, "Men, you know that in this business we make much money. ²⁶ You see and hear that, not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people. He is saying that gods made by hands are not gods. ²⁷ Not only is there danger that our trade will be discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be regarded as worthless, and her greatness would be brought to nothing, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

²⁸ When they heard this, they were filled with anger and cried out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." ²⁹ The whole city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed with one mind into the theater. They had seized Paul's travel companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, who came from Macedonia. ³⁰ Paul wanted to enter in among the crowd of people, but the disciples prevented him. ³¹ Also, some of the officials of the province of Asia who were his friends sent him a message pleading with him not to enter the theater. ³² Some people were shouting one thing, and some another, for the crowd was in confusion. Most of them did not even know why they had come together. ³³ Some of the crowd advised Alexander, whom the Jews were pushing forward. So Alexander motioned with his hand, wanting to give a defense to the assembly. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all cried out for about two hours with

one voice, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." ³⁵ When the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from heaven? ³⁶ Seeing then that these things are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men to this court who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ Therefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have an accusation against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse one another. ³⁹ But if you are seeking anything more, it should be resolved in the regular assembly. ⁴⁰ For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today, and there is no cause we can give to justify this uproar." When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly. ^[1]

Footnotes

19:40 ^[1]Some Greek copies number this last sentence as verse 41.

Acts 19

19:1-7

Who were these disciples?

[19:1]

1. Some scholars think these disciples were Christians. They were not only disciples of John the Baptist but they were also disciples of Jesus. They think that only people who followed and believed in Jesus were disciples in the book of Acts.
2. Some scholars think these disciples were not Christians. They did not have the Holy Spirit in them. Only people who had the Holy Spirit were Christians (see: John 3:5; Romans 8:9). They did not know about baptism in the name of Jesus.
3. Some scholars think people believed these people were disciples. However, Paul did think they really were disciples.
4. Some scholars think Apollos persuaded people to believe in Jesus before Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How did Paul ask these disciples when they believed?

[19:2]

Scholars have two ideas of how Paul asked these disciples when they believed.

1. Paul asked them if God gave them the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. That is, God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. Christians knew they already had the Holy Spirit. However, these disciples did not know God gave the Holy Spirit (see: John 7:39).
2. Paul asked them if God gave them the Holy Spirit after they believed in Jesus. That is, Christians had the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. However, God filled Christians with the Holy Spirit at a later time so that they could better serve God. The Jews and the people John the Baptist baptized knew about the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when they said they did not hear about the Holy Spirit they were thinking about God filling people with the Holy Spirit.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Disciple](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did these disciples say they were baptized with John's baptism?

[19:3]

These disciples said they were baptized by John the Baptist. However, they were not baptized as Christians. This was a different baptism.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Why did Paul lay his hands on these disciples?

[19:6]

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

How did the Holy Spirit come on these disciples?

[19:6]

The Holy Spirit came on these disciples in the same way God filled disciples with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and they spoke in “tongues”(γλῶσσα/g1100) (see: Acts 2:4) and prophesied.

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Pentecost](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#)

19:8-20

What was the “Way”?

[19:9]

In ancient Israel, people called Christians the “Way”(ὁδός/g3598). A “way” was a road or path from one place to another. It a metaphor of how a person lived their life. That is, when a person lived in a way that honored God, they were following the right way. Christians did more than believe the right things about God and Jesus. Christians also honored God in the way they lived (see: Acts 15:11; 18:25-26; John 14:6).

See: Acts 9:2; 22:4; 24:14,22

What was the “lecture hall of Tyrannus”?

[19:9]

The “lecture hall of Tyrannus” was a place where people taught others. Here, Paul was able to speak every day rather than just one day a week at the synagogue. Paul made tents in Ephesus (see: Acts 20:34) in the mornings and taught people at the hall of Tyrannus in the afternoons. Then in the evenings he served at houses (see: Acts 20:20).

See: [Synagogue](#)

See Map: Ephesus

How did all the Jews and Greeks in Asia hear the word of the Lord?

[19:10]

All the Jews and Greeks in Asia heard the word of the Lord when Christians went to cities in Asia and told people about Jesus. Many of these people went to Ephesus to do trade with others.

See: [Word of God](#)

See Map: Asia; Ephesus

What were “extraordinary miracles”?

[19:11]

See: [Miracle](#)

Who was Sceva?

[19:14]

Some scholars think Sceva was a “chief” priest rather than the “high” priest. That is, he was not the high priest who stayed in Jerusalem but he was a priest who serve the high priests Annas and Caiphas. Other scholars think Sceva gave himself this title and Luke wrote what Sceva called himself this. He was not truly a priest in Israel. In ancient Israel, some people said they were priests when they were not priests.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why did the evil spirit take control over the sons of Sceva?

[19:14]

The evil spirit took control over the sons of Sceva because they tried to do it themselves, rather than trusting in Jesus. They tried to force the evil spirit out the same way other Jewish leaders did except they also said the name of Jesus. This did not help them because they did not believe in Jesus.

See: [Demon](#)

Why did many believers have magic books?

[19:19]

Many believers had magic books because they were recently became Christians. The ancient city of Ephesus had many magicians with books of formulas for casting spells. Many people did magic all their lives before they began to believe in Jesus. However, the failure of the sons of Sceva to force out an evil spirit made Christians know their magic formulas did not have the same power as Jesus. Therefore, they burned their magic books and honored the Lord Jesus.

See Map: Ephesus

How much was fifty-thousand pieces of silver?

[19:19]

Fifty-thousand pieces of silver was the same amount two-hundred workers or soldiers earned in a year.

19:21-22**What were “these things”?**

[19:21]

Some scholars “these things” were the two years Paul served the Christians in Ephesus. Other scholars think he was writing about the things in 19:13-19. Paul believed he finished serving the Christians in Ephesus. The church grew and became strong. It was time for Paul to serve in other places.

See: [Church](#)

How did Paul decide in the Spirit?

[19:21]

Some scholars think Paul decided in his own spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to Jerusalem. More scholars think the Holy Spirit led Paul to travel. This was how the Holy Spirit led Paul.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Macedonia; Achaia; Jerusalem

Why did Paul say he must see Rome?

[19:21]

Paul said he must see Rome because he knew God wanted him to go there. Later, God told this to Paul (see: Acts 23:11) and also an angel told this to Paul (see: Acts 27:23-24).

See: [Angel](#)

See Map: Rome

How did Paul go to Rome?

[19:21]

Paul did not go to Rome right away. He needed to visit other churches first. However, from here to the end of the book of Acts Paul's purpose was to go to Rome.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

See Map: Rome

Why did Paul send Timothy and Erastus ahead to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia?

[19:22]

Paul sent Timothy and Erastus ahead to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia because he wanted them to prepare those churches for his visit.

19:23-41

What was Artemis?

[19:24]

Artemis was a pagan fertility goddess with many breasts, or planets, or fruits, or bee or ostrich eggs, or castrated organs. The ancient Ephesians built a temple to Artemis. The temple was a bank and people put money there. The temple was destroyed and rebuilt many times. During the time of Paul, people made many small silver shrines of the temple. That is, they made little copies or models of the temple. Many people went to Ephesus and bought the silver shrines and used them to worship false gods in their houses. However, when many people no longer believed in idols because they believed in Jesus, then the people who made these idols did not make as much money.

See: [Temple](#); [False gods](#); [Temple](#)

Why did Demetrius say Paul persuaded many people in Ephesus and most of Asia?

[19:24]

Demetrius said Paul persuaded many people in Ephesus and most of Asia because he wanted to gather people against Paul. However, Demetrius did not know he said Paul was very successful in persuading people to believe in Jesus.

See: Luke 13:18-20

Why did Luke write about Gaius and Aristarchus?

[19:29]

Luke wrote about Gaius and Aristarchus because he wanted people to know Paul persuaded many people to believe in Jesus when he served in Macedonia, especially in Thessalonica (see: Acts 20:4).

See Map: Macedonia; Thessalonica

Why did Luke write most of the people did not know why they gathered?

[19:32]

Luke wrote most of the people did not know why they gathered because he wanted people to laugh at the crowd. In ancient Greece, writers often wanted the people to laugh when people did stupid things.

Why did the Jews push forward Alexander to make a defense?

[19:33]

The Jews wanted Alexander to make a defense because they wanted the crowd not to think they were Christians. The people knew the Jews also did not believe in idols. The Jews wanted the people to know they had nothing to do with Paul or the Christians.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What was the town clerk?

[19:35]

The town clerk was the highest official in the city. He kept the city and temple records. He reigned over city meetings. He also talked to Rome about the city.

See: [Temple](#)

How did the town clerk know the Christians did not rob the temples or blaspheme the goddess?

[19:37]

The town clerk knew the Christians did not rob temples or blaspheme the goddess because Christians were in Ephesus for at least three years and the Christians did not do these things. The Christians preached about Jesus and fewer people bought silver shrines of the goddess.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [False gods](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

See Map: Ephesus

Chapter 20

¹ After the uproar was over, Paul sent for the disciples and after he encouraged them, he said farewell and left to go into Macedonia. ² When he had gone through those regions and had spoken many words of encouragement to them, he came to Greece. ³ After he had spent three months there, a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to sail for Syria, so he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴ Accompanying him as far as Asia were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, both from the Thessalonian believers; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. ⁵ But these men had gone before us and were waiting for us at Troas. ⁶ We sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and in five days we came to them in Troas. There we stayed for seven days.

⁷ On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul spoke to the believers. He was planning to leave the next day, so he prolonged his message until midnight. ⁸ There were many lamps in the upper room where we had come together. ⁹ In the window was sitting a young man named Eutychus, who fell into a deep sleep. As Paul spoke even longer, this young man, still sleeping, fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰ But Paul went down, stretched himself out on him, and embraced him. Then he said, "Do not be upset any more, for he is alive." ¹¹ Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking with them much longer until dawn, he left. ¹² They brought back the boy alive and were greatly comforted.

¹³ We ourselves went ahead of Paul by ship and sailed away to Assos, where we planned to take Paul on board. This is what he himself desired to do, because he planned to go by land. ¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him onto the ship and went to Mitylene. ¹⁵ Then we sailed from there and arrived the next day opposite the island of Chios. The following day we touched at the island of Samos, and the day after we came to the city of Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not spend any time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost, if it were at all possible for him to do so.

¹⁷ From Miletus he sent men to Ephesus and called to himself the elders of the church. ¹⁸ When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I always spent my time with you. ¹⁹ I kept serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind and with tears, and in trials that happened to me because of the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you anything that was useful, and how I taught you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus. ²² Now look, I am going to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that chains and afflictions await me. ²⁴ But I do not consider my life valuable to myself, if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ Now look, I know that you all, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of any man. ²⁷ For I did not hold back from declaring to you the whole will of God. ²⁸ Therefore be careful about yourselves, and about all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ So be on guard. Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each one of you night and day with tears. ³² Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are being sanctified. ³³ I coveted no man's silver, gold, or clothing. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands served my own needs and the needs of those who were with me. ³⁵ In all things I gave you an example of how you should help the weak by laboring, and of how you should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, words that he himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

³⁶ After he had spoken in this way, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ There was a lot of crying and they embraced Paul and kissed him. ³⁸ They were in anguish most of all because of what he had said, that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

Footnotes

20:28 ^[1] Instead of

Acts 20

20:1-6

How did Paul encourage the disciples?

[20:1]

Paul encouraged the disciples by telling them to continue trusting in God and to live in a way that honors God. Paul wrote these things in his letters when he encouraged Christians.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was the plot the Jews formed against Paul?

[20:3]

The plot the Jews formed against Paul was a plan to do something evil to Paul or even kill him. Because of this, Paul changed his plans and went by land back to Macedonia rather than sail on a ship toward Syria.

See Map: Macedonia; Greece; Syria

Why did Luke write “us” in verse five?

[20:5]

Some scholars think Luke wrote “us” in verse five because Luke began to travel with Paul. Fewer scholars think “us” also included other Christians who traveled with Paul and Luke.

Why did the Christian men meet Paul and Luke at Troas?

[20:5]

Christian men met Paul and Luke at Troas because they sailed on a ship and arrived there before Paul did because he traveled on land. Scholars think these men had money to give to the poor Christians in Jerusalem (see: 1 Corinthians 16:1-4).

See Map: Berea; Thessalonica; Derbe; Asia; Troas

What were the days of unleavened bread?

[20:6]

The days of unleavened bread was the festival of Passover.

See: [Festival of Unleavened Bread](#); [Festival of Unleavened Bread](#)

20:7-12

How did they break bread?

[20:7]

Some scholars think they broke bread by eating a meal (see: 2:46). Other scholars think they ate a meal and had the Lord’s supper (see: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

Why did Luke write there were many lamps?

[20:8]

Some scholars think Luke wrote there were many lamps because the odor, heat, or smoke of the lamps took away the air to breathe in the upper room. This made Eutychus sleep even though he sat near a window. Other scholars think the lamps gave much light so that Paul was able to continue speaking to the Christians all night.

How did Eutychus die?

[20:9]

Some scholars think Eutychus died from the fall. They say Paul prayed when he stretched himself and embraced Eutychus. Eutychus then became alive again. Luke was a doctor so he knew Eutychus was dead. Fewer scholars think they do not know if Eutychus really died. They say Eutychus did not wake up until later.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

20:13-16**Why did Paul travel by land from Troas to Assos?**

[20:13]

Luke did not write why Paul traveled by land from Troas to Assos. Scholars think Paul wanted time alone to talk to God. The Holy Spirit told Paul many times he will go to prison (see: 20:22-23). Paul was alone and God strengthened Paul to accept God's will and serve Jesus until Paul died (see: 20:24).

See: Acts 9:15-16

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

See Map: Troas; Assos

Why did Paul hurry to go to Jerusalem?

[20:16]

Paul hurried to go to Jerusalem to be there for the Day of Pentecost. Many Jewish Christians were in Jerusalem for Pentecost. Paul wanted the Gentile Christians from Macedonia and Greece to give the money to the poor Jewish Christians. He knew this would help join the Gentile and Jewish Christians together.

See: [Pentecost](#)

See Map: Mitylene; Chios; Samos; Miletus; Ephesus; Asia; Jerusalem; Macedonia; Greece

20:17-35**What were the "elders" in the church?**

[20:17]

The "elders" (πρεσβύτερος/g4245) were the leaders in the church. They were also called "overseers" (ἐπίσκοπος/g1985) or "shepherds" (ποιμαίνω/g4165) (see: Acts 20:28).

See: [Shepherd](#); [Overseer](#); [Shepherd](#)

How did Paul do the things he wanted the church leaders to do?

[20:18, 20:19, 20:24]

There were many ways Paul did the things he wanted the church leaders to do (see: 1 Corinthians 4:6; 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6).

1. He was with them all the time.
2. He served Jesus even when he was persecuted.
3. He did not think he was greater than other people (see: 2 Corinthians 12:7).
4. He was innocent of all blood. That is, Paul preached the gospel to all people and warned them to repent and believe in Jesus (see: Ezekiel 3:18,20; 33:6,8).
5. He warned them about people who did not teach the truth.
6. He did not want people to give him things.
7. He worked and did not rely on people to give him money.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#) ; [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did the Holy Spirit testify to Paul?

[20:23]

The Holy Spirit testified to Paul through prophecy. That is Paul knew what the Holy Spirit wanted him to know through prophecies. Luke wrote about the prophecy in Caesarea because it was an example of prophecies in other cities (see: 21:10-11). The Holy Spirit was able to testify to Paul through visions (see: 16:9-10) or talking to Paul when he worshipped God or fasted (see: 13:2). Paul knew the Holy Spirit did not want to stop Paul from going to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit told Paul about God's plan for Paul to tell people about the gospel and God's grace (see: 20:24).

See: [Grace](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Holy Spirit](#); [Vision](#); [Worship](#); [Fasting](#); [Grace](#)

See Map: Caesarea ; Jerusalem

What was "the grace of God"?

[20:24]

See: [Grace](#)

What was "the whole will of God"?

[20:27]

The "whole will of God" was the whole plan of God to save people. That is, it was God's plan in the whole Bible. Jesus fulfilled all of God's plan.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

What were "vicious wolves"?

[20:29]

When Paul spoke about "vicious wolves," this was a metaphor. He was speaking about people from outside the church who came into the church and taught wrong things about God and Jesus. Paul called them "vicious" because they were wild and cruel. Jesus called them false prophets (see: Matthew 7:15).

See: [False Prophet](#); [False Prophet](#)

What was the "flock"?

[20:29]

The “flock” was a metaphor for the church. Wolves attacked the “flock” and killed sheep. False teachers will teach wrong things about God and Jesus until Jesus returns.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Metaphor](#); [Church](#); [False Teacher](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was the inheritance?

[20:32]

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What was sanctification?

[20:32]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

Who were the “weak”?

[20:35]

The “weak”(ἀσθενέω/g0770) were people who were poor people or people who were sick or suffering.

Why did Paul repeat what Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than receive”?

[20:35]

Paul repeated what Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” because Paul did not want anyone to think he preached to make money. Therefore, he worked to meet his own needs. Paul was talking about how he helped a new church. That is, Paul was at the church in Ephesus when it just started. However, after a church grew Paul wanted them to support the leaders in this church (see: Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18). Also, Paul was an example to them of how to help the weak.

See: [Church](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Ephesus

20:36-38

Why did Paul kneel down to pray?

[20:36]

Paul knelt down to pray because this was a time of strong feelings for Paul (see: 21:5; 9:40). Christians prayed standing or sitting.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Chapter 21

¹ When we had gone away from them and set sail, we took a straight course to the city of Cos, and the next day to the city of Rhodes, and from there to the city of Patara. ² When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. ³ After sighting Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat, we sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, where the ship was to unload its cargo. ⁴ After we found the disciples, we stayed there seven days. Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem. ⁵ When our days there were over, we left and went on our way, and they all, with their wives and children, accompanied us out of the city. Then we knelt down on the beach, prayed, ⁶ and said farewell to each other. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

⁷ When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. There we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day. ⁸ On the next day we left and went to Caesarea. We entered the house of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and we stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

¹⁰ As we stayed there for some days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ He came to us and took Paul's belt. With it he tied his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man who owns this belt, and they will hand him over into the hands of the Gentiles.'" ¹² When we heard these things, both we and the people who lived in that place pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.

¹³ Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be tied up, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁴ Since Paul would not be persuaded, we remained silent and then we said, "May the will of the Lord be done."

¹⁵ After these days, we picked up our bags and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ There also went with us some of the disciples from Caesarea. They brought with them a man named Mnason, a man from Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we would stay.

¹⁷ When we had arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly. ¹⁸ The next day Paul went with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ When he had greeted them, he reported one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ When they heard it, they glorified God, and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands have believed among the Jews. They are all zealous to keep the law. ²¹ They have been told about you, that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children, and not to walk according the traditional ways. ²² What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ So do what we say to you. We have four men who made a vow. ²⁴ Take these men and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, so that they may shave their heads. So everyone will know that the things they have been told about you are false. They will learn that you also live correctly, obeying the law. ²⁵ But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote about our decision that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality." ²⁶ Then Paul took the men, and the next day he purified himself along with them. Then they went into the temple, giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and the offering would be presented for each of them.

²⁷ When the seven days were almost finished, some Jews from Asia, seeing Paul in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him. ²⁸ They were shouting, "Men of Israel, help us. This is the man who teaches all men everywhere things that are against the people, the law, and this place. Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." ²⁹ For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple. ³⁰ All the city was excited, and the people ran together and laid hold of Paul. They dragged him out of the temple, and the doors were immediately shut. ³¹ As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the chief captain of the company of soldiers, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ³² Right away he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to the crowd. When the people saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the chief captain approached and laid hold of Paul, and

commanded him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and others another. Since the captain could not learn the truth because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress. ³⁵ When he came to the steps, he was carried by the soldiers because of the crowd's violence. ³⁶ For the crowd of people followed after and kept shouting out, "Away with him!"

³⁷ As Paul was about to be brought into the fortress, he said to the chief captain, "Is it permitted for me to say something to you?"

The captain said, "Do you know Greek? ³⁸ Are you not then the Egyptian who some time ago started a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the 'Assassins' out into the wilderness?"

³⁹ Paul said, "I am a Jew, from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I am a citizen of no unimportant city. I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."

⁴⁰ When the captain had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned with the hand to the people. When there was a deep silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language. He said,

Acts 21

21:1-6

Why did Paul and his friends find the disciples at Tyre?

[21:3]

Paul and his friends found the disciples at Tyre because they did not know where the disciples were in Tyre. When Paul and his friends found the disciples they were in Tyre for seven days while merchants unloaded cargo from the ship.

See: [Disciple](#)

See Map: Cos; Rhodes; Patara; Phoenicia; Cyprus; Syria; Tyre

Why did the disciples at Tyre urge Paul not to go to Jerusalem?

[21:4]

The disciples at Tyre did not want Paul not to go to Jerusalem because they did not want Paul to suffer and go to prison in Jerusalem. However, the Holy Spirit was sending Paul to Jerusalem to suffer (see: Acts 19:21; 20:22-23). The disciples at Tyre did not tell Paul what the Holy Spirit told them to say when they told Paul not to go. Instead, they told Paul to not go because the Holy Spirit said Paul will suffer in Jerusalem. Luke wrote more about this when the same thing happened in Caesarea (see: Acts 21:12).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

See Map: Tyre; Jerusalem; Caesarea

21:7-14

How was Philip an "evangelist"?

[21:8]

Scholars have several ideas of how Philip was an "evangelist" (εὐαγγελιστής/2099). He was not the same Philip who was an apostle (see: Luke 6:13-14).

1. He helped people to believe in Jesus in Samaria and Judea.
2. God gave him the gift of "evangelist."
3. He started the church at Caesarea.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Samaria; Judea; Ptolemais; Caesarea

Why did Paul and his friends stay for several days in Philip's house?

[21:8]

Scholars say there were two reasons why Paul and his friends stayed in Philip's house for several days.

1. Philip's daughters prophesied to Paul and encouraged him.
2. Philip told Luke about the Christians in Jerusalem (see: 6:5).

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did Luke write Philip's daughters were virgins?

[21:9] Luke wrote Philip's daughters were virgins because they were under sixteen years of age and not married. Some ancient pagan leaders wanted people who served in their temples to be virgins. However, Christians did not have to be virgins to prophesy or serve (see: 1 Corinthians 9:5).

See: [Serve](#); [Temple](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Serve](#)

How did God fulfill Agabus' prophecy?

[21:10, 21:11]

Some scholars think God did not fulfill all of Agabus' prophecy because the Romans in Jerusalem tied Paul's feet and hands. Other scholars think God fulfilled all of Agabus' prophecy because the Jews in Jerusalem accused Paul of doing evil things and made the Romans tie his feet and hands.

See: Acts 23:27

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#) ; [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did the Holy Spirit give prophecies to say Paul will suffer in Jerusalem?

[21:11]

The Holy Spirit gave prophecies to say Paul will suffer in Jerusalem. The Jewish enemies of Paul will not be able to say God judged Paul because he preached a wrong gospel. These Jews were wrong to think that Gentiles need to become Jews before they became Christians (see: Acts 15:1-29). The prophecies stopped people from thinking wrong things about how Paul served God. The church continued to grow after Paul went to Jerusalem.

See: [Church](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Gentile](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

Why did the Christians say, "May the will of the Lord be done"?

[21:14]

The Christian said, "May the will of the Lord be done," because they finally accepted God's plan for Paul to suffer in Jerusalem. They agreed with Paul and prayed for the things to happen as God said (see: Luke 2:42).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Will of God](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

21:15-26

Why did Luke write they went up to Jerusalem?

[21:15]

Luke wrote they went up to Jerusalem because Jerusalem was on a mountain. Even when people traveled from the north to Jerusalem the Bible wrote they went up to Jerusalem.

See Map: Jerusalem; Caesarea; Cyprus

Who was this James?

[21:18]

This James was the brother of Jesus. He was the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

See: [Family of Jesus](#); [Family of Jesus](#)

Why did not any of the other apostles meet Paul?

[21:18]

None of the other apostles met Paul because none of them were in Jerusalem. All of the other apostles left Jerusalem to go and tell people about Jesus.

See: [Apostle](#)

When did the things God did for the Gentiles happen?

[21:19]

The things God did for the Gentiles happened after Paul visited Jerusalem (see: Acts 15). This was during Paul's second and third missionary journeys.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

What vow did the four men make?

[21:23]

The four men vowed a Nazirite Vow (see: Numbers 6:14-20). At the end of the time of the vow, the person who made the vow shaved their heads and offered sacrifices. James and the leaders did not ask Paul to take the Nazirite Vow himself. However, they thought if Paul paid for the sacrifices of the four men, then the Jews will know it was wrong to say Paul did not keep the law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did Luke write in verse 25?

[21:25]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that the Gentiles do not do these things Older and more copies of the Greek New Testament do not say this. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Why did James repeat the letter from Acts 15?

[21:25]

James repeated the letter from Acts 15 because he wanted everyone to know the church in Jerusalem did not change what they thought about Gentile Christians. That is, even though the Jerusalem church asked Paul to pay for sacrifices in the Law of Moses, they still did not ask Gentile Christians to become Jews.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Gentile](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Law of Moses](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

21:27-36

How did the Jews from Asia lay hands on Paul?

[21:27]

The Jews from Asia laid hands on Paul. That is, they tried to hurt or kill Paul.

See Map: Asia

How did the Jews from Asia say wrong things about Paul?

[21:28]

The Jews from Asia lied about Paul by saying Paul spoke against the Jews, the Law of Moses, and the temple. They also lied and said that Paul brought a Gentile into a part of the temple where Gentiles were not supposed to go.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

See Map: Asia

Why did they close the doors of the temple?

[21:30]

They closed the doors of the temple so the crowd in an uproar will not defile the temple. If the crowd killed Paul in the temple it will defile the temple.

See: [Temple](#)

Who was “the chief captain of the cohort”?

[21:31]

“The chief captain of the cohort” was a Roman officer. He commanded between six hundred and one thousand Roman soldiers.

Where was the fortress?

[21:34]

The fortress was a tower northwest of the temple. It was called the Antonia tower. A person was able to see the temple from the tower. It was used to protect the temple.

See: [Temple](#)

Why did the crowd shout, “Away with him!”?

[21:36]

Some scholars think the crowd shouted, “Away with him!” because they wanted to kill Paul. Fewer scholars think they wanted to take Paul away and judge him.

See: 22:22; Luke 23:18

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

21:37-40

Why did the captain ask Paul if he was the Egyptian who started a rebellion?

[21:38]

The captain asked Paul if he was the Egyptian who started a rebellion because Paul spoke Greek. Many people in Egypt spoke Greek. Paul defended himself by saying he was a Jew from the city of Tarsus. That gave him Roman citizenship.

See: [Citizen](#)

See Map: Egypt; Tarsus

Who were the “Assassins”?

[21:38]

The “Assassins” were a group of certain people who fought against the Romans. They carried small knives and they killed people in crowds at festivals.

Why was Tarsus an important city?

[21:39]

Tarsus was an important city because many people lived there and they ruled themselves. Many people in Tarsus were rich.

How did Paul speak in the Hebrew language?

[21:40]

Some scholars think Paul spoke Aramaic. Aramaic was the language the Jews spoke when they lived in Babylon. At this time, the people in Israel spoke Aramaic. Only certain Jewish teachers read or spoke Hebrew. Fewer scholars think the Jews in Jerusalem read the Hebrew Old Testament.

See: [Babylon](#); [Babylon](#)

See Map: Babylon

Chapter 22

¹ "Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense which I will now make to you."

² When the crowd heard Paul speak to them in the Hebrew language, they became quiet. He said,

³ "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel. I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers. I am zealous for God, just as all of you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, binding up and delivering to prison both men and women, ⁵ as the high priest and all the elders can testify. I received letters from them for the brothers in Damascus, and I went there to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished. ⁶ It happened that when I was traveling and nearing Damascus, about noon suddenly a great light from heaven began to shine around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

⁸ I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?'

He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

⁹ Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me.

¹⁰ I said, 'What should I do, Lord?'

The Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus. There you will be told everything that has been appointed for you to do.' ¹¹ I could not see because of that light's brightness, and being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. ¹² There I met a man named Ananias, a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there. ¹³ He came to me, stood by me, and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' In that very hour I saw him. ¹⁴ Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice coming from his own mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be a witness for him to all men about what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now why are you waiting? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.' ¹⁷ After I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, a trance came on me. ¹⁸ I saw him say to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' ¹⁹ I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you in every synagogue. ²⁰ When the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled, I also was standing by and agreeing, and I was guarding the cloaks of those who killed him.' ²¹ But he said to me, 'Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

²² They listened to him until that statement. Then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not right that he should live." ²³ As they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴ the chief captain commanded Paul to be brought into the fortress. He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging, so that he himself might know why they were shouting against him like that. ²⁵ When they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?"

²⁶ When the centurion heard this, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen." ²⁷ The chief captain came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

Paul said, "Yes."

²⁸ The chief captain answered, "It was only with a large amount of money that I acquired citizenship."

But Paul said, "I was born a Roman citizen." ²⁹ Then the men who were going to question him left him immediately. The chief captain also was afraid, when he learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, because he had tied him up.

³⁰ On the next day, the chief captain wanted to know for certain about the Jews' accusations against Paul. So he untied his bonds and ordered the chief priests and all the council to meet. Then he brought Paul down and placed him in their midst.

Acts 22

22:1-21

Why did speaking in Hebrew make the crowd quiet?

[22:2]

Speaking in Hebrew made the crowd quiet. When they heard Paul speaking Hebrew, they knew Paul was a Jew.

Who was Gamaliel?

[22:3]

Gamaliel was a Pharisee and teacher in Jerusalem. People respected this man. He taught many other Jewish teachers.

See: Acts 5:34

How did Paul study at the feet of Gamaliel?

[22:3]

When Paul he studied at the feet of Gamaliel, he used a metaphor. Gamaliel taught Paul. Some scholars think Gamaliel taught and raised Paul. Other scholars think Gamaliel taught Paul but he did not raise him. Because Gamaliel taught Paul, Paul had the best education in the Law of Moses and the things the Jews taught.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul say he was zealous for God?

[22:3]

Paul said he was 'zealous' (ζηλωτής/g2207) for God because he wanted the Jewish crowd to know he was not angry at them for beating him and wanting to kill him. He did the same things to Christians before he believed in Jesus. What was the Way? "The way" was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

Why was the high priest able to bring Christians from another country to Jerusalem in bonds?

[22:4]

At that time the high priest in Jerusalem had permission to bring back a prisoner to Jerusalem from other areas under Roman control. Saul looked for Christians who left Jerusalem when the people persecuted Christians (see: Acts 8:1).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See Map: Jerusalem

How did Paul persecute Jesus?

[22:7]

Paul persecuted Jesus when he persecuted the followers of Jesus. That is, Christians represented Jesus (see: Luke 10:16).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul say those with him did not understand the voice of Jesus?

[22:9]

Paul said those with him did not understand the voice of Jesus, because Jesus spoke only to Paul. Why did Paul say his old name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him?

Paul said his name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him. Perhaps he did this because Paul wanted to say exactly what Jesus said to him.

See: Acts 9:4

How did Paul call Jesus “Lord”?

[22:10]

Paul called Jesus “Lord” two times. The first time Paul gave respect in the same way people gave respect to any leader. Paul did not know it was Jesus (see: Acts 22:8). The second time Paul knew Jesus reigned over everything and everyone. Paul was ready to obey Jesus (see: Acts 22:10).

See: [Lord](#)

Why did Jesus say things were appointed for Paul to do?

[22:10]

Jesus said things were appointed for Paul to do and God wanted Paul to be a part of his plan. Because Jesus said these things to Paul, Paul waited to hear what God had appointed for him to do.

What did it mean that Ananias was devout according to the Law of Moses?

[22:12]

When Paul said Ananias was devout according to the Law of Moses, he meant that Ananias obeyed the Lord of Moses. Ananias was also a Christian.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Ananias call Paul “brother”?

[22:13]

Ananias called Paul “brother”(αδελφος/g0080) because Ananias knew Paul was a Christian.

See: [Family of God](#)

Why did Ananias tell Paul to be baptized in water?

[22:16]

Ananias told Paul to be baptized in water because Paul needed to make others aware he believed in Jesus.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

When did Paul return to Jerusalem?

[22:17]

Some scholars think Paul returned to Jerusalem for a brief visit after becoming a Christian. Other scholars think Paul did not return to Jerusalem until three years after he became a Christian.

See: Acts 9:26-30

What was a “vision”?

[22:17]

See: [Vision](#)

What was meant by the words, “they will not accept your testimony about me”?

[22:18]

Jesus told Paul that people would not accept the testimony about Jesus. That is, people would not believe in Jesus when Paul told them about Jesus. Scholars think this was because they would not be able to believe Paul since had persecuted people for believing in Jesus.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul talk about Gentiles?

[22:21]

Paul talked about Gentiles because God wanted everyone to hear about Jesus. Paul did that even though he knew the Jews would become angry.

See: [Gentile](#)

22:22-29

Why did the Jewish crowd want to kill Paul when he talked about Gentiles?

[22:22]

The Jewish crowd did not think God wanted to do anything good for the Gentiles. They forgot God cared about Gentiles (see: Genesis 12:3). Jews hated the Gentiles because they thought they were evil. Because they hated the Gentiles, this made them want to kill Paul.

See: [Gentile](#)

Why did the Jewish crowd shout, take off their cloaks, and throw dust?

[22:23]

Some scholars think the crowds were taking off their cloaks because they were preparing to fight Paul. Other scholars think that taking off cloaks and making dust was a way of rejecting the person speaking. Other scholars think this was a sign that they believed Paul was blaspheming God.

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What was scourging?

[22:24]

Scourging was a type of whipping. People were whipped with pieces of bone and metal sown into the leather whip. It caused permanent physical damage and sometimes people died.

Why did Paul’s Roman citizenship stop the soldiers from scourging him?

[22:25, 22:26]

According to Roman law, it was not permitted to scourge a person who was a Roman citizen. It was also not permitted to punish a Roman citizen without first having a trial to determine guilt.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How did the chief captain pay a large amount of money for his citizenship?

[22:28]

Roman Citizenship was often sold for money. Often it was a bribe. Certain Roman leaders became wealthy from selling citizenships. The chief captain used this to become an officer in the Roman army.

See: [Citizen](#)

22:30

What was the council?

[22:30]

See: Jewish Council-Sanhedrin

Chapter 23

¹ Paul looked directly at the council members and said, "Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." ² The high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

³ Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall. Are you sitting to judge me by the law, yet order me to be struck, against the law?"

⁴ Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?"

⁵ Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, 'You must not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

⁶ When Paul saw that the one part of the council were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he spoke loudly in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is because I have the hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am being judged." ⁷ When he said this, an argument began between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the crowd was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge all of them.

⁹ So a large uproar occurred, and some of the scribes belonging to the Pharisees stood up and argued, saying, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" ¹⁰ When there arose a great argument, the chief captain feared that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, so he commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among the council members, and bring him into the fortress.

¹¹ The following night the Lord stood beside him and said, "Have courage, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

¹² When it became day, some Jews formed a conspiracy and put themselves under an oath, saying that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty men who formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have sworn a great oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ Now, therefore, let the council formally request the chief captain to bring him down to you, as if you would decide his case more precisely. As for us, we are ready to kill him before he comes here."

¹⁶ But Paul's sister's son heard that they were lying in wait, so he went and entered the fortress and told Paul.

¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to report to him."

¹⁸ So the centurion took the young man and brought him to the chief captain and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him, and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you."

¹⁹ The chief captain took him by the hand to a private place and asked him, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

²⁰ The young man said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring down Paul tomorrow to the council, as if they were going to ask more precisely about his case. ²¹ But do not be persuaded by them, because there are more than forty men who are lying in wait for him. They have put themselves under oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. Even now they are ready, waiting for your approval."

²² So the chief captain let the young man go, after instructing him, "Tell no one that you have reported these things to me."

²³ Then he called to him two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen also, and two hundred spearmen. You will leave at the third hour of the night." ²⁴ He also ordered them to provide animals which Paul could ride and to take him safely to Felix the governor.

²⁵ Then he wrote a letter like this:

²⁶ "Claudius Lysias,
To the most excellent Governor Felix,
Greetings.

²⁷ This man was arrested by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, since I learned that he was a Roman citizen. ²⁸ I wanted to know why they accused him, so I took him down to their council. ²⁹ I learned that he was being accused about questions concerning their own law, but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment. ³⁰ Then it was reported to me that there was a plot against the man, so I immediately sent him to you and instructed his accusers also to bring their charges against him in your presence. Farewell."

³¹ So the soldiers obeyed their orders. They took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² On the next day, most of the soldiers left the horsemen to go with him and they themselves returned to the fortress. ³³ When the horsemen reached Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. ³⁴ When the governor read the letter, he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, "I will hear you fully when your accusers come here." Then he commanded him to be kept in Herod's government headquarters.

Acts 23

23:1-11

Why did Paul look directly at the council?

[23:1]

Paul looked directly at the council because he did not fear them. Some scholars think Paul was confident because he was also confident of the message he was about to give to them. He knew he was in God's will. He also knew the Holy Spirit led him.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Will of God](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

When did Paul have a good "conscience"?

[23:1]

Some scholars think Paul always had a good "conscience" (συνείδησις/g4893). That is, he always thought he did the right things. He even thought this when he persecuted Christians. Other scholars think Paul had a good "conscience" only after he became a Christian.

Paul wanted the Jewish council to know that he believed he did nothing wrong.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did the high priest command someone to strike Paul on the mouth?

[23:2]

Some scholars think Ananias had someone strike Paul on the mouth because they did not like something Paul said. Other scholars think Ananias was a man with a quick temper to become very angry.

See: [High Priest](#)

What was a whitewashed wall?

[23:3]

A whitewashed wall was a crumbling or decaying wall painted to make it look better. Whitewashed walls were usually walls facing streets. This was a metaphor. Scholars think Paul was saying that they wanted

other people to think they did things that honor God. However, they did not want to do things that honor God. They wanted to do evil things. Paul thought that Ananias was being a hypocrite.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

Why did Paul call the high priest a whitewashed wall?

[23:3]

Paul called the high priest a whitewashed wall to say the high priest did not obey the Law of Moses himself even when he judged Paul for not obeying the law of Moses (see: Leviticus 19:15).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Paul not know the high priest?

[23:5]

Scholars think Paul did not know the high priest because Paul had been away from Jerusalem. Also, the high priest did not sit in his usual seat because the Roman leader wanted the Jewish council to meet.

See: Exodus 22:28

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

Why did Paul say he was a Pharisee?

[23:6]

Scholars think Paul knew he would not receive justice from the council. Paul had been a Pharisee. He knew the Pharisees believed in the resurrection. Therefore, Paul spoke about the resurrection. This caused people in the Jewish council to fight with one another.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

How did Jesus stand beside Paul and speak to Paul?

[23:11]

Some scholars think Jesus stood beside Paul and helped him. Other scholars think Paul had a vision of Jesus standing with him. Other scholars think Paul must have dreamed that the Lord encouraged him.

See: [Vision](#)

23:12-22

What was meant by the words, “called a curse down upon themselves with an oath”?

[23:14]

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#); [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why did the Jews want to kill Paul on the way to the council?

[23:15]

Some scholars think a group of Jews were very disappointed that the Jewish council did not kill Paul. They made a plan to have the council bring Paul back to answer more questions. They wanted to kill Paul while he was on his way to speak to the council once again.

See: [Jewish Council \(Sanhedrin\)](#)

23:23-35**Why did the chief captain send Paul to Caesarea?**

[23:23]

The Roman soldier sent Paul to Caesarea because Paul was a Roman citizen. Roman law required the chief captain to keep Roman citizens safe. The chief captain sent Paul to Caesarea because he thought Paul would be safer there.

See: [Citizen](#)

See Map: Caesarea

Who was Claudius Lysias?

[23:26]

Claudius Lysias was the chief captain, a Roman soldier and leader. He was born a Greek because Lysias was a Greek name. Claudius was the name of a Roman Emperor. The chief captain took the name of the Roman Emperor who reigned when he became a Roman citizen.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)**Why did the chief captain write that he rescued Paul from the Jews when he knew Paul was a Roman citizen?**

[23:27]

The Roman soldier wrote that he rescued Paul from the Jews when he knew Paul was a Roman citizen because he wanted the governor to think he protected Paul. He wanted the governor to know that he wanted to know for himself if Paul was guilty of the things people said he did.

See: [Citizen](#)**Where was Antipatris?**

[23:31]

See Map: Antipatris

Why did the governor ask Paul what province he was from?

[23:34]

The governor asked Paul what area he was from because Roman leaders usually heard trials for people from the places over which they reigned. Some scholars think the province of Cilicia was a large territory and the Roman leader over it did not want to hear a small court case. Therefore, Felix decided to hear Paul's case. Other scholars think the governor wanted an easy way to give Paul's case to another Roman ruler.

See Map: Cilicia

What was Herod's government headquarters?

[23:35]

Herod's government headquarters was a palace Herod the Great built. It was in Caesarea.

See: [King Herod](#)

See Map: Caesarea

Chapter 24

¹ After five days, Ananias the high priest, certain elders, and an orator named Tertullus went there. These men brought charges against Paul before the governor. ² When Paul stood before the governor, Tertullus began to accuse him and said to the governor, "Because of you we have great peace, and your foresight brings good reform to our nation;

³ so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do, most excellent Felix. ⁴ So that I detain you no more, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. ⁵ For we have found this man to be a pest and one who causes all the Jews throughout the world to rebel. He is a leader of the Nazarene sect. ⁶ He even tried to desecrate the temple, so we arrested him. ^[1]⁷^[2]⁸ When you examine Paul about all these matters, you will be able to learn about all the things of which we are accusing him." ⁹ The Jews also joined in the accusation, affirming that these charges were true.

¹⁰ But when the governor motioned for Paul to speak, Paul answered, "I understand that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, and so I gladly explain myself to you.

¹¹ You can learn for yourself that it has not been more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. ¹² When they found me in the temple, I did not argue with anyone, and I did not stir up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. ¹³ They cannot prove to you the accusations they are now making against me. ¹⁴ But I confess this to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things that are according to the law and that has been written in the prophets. ¹⁵ I have a hope in God, which these men also have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶ So I always strive to have a blameless conscience before God and human beings. ¹⁷ Now after many years I came to give alms to my nation and present sacrifices. ¹⁸ When I did this, certain Jews from Asia found me in a purification ceremony in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar. ¹⁹ These men ought to be before you now and accuse me, if they have anything. ²⁰ Or else, these same men should say what wrong they found in me when I stood before the Jewish council, ²¹ unless it is about this one thing that I shouted out when I stood among them, 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'"

²² Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, postponed the hearing. He said, "When Lysias the commander comes down from Jerusalem, I will decide your case." ²³ Then he commanded the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody, but to have some freedom so that none of his friends would be prevented from attending to his needs.

²⁴ After some days, Felix returned with Drusilla his wife, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and he heard from him about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ But when Paul reasoned with him about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for now. But when I have time later on, I will send for you." ²⁶ At the same time he hoped that Paul would give money to him, so he often sent for him and spoke with him. ²⁷ But when two years passed, Porcius Festus became the governor after Felix, but Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul bound.

Footnotes

24:6 ^[1]Some ancient copies add,

24:7 ^[2]Some ancient copies have for verse 7 and the beginning of verse 8,

Acts 24

24:1-9

What was an orator?

[24:1]

An orator was a person who made money speaking in front of many other people. The Jews hired Tertullus to speak against Paul in the Roman court. Scholars do not know if Tertullus was Jewish or not.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#); [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

What was the Nazarene sect?

[24:5]

The Nazarene sect was a group of followers of the Man of Nazareth. The Man of Nazareth is Jesus. However, the orator wanted to make Felix think these people will cause fighting. The orator wanted Felix to judge Paul.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What did Luke write in verse 6-7?

[24:6, 24:7]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament say that the Jews wanted to judge Paul by their law but Lysias took Paul away from them. Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not know whether Luke wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How did the Jews join the accusation against Paul?

[24:9]

The Jews joined the accusation against Paul by saying again and again these lies were really true.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

24:10-21

How did Paul talk to the governor?

[24:10, 24:11]

Paul talked to the governor with confidence because the governor had judged the Jews for years. Paul was glad because Paul did not act against Jewish laws. Paul believed the governor would make the right judgment.

Why did Paul say it was not more than twelve days since he went to Jerusalem to worship?

[24:11]

Scholars think it would have been very easy for the governor to find out whether Paul was guilty of doing evil things. This is because it had only been a period of twelve days.

See: [Worship](#)

Why was Christianity called the Way?

[24:14]

“The way” was a name for Christians (see: Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

See: John 14:6

24:22-27

Why did Felix say he will decide Paul's case when Lysias came?

[24:22]

Felix said he will decide Paul's case when Lysias came because Felix did not want to make a decision. Some scholars think Felix knew about the Christians and did not want to make things difficult for Christians.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

Why did Felix give Paul some freedom?

[24:23]

Felix gave Paul some freedom because he knew Paul did not do the crimes of which he was accused. Also, Paul was a Roman citizen.

See: [Citizen](#)

Why did Luke write Drusilla was Jewish?

[24:24]

Luke wrote Drusilla was Jewish because the wife of the governor influenced the governor's thinking. Some scholars think her faith made Felix listen to Paul. Other scholars think Felix wanted Paul to give him personal advice in the same way some other Roman leaders paid people to give them personal advice.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Felix become frightened?

[24:25]

Felix became frightened because he and his wife, Drusilla, did many evil things. Paul's speech about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment reminded Felix of the evil things he did. However, Felix did not repent.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did Felix want Paul to give him money?

[24:26]

Felix wanted Paul to give him money because Felix wanted to be rich from bribes. Some scholars think Paul received an inheritance. Other scholars think Felix wanted Paul's friends to give Felix money.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

Chapter 25

¹ Now, Festus entered the province, and after three days, he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem. ² The chief priests and the prominent Jews brought their charges against Paul, and they asked Festus earnestly — ³ asking him to do them a favor against Paul—to summon him to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way. ⁴ Festus answered that Paul was being held in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there soon. ⁵ "Therefore, those who can," he said, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

⁶ Festus stayed not more than eight or ten days and then he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat on the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be brought to him. ⁷ When he arrived, the Jews from Jerusalem stood nearby, and they brought many serious charges which they could not prove.

⁸ Paul defended himself and said, "I have committed no sin against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

⁹ But Festus wanted to gain the favor of the Jews, and so he answered Paul and said, "Do you want to go up to Jerusalem and to be judged by me about these things there?" ¹⁰ Paul said, "I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged. I have wronged no Jews, just as you also very well know. ¹¹ Though if I have done wrong and if I have done what is worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if their accusations are nothing, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar." ¹² After Festus talked with the council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

¹³ Now after some days, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay an official visit to Festus. ¹⁴ After they had been there for many days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king; he said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. ¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against this man to me, and they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him. ¹⁶ I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had faced his accusers and received an opportunity to defend himself against the charges. ¹⁷ Therefore, when they came together here, I did not wait, but the next day I sat in the judgment seat and I ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they charged him with nothing that I considered wickedness. ¹⁹ Instead, they had certain disputes with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who was dead, whom Paul claims to be alive. ²⁰ I was perplexed about how to investigate this matter, and so I asked him if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial there about these charges. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held in custody until I could send him to Caesar." ²² Agrippa spoke to Festus, "I would also like to listen to this man." "Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

²³ So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with much ceremony; they came into the hall with the military officers and with the prominent men of the city. When Festus spoke the command, Paul was brought to them. ²⁴ Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you men who are here with us, you see this man; all the multitude of Jews appealed to me in Jerusalem and here also, and they shouted to me that he should no longer live. ²⁵ I found he had done nothing worthy of death; but because he appealed to the emperor, I decided to send him to Rome. ²⁶ But I do not have anything certain to write to my lord. For this reason, I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa, so that I might have something more to write about the case. ²⁷ For it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state the charges against him."

Acts 25

25:1-12

Where was Caesarea and Jerusalem?

[25:1]

See Map: Caesarea; Jerusalem

Why did Festus refuse to bring Paul to Jerusalem?

[25:3]

Festus refused to bring Paul to Jerusalem. Some scholars think that because Paul was a Roman citizen, Festus could not transfer Paul to the court in Jerusalem. Other scholars think Festus did not want to stay in Jerusalem long enough for there to be a trial.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#); [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

What was a “judgment seat”?

[25:6]

A “judgment seat” was an actual chair in a court upon which the governing ruler sat to make legal decisions for the court.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#); [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

Why did Paul appeal to Caesar?

[25:10]

Any Roman citizen accused of crimes for which they could be killed, had the right to appeal to Caesar. The Jewish leaders wanted Paul to be killed. People accused Paul of doing wrong things, but no one tried to find out if he did these things. Felix had the opportunity and the right to release Paul earlier. Because Felix did not release Paul, Paul wanted the Roman emperor to judge him and release him.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#); [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

25:13-22**Who were the chief priests and elders of the Jews?**

[25:15]

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

What was a sentence of condemnation?

[25:15]

A “sentence of condemnation” was a decision made by the courts to convict a person of a crime. In this case, the Jews were hoping for Paul to be judged and killed.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What was the “religion” about which Festus spoke?

[25:19]

Some scholars think when Festus spoke about a “religion”(δαισινδαιμονία/g1175), he was speaking about the Jewish religion. That is, it was how the Jews followed the Law of Moses and did certain things to worship God. Fewer scholars think when Festus spoke about a religion, he was speaking about Christians.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

Why did Agrippa say he wanted to hear Paul?

[25:22]

Agrippa said he wanted to hear Paul. Agrippa wanted to be able to give advice to Festus about Paul (see: 25:26). Also, sometimes Roman leaders wanted to hear people teach about God (see: Luke 23:8).

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

25:23-27

Why did Festus not have something more to write about Paul's case?

[25:26]

Festus did not have anything more to write about Paul's case because there was no evidence that Paul did something wrong. Therefore, Festus did not think Paul was guilty of the things people said he did.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

Chapter 26

¹ So Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense.

² "I consider myself happy, King Agrippa, to make my case before you today against all the accusations of the Jews, ³ especially because you are an expert in all the Jewish customs and questions. So I beg you to hear me patiently. ⁴ Truly, all the Jews know how I lived from my youth in my own nation and at Jerusalem. ⁵ They have known about me from the beginning, if they are willing to admit it, that I lived as a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion. ⁶ Now I stand here to be judged because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. ⁷ It is this promise that our twelve tribes hope to receive as they worship God earnestly night and day, and it is for this hope, king, that the Jews are accusing me. ⁸ Why should any of you judge it to be incredible that God raises the dead? ⁹ Now indeed, I myself thought that I should do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ I did these in Jerusalem. I locked up in prison many of God's holy people by the authority I received from the chief priests; and when they were killed, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ I punished them many times in all the synagogues and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was furiously enraged against them and I persecuted them even to foreign cities. ¹² While I was doing this, I went to Damascus with authority and orders from the chief priests; ¹³ and on the way there, in the middle of the day, king, I saw a light from heaven that was brighter than the sun, and it shone around both me and the men who were traveling with me. ¹⁴ When we all fell to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me that said in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.' ¹⁵ Then I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord replied, 'I am Jesus whom you persecute. ¹⁶ Now get up and stand on your feet; because for this purpose I appeared to you, to appoint you to be a servant and a witness concerning the things that you know about me now and the things that I will show to you later; ¹⁷ and I will rescue you from the people and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, so that they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance that I give to them who are sanctified by faith in me.' ¹⁹ Therefore, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision; ²⁰ but, to those in Damascus first, and then at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, I gave them the message that that they should repent and turn to God, doing deeds worthy of repentance. ²¹ For this cause the Jews arrested me in the temple and tried to kill me. ²² Therefore I have received the help that comes from God until this very day, and I stand and testify to both small and great about nothing more than what the prophets and Moses said would happen— ²³ that Christ must suffer, and by being the first to rise from the dead he would proclaim light to our own people and to the Gentiles."

²⁴ As Paul completed his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are insane; your great learning makes you insane." ²⁵ But Paul said, "I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I am declaring words of truth and sound judgment. ²⁶ For the king knows about these things; and so I speak boldly to him, for I am persuaded that none of this is hidden from him; for this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷ Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe." ²⁸ Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?"

²⁹ Paul said, "I pray to God, that whether in a short or long time, not you only, but also all that hear me today, would be like me, but without these prison chains."

³⁰ Then the king stood up, and the governor, and Bernice also, and those who were sitting with them; ³¹ when they left the hall, they talked to one another and said, "This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds."

³² Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been freed if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Acts 26

26:1-11

Why did Paul stretch out his hand?

[26:1]

Some scholars think it was common in those days to raise a hand toward the king in order to greet him. Other scholars think Paul stretched out his hand toward the king because it indicated he was about to make a speech.

What did Paul mean by saying he was happy?

[26:2]

When Paul said he was happy, he meant he felt fortunate or blessed to make his case before King Agrippa. King Agrippa was also a Roman and he knew Roman laws.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Who were the fathers?

[26:6]

Some scholars think the fathers about which Paul spoke were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about other ancestors of Israel.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

What was the promise God made to the fathers?

[26:6]

God promised many things to these fathers. God promised the messiah, resurrection from the dead, the kingdom of God, and eternal life with God the Father.

See: [God the Father](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Kingdom of God](#); [Eternal Life](#); [God the Father](#)

What did Paul mean when he said, “I cast my vote against them”?

[26:10]

Some scholars think Paul meant that he wanted Christians to be punished and killed. More scholars do not think Paul was a ruler on the Jewish council.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What did it mean to “blaspheme”?

[26:11]

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

26:12-18

Why did Jesus say, “It is hard for you to kick a goad”?

[26:14]

Scholars think that when Jesus said, “It is hard for you to kick a goad” he used a metaphor. In ancient times, people used a goad to make an ox move. If an ox kicked against the stick, this caused more discomfort for the ox. Scholars think Jesus said this to Paul in order to tell Paul that he was resisting God.

That is, when Paul wanted to persecute Christians, this fought against God. It was not what God wanted Paul to do.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How did Paul persecute Jesus?

[26:14]

Paul persecuted Jesus when he persecuted Christians. When he did this, he persecuted Jesus (see: Luke 10:16).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul use his old name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him?

[26:14]

Paul said his old name “Saul” when he talked about when Jesus appeared to him because Paul wanted to say exactly what Jesus said to Paul.

How was Paul able to “open their eyes”?

[26:18]

Paul was able to open people’s eyes. This is a metaphor. God gave Paul the ability to teach the Gentiles about sin. Before Paul taught them, the Gentiles did not know they sinned. They now knew they sinned.

See: [Sin](#); [Gentile](#); [Sin](#)

What did it mean to turn, “from darkness to light”?

[26:18]

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

26:19-23

What was the heavenly vision?

[26:19]

Scholars think the heavenly vision was the revelation Jesus gave Paul on the road to Damascus.

See: [Vision](#); [Vision](#)

Who were the small and the great?

[26:22]

When Paul wrote about the small and the great, he was speaking about all people. The small included poor and servants. The great included rich people and free people, including King Agrippa.

See: Galatians 3:28; Job 3:19

26:24-32

What did Festus mean when he said, “your great learning makes you insane”?

[26:24]

Scholars give several reasons why Festus said Paul was insane.

1. Festus thought it was insane to believe dead people will become alive again.

2. Festus thought it was insane to believe Jesus became King by suffering and dying.
3. Festus thought it was insane to write a report to government leaders in Rome about becoming alive again.
4. Because King Agrippa was a Jew, he understood Paul. However, he did not think Paul was thinking in the right way.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Advice to translators: Someone who is insane is crazy or is ill and cannot think the right way.

What was meant by the words, “this has not been done in a corner”?

[26:26]

When Paul said, “this has not been done in a corner” he used a metaphor. He meant that all the events that were fulfilled God’s promises and people could see these promises being fulfilled. People saw Jesus resurrected. Paul also said that all these events were prophesied by Moses and the ancient prophets of Israel.

See: [Prophet](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophet](#)

Why did Paul want people to be like him but without prison chains?

[26:29]

Paul wanted people to be like him, but without prison chains. Paul prayed that Agrippa would believe Jesus as Paul believed Jesus. However, Paul did not wish Agrippa to be imprisoned. Paul was imprisoned, but he did not do anything wrong.

Why did the king stand up?

[26:30]

Scholars think that both Agrippa and Festus had heard everything they wanted to hear from Paul. When they stood up, this meant that their meeting had ended.

Chapter 27

¹ When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan company of soldiers. ² We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail along the coast of Asia. So we went to sea. Aristarchus from Thessalonica in Macedonia went with us. ³ The next day we landed at the city of Sidon, where Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to receive their care. ⁴ From there we went to sea and sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island, because the winds were against us. ⁵ When we had sailed across the sea past Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia. ⁶ There, the centurion found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy. He put us on it. ⁷ When we had sailed slowly for many days and had finally arrived with difficulty near Cnidus and the wind no longer allowed us to go that way, we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete, opposite Salmone. ⁸ We sailed along the coast with difficulty, until we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, which is near the city of Lasea.

⁹ We had now taken much time, the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail. So Paul warned them, ¹⁰ and said, "Men, I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." ¹¹ But the centurion was more persuaded by the master and by the owner of the ship than by those things that were spoken by Paul. ¹² Because the harbor was not easy to spend the winter in, most of the sailors advised to sail from there, and if by any means we could reach the city of Phoenix, to spend the winter there. Phoenix is a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest. ¹³ When a south wind began to blow gently, the sailors thought that they had what they needed. So they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. ¹⁴ But after a short time a wind of hurricane force, called the northeaster, began to beat down from the island. ¹⁵ When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind, we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind. ¹⁶ We sailed along the lee of a small island called Cauda, and with difficulty we were able to secure the lifeboat. ¹⁷ When they had hoisted the lifeboat up, they used its ropes to bind the hull of the ship. They were afraid that they should run upon the sandbars of Syrtis, so they lowered the sea anchor and were driven along. ¹⁸ We took such a violent battering by the storm that the next day they began throwing the cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day the sailors threw overboard the ship's equipment with their own hands. ²⁰ When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days, and the great storm still beat upon us, any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned. ²¹ When they had gone long without food, then Paul stood up among the sailors and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crete, so as to get this injury and loss. ²² Now I urge you to take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong, whom also I worship—his angel stood beside me ²⁴ and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and see, God in his kindness has given to you all those who are sailing with you.' ²⁵ Therefore have courage, men! For I trust God that it will happen just as it was told to me. ²⁶ But we must run aground upon some island."

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven this way and that in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors thought that they were approaching some land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found twenty fathoms; after a little while, they took more soundings and found fifteen fathoms. ²⁹ They were afraid that we might crash on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the stern and prayed that morning would come soon. ³⁰ The sailors were looking for a way to abandon the ship and had lowered the lifeboat into the sea, and pretended that they would throw down the anchors from the bow. ³¹ But Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." ³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and let it drift away. ³³ When daylight was coming on, Paul encouraged them all to take some food. He said, "This day is the fourteenth day that you have been on constant guard and have gone without food—you have not eaten anything. ³⁴ So I urge you to share some food, for this is necessary for you to survive. For not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." ³⁵ When he had said this, he took bread and he thanked God in the sight of everyone. Then he broke the bread and began to eat. ³⁶ Then they were all encouraged and they also took food. ³⁷ We were 276 souls on the ship. ³⁸ When they had eaten enough, they made the ship lighter by throwing out the wheat into the sea. ³⁹ When it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a beach, and they discussed whether they could drive the ship onto it. ⁴⁰ So they cut loose the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosed the ropes of the rudders and raised the foresail to the wind;

and so they headed to the beach. ⁴¹ But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow was stuck there and remained unmovable, and the stern was broken up by the force of the waves. ⁴² The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of them could swim away and escape. ⁴³ But the centurion wanted to save Paul, so he stopped their plan; and he ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. ⁴⁴ Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to land.

Acts 27

27:1-12

Why did Luke write “we”?

[27:1]

Luke wrote “we” because he went with Paul on the ship. Luke was writing about things that he saw. Some scholars think Luke and Aristarchus were Paul’s servants on the ship. Other scholars think “we” included everyone on the ship.

What was the Imperial Regiment?

[27:1]

The Imperial Regiment was a group of eighty soldiers. This regiment was under the command of a centurion named Julius.

Where was Adramyttium?

[27:2]

See Map: Adramyttium

Why did Paul go to his friends “to receive their care”?

[27:3]

When Paul received the care of his friends, it meant they cared for Paul and helped him.

Where was Cyprus, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Myra, and Lycia?

[27:4, 27:5]

See Map: Cyprus; Cilicia; Pamphylia; Myra; Lycia

What was an Alexandrian ship?

[27:6]

An Alexandrian ship was a ship from Egypt. These ships were very large and carried a lot of grain.

See: [Grain \(Grain Offering\)](#)

See Map: Mediterranean Sea; Alexandria; Egypt; Rome; Italy; Cnidus; Salmone; Fair Havens; Lasea

When was the Jewish Fast?

[27:9]

The Jewish fast was usually in September or October. It was also called the Day of Atonement.

See: [Fasting](#); [Fasting](#)

How did Paul know the voyage will bring loss?

[27:10]

Paul knew the voyage will bring loss because he was already in three shipwrecks (see: 2 Corinthians 11:25) and he knew winter storms were dangerous.

See Map: Phoenix; Crete

27:13-38

Why did Paul remind the sailors they did not listen to him?

[27:21]

Paul reminded the sailors they did not listen to him because he wanted them to know he spoke wisely when he first spoke to them. He was hoping they would listen to the things he said now. That is, he was going to give them wise advice once again.

See Map: Crete; Cauda

How did Paul talk about salvation?

[27:22]

Paul talked about salvation from the storm and shipwreck. He was not talking about the forgiveness of sins. Paul wanted them to eat so they will have the strength to survive.

See: [Sin](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#)

What did Paul mean when he said, “not one of you will lose a single hair from his head”?

[27:34]

When Paul said they will not lose a single hair from their head, he used a metaphor. It meant the men would not die in the storm or shipwreck.

Why did they want the ship to be lighter in weight?

[27:38]

They wanted the ship to be lighter in weight so that the ship would not sink and they would be able to get closer to land.

27:39-44

Why did the soldiers want to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping?

[27:42]

The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping because Roman leaders killed Roman soldiers when a prisoner escaped (see: Acts 12:18-19; 16:27). However, God wanted to bring Paul to Rome. The Roman soldier did God’s will when he stopped the soldiers from killing the prisoners.

See: [Will of God](#)

See Map: Rome

Chapter 28

¹ When we were brought safely through, we learned that the island was called Malta. ² The native people offered to us not just ordinary kindness, but they lit a fire and welcomed us all because of the constant rain and cold. ³ But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and placed them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened onto his hand. ⁴ When the native people saw the animal hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "This man certainly is a murderer who has been saved from the sea; Justice does not permit him to live." ⁵ But then he shook the animal into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they watched him for a long time and saw that nothing was wrong with him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

⁷ Now in a nearby place there were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, a man named Publius. He welcomed us and kindly provided for us for three days. ⁸ It happened that the father of Publius was lying afflicted with a fever and dysentery. When Paul went to him, he prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him. ⁹ After this happened, the rest of the people on the island who were sick also came and were healed. ¹⁰ The people also honored us with many honors. When we were preparing to sail, they gave us what we needed.

¹¹ After three months we set sail in a ship that had spent the winter at the island, a ship of Alexandria, with "the twin gods" as its figurehead. ¹² After we landed at the city of Syracuse, we stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we sailed and arrived at the city of Rhegium. After one day a south wind sprang up, and in two days we came to the city of Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. In this way we came to Rome. ¹⁵ From there the brothers, after they heard about us, came to meet us as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Taverns. When Paul saw the brothers, he thanked God and took courage.

¹⁶ When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.

¹⁷ Then it came about that after three days Paul called together those men who were the leaders among the Jews. When they had come together, he said to them, "Brothers, although I have done nothing wrong against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. ¹⁸ After they questioned me, they wished to set me free, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. ¹⁹ But when the Jews spoke against their desire, I was forced to appeal to Caesar, although it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation. ²⁰ For this reason, therefore, I called upon you that I might see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am now wearing this chain."

²¹ Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea about you, nor did any of the brothers come and report or say anything bad about you. ²² But we want to hear from you what you think about this sect, because it is known by us that it is spoken against everywhere."

²³ When they had appointed a day for him, more people came to him at his dwelling place. He presented the matter to them, and testified about the kingdom of God. He tried to persuade them about Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning until evening. ²⁴ Some were convinced about the things which were said, while others did not believe. ²⁵ When they did not agree with one another, they left after Paul had spoken this one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.

²⁶ He said, 'Go to this people and say,
"Hearing you will hear, but you will never understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

²⁷ For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn again,
and I would heal them.'"

28 Therefore, you should know that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen." **29**^[1]

30 Paul lived for two whole years in his own rented house, and he welcomed all who came to him. **31** He was proclaiming the kingdom of God and was teaching the things about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness without being hindered.

Footnotes

28:29 ^[1] Acts 28:29—Some ancient copies have verse 29:

Acts 28

28:1-10

What did it mean that the natives offered more than “ordinary kindness”?

[28:2]

The people of Malta showed the shipwrecked people more than ordinary “kindness”(φιλανθρωπία/g5363). That is, they were more kind to these people than other would have been.

See Map: Malta; Phoenicia

What did it mean that a viper “fastened” onto Paul’s hand”?

[28:3]

Scholars think the viper bit into Paul’s hand and kept hanging on. That is, it attached itself to Paul’s hand.

What was meant by the words, “justice does not permit him to live”?

[28:4]

The people of Malta believed in a goddess named “justice.” This false god judged a person who escaped from captivity. Other scholars think the people in Malta believed that the justice of their god would not let Paul live.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

See Map: Malta

Who was Publius?

[28:7]

Some scholars think Publius was a Roman whom the Roman government appointed Publius to rule the island of Malta. Other scholars think Publius was very rich and many people knew him. He then became the leader of the island.

See Map: Malta

What kind of illness did Publius’ father have?

[28:8]

Scholars think Publius’ father often had fever and dysentery. That is, he was often ill.

How was Publius' father, and the rest of the people healed?

[28:9]

Scholars think Publius' father and the rest of the people were miraculously healed when Paul placed his hands upon them and prayed for them. That is, God healed the people for whom Paul prayed.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

28:11-16

What were "the twin gods"?

[28:11]

"The twin gods" were Castor and Pollux. The Greeks believed these false gods were the sons of another false god, Zeus. The Greeks thought that these gods protected ships. Pagan sailors prayed to them for protection in storms.

See: [Pagan](#); [False gods](#); [Pagan](#)

See Map: Syracuse; Rhegium; Puteoli

Where was Puteoli?

[28:13]

See Map: Puteoli

Who were the "brothers" about whom Luke wrote?

[28:15]

Luke wrote "brothers" (ἀδελφός/g0080) to let his readers know they were Christians. They also included Christian women.

See: [Family of God](#)

What was the market of Appius?

[28:15]

The Market of Appius was a market on a paved road to Rome. The paved road was about 60 kilometers from Rome.

What was the Three Taverns?

[28:15]

The Three Taverns was a place on the Appian Way. It was about 50 kilometers from Rome.

How did the soldier guard Paul?

[28:16]

The soldier guarded Paul with a small chain on Paul's wrist (see: Acts 28:20).

28:17-29

What did Paul mean by the word, "brothers" in this context?

[28:17]

When Paul spoke to the “brothers”(ἀδελφός/g0080) here, he was speaking to the Jewish leaders. They ruled over several synagogues in Rome.

See: [Synagogue](#)

See Map: Rome

What was the hope of Israel?

[28:20]

Scholars say the hope of Israel was two things.

1. They had hope of becoming alive again after death. This was made possible because Jesus died and became alive again.
2. They had hope of the coming of the messiah. This hope was fulfilled when Jesus came to earth.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

What was the “sect” about which the Jewish leaders spoke?

[28:22]

The Jewish leaders wanted to hear from Paul regarding the “sect.” That is, they wanted to know about Christianity and about the things he believed and taught. The Jewish leaders also heard the “sect” was called the Nazarenes.

Advice to translators: A sect is a group of religious people who believe the same thing.

What was meant by the words, “testified about the kingdom of God”?

[28:23]

When Luke wrote that Paul “testified about the kingdom of God,” he meant that Paul taught the Jewish leaders about Jesus. He taught them that Jesus is the messiah whom God promised to Israel.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul say the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[28:25]

Scholars think Paul said the same thing Isaiah wrote because he wanted people to know something. He wanted them to remember what happened when Isaiah lived. At that time, people would not understand what God said to them through the prophets. Now, Paul wanted people to know that the Jewish leaders did not understand what God said to them through the apostles and prophets (see: Isaiah 6:9-10).

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

What did it mean that the people’s hearts had become “dull”?

[28:27]

Some scholars think that when the people’s hearts had become “dull” it meant that the people simply refused to listen and understand God’s messengers. Other scholars think the people’s hearts were dull because they had been disobedient to God’s word for so long, they could no longer understand the things God wanted them to know.

See: [Word of God](#); [Word of God](#)

What did Luke write in verse 29?

[28:29]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words in verse 29. Older and more ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have the words of verse 29. Scholars do not think Luke wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

28:30-31

What did Luke mean when he wrote that Paul taught the things about Jesus “with all boldness”?

[28:31]

Scholars think that during these two years Paul was able to teach anyone and anywhere, and no one attempted to stop him from teaching.

Book: Romans

Introduction to Romans

Overview

Paul explained the gospel in detail to the Roman Christians so they can know how someone can be at peace with God and know how to live in a way that honors God. He also wrote about the role of Israel in God's plan.

See: [Gospel](#)

Who wrote this letter?

The apostle Paul wrote this letter (see: 1:1).

See: [Apostle](#); [Ancient Letters](#)

When did he write it?

Paul wrote this letter while he was staying in the city of Corinth during his third missionary journey.

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

To whom did Paul write?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome. There was already a church there for many years before he wrote. Paul referred to many believers whom he knew in that city (see: 16:3-15). The church had Jewish Christians, but more were Gentile Christians

See: [Church](#); [Gentile](#)

What did Paul write about in this letter?

In this letter, Paul fully described the gospel. He explained that everyone has sinned. God will forgive people and they will be at peace with him only if they believe in Jesus. Then he helped these Christians know how to live in a way that honors God. He also wrote about how Israel rejected God and the future plans God had for the nation.

See: [Sin](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Israel](#)

Why did Paul write to the Romans?

Paul wanted to get them ready for when he was going to visit them. He also wanted them to help him when he travelled to Spain to tell people about Jesus (see: 15:23-29). Perhaps Paul also wrote in order to help the church in Rome to stop fighting with one another.

Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-15)
2. God's power in the gospel (1:16-17)
3. All mankind condemned because of sin (1:18-3:20)
4. Righteousness through Jesus by faith in him (3:21-4:25)
5. Adam and Jesus (5:1-21)
6. Becoming like Jesus in this life (6:1-8:39)
7. God's plan for Israel (9:1-11:36)
8. Helping Christians live in the right way (12:1-15:13)
9. Conclusion and greetings (15:14-16:27)

See: [Gospel](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Sin](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Romans

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ concerning his Son who was a descendant of David according to the flesh. ⁴ Through the Spirit of holiness he was declared with power to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the nations, for the sake of his name. ⁶ Among these nations, you also have been called to belong to Jesus Christ.

⁷ To all in Rome who are beloved of God and called to be his holy people: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. ⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, of how continually I make mention of you. ¹⁰ I always request in my prayers that by any means I may at last be successful now by the will of God in coming to you. ¹¹ For I desire to see you, that I may give you some spiritual gift, in order to strengthen you. ¹² That is, I long to be mutually encouraged among you, through each other's faith, yours and mine. ¹³ Now I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, that I often intended to come to you (but I was hindered until now), in order to have some fruit among you also, just as I have had among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to foreigners, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵ So, as for me, I am ready to proclaim the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, as it has been written, "The righteous will live by faith."

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who through unrighteousness hold back the truth. ¹⁹ This is because that which is known about God is visible to them. For God has enlightened them. ²⁰ For ever since the creation of the world, his invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, having been discerned in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ This is because, although they knew about God, they did not glorify him as God, nor did they give him thanks. Instead, they became foolish in their thoughts, and their senseless hearts were darkened. ²² They claimed to be wise, but they became foolish. ²³ They exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man, of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God delivered them over to the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness, for their bodies to be dishonored among themselves. ²⁵ It is they who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and who worshiped and served the creation instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶ Because of this, God delivered them over to dishonorable lusts, for their women exchanged natural relations for those that were unnatural. ²⁷ In the same way, the men also left their natural relations with women and burned in their lust for one another. These were men who committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves the penalty they deserved for their error.

²⁸ And just as they did not approve of having God in their awareness, he gave them up to a corrupted mind, for them to do those things that are not proper. ²⁹ They have been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, and malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and evil intentions. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventing ways of doing evil; they are disobedient to parents. ³¹ They are senseless, faithless, heartless, and unmerciful. ³² They understand the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death. But not only do they do these things, they also approve of others who do them.

Romans 1 Commentary

1:1-7

How was Paul a servant?

[1:1]

Paul called himself a slave or “servant” (δοῦλος/g1401) of Jesus Christ. Some scholars think that he wanted people to think about Joshua, Moses, and Jonah, who were also called “servants.” More scholars think that Paul was a servant because he wanted to obey and serve God.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

See: Romans 15:16; Titus 1:1

What was an “apostle”?

[1:1]

See: [Apostle](#)

When was the promise made in the “holy scriptures”?

[1:2]

When Paul wrote about promises made the holy scriptures, he was speaking about the Old Testament.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How was Jesus a “descendent of David”?

[1:3]

The Bible prophesied that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David (see: 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6). Jesus was a descendant of David (see: Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).

See: Matthew 9:27; 12:23; 21:9; 22:41-45; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5

See: [Son of David](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Son of David](#)

What was the “Spirit of holiness”?

[1:4]

Paul wrote about the spirit of holiness. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about the Holy Spirit (see: Isaiah 63:10). Other scholars state that it referred to the holiness Christians have (see: 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What was meant by the words, “declared with power to be the Son of God”?

[1:4]

Paul wrote “declared with power to be the Son of God.” Scholars think that God declared Jesus to be the Son of God when Jesus was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What was “received grace and apostleship”?

[1:5]

Paul wrote “received grace and apostleship.” Some scholars he was talking about all Christians. Christians received grace in the same way that Paul did. Other scholars think Paul spoke about the other apostles who, like him, were called by Jesus.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Grace](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

What was the “obedience of faith”?

[1:5]

When Paul wrote about the obedience of faith, he was speaking about obeying God because someone believed in Jesus.

See: Acts 6:7; Romans 16:26

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

1:8-17

How was God a witness?

[1:9]

When God’s people insisted that they were telling the truth, they sometimes said that God was a witness of the things they said. This was a type of oath.

See: Romans 9:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:5, 10

See: [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#)

What did it mean to serve “in my spirit”?

[1:9]

Some scholars think that in his “spirit” meant that Paul completely served God. Other scholars think he was speaking serving God with the power of the Holy Spirit.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What is the “spiritual gift” that Paul wanted to give the Romans?

[1:11]

When Paul wrote about a spiritual gift here, he was speaking about God blessing people (see: Romans 11:29).

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

How did Paul want to “have some fruit”?

[1:13]

He wanted people to believe in Jesus and help them in a way that honors God.

See: Philippians 1:22; Colossians 1:6

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Who are the Gentiles, Greeks, and foreigners?

[1:14]

Gentiles were any non-Jewish people. Many Gentiles were also “Greeks,” because they spoke Greek. “Foreigners” were Gentile people who could not speak Greek (see: 1 Corinthians 14:11).

See: Colossians 3:11

See: [Gentile](#)

What made Paul a “debtor” to everyone?

[1:14]

A “debtor” (ὀφειλέτης/g3781) was someone who owe something to someone (see: Romans 15:27). This was often money. God wanted him to preach the gospel. Therefore, Paul needed to preach the gospel.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:16

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did it mean to not be “ashamed” of the gospel?

[1:16]

Paul did not want people to be ashamed of the gospel. He did not want people to worry about people judging them for believing the gospel.

See: Jeremiah 9:24; Mark 8:38; 2 Timothy 1:8, 12

See: [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#)

What was “for the Jew first and for the Gentile”?

[1:16]

Paul said that salvation came to the Jews first. He wanted to know that Jesus began to tell Jewish people how to be at peace with God before he began telling the Gentiles how to have peace with God. He did this after the Jews rejected their messiah.

See: Acts 11:18; 20:21; Romans 10:12-13; Ephesians 2:11-18

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was “God’s righteousness”?

[1:17]

Paul spoke about God’s “righteousness.” Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that God is righteous (see: Psalm 50:6; Romans 3:5). Other scholars think Paul was writing about the righteousness that God gave people when he justified them (see: Romans 3:21; 10:3). Other scholars think Paul was writing about salvation (see: Isaiah 51:6).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How was God’s righteousness “revealed from faith to faith”?

[1:17]

Paul wrote about God’s righteousness revealed from faith to faith. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that they were saved because they believe in Jesus. Other scholars think Paul wanted Christians to have more faith or to trust God more. Other scholars think Paul wanted them to the Jews to change what they believed. Before, they needed to believe in God. Now, they also need to believe in Jesus, who is God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

1:18-25

What is the “wrath of God”?

[1:18]

See: Ezekiel 25:17; Romans 5:9; 12:19; Ephesians 5:6

See: [Wrath](#)

What was “unrighteousness”?

[1:18]

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How did people “hold back the truth”?

[1:18]

Paul wrote about holding back the truth. This is a metaphor. The evil people tried to stop the truth. They did not destroy the truth, but they did keep it from changing them.

See: 2 Thessalonians 2:10

What was their “senseless hearts were darkened”?

[1:21]

People with “senseless hearts” could not think in the right way because of their sin.

See: John 3:19; Ephesians 4:17-18

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was the “likenesses of an image”?

[1:23]

Gentiles who did not know God made idols. These were statues that were “like” how a man or an animal looked, that is, its image.

See: Deuteronomy 5:8; Isaiah 44:12-17; Acts 17:29

See: [Image](#); [Image](#)

How did God give people “over to the lusts of their hearts”?

[1:24]

God gave people over to the lusts of their hearts. God allowed people to do the sins they wanted to do and to be punished for their sins.

See: Psalm 81:11-12; Acts 7:42

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

1:26-32

What were “dishonorable passions”?

[1:26]

Paul wrote about people with dishonorable passions. These people were sexually immoral.

See: Ephesians 4:18-19; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:4-5

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What were “natural” and “unnatural” relations?

[1:26]

Paul wrote about natural and unnatural relations. Sex between a husband and a wife were “natural”(φυσικός/g5446). That is, it is the way God intended it to be. Other types of sex were “unnatural”(φύσις/g5449). They are sins and God does not want people to do these things.

See: Jude 7

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What was “burned in their lust”?

[1:27]

Paul wrote about people who burned with lust. This is a metaphor. They really wanted to be sexually immoral.

See: 1 Corinthians 7:9, 36; 1 Timothy 5:11

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What was a “corrupted mind”?

[1:28]

A corrupted mind thought evil things that were worthless (see: Titus 1:16). This person did not think the things that God wanted them to think.

See: 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:8

See: [Mind](#)

What did “not proper” mean?

[1:28]

Something that was not proper was against God’s holy will.

See: Romans 8:7-8; Titus 1:16

See: [Will of God](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Therefore you are without excuse, you person, you who judge, for in things for which you judge the other person, you condemn yourself. For you who judge practice the same things. ² But we know that God's judgment is according to truth when it falls on those who practice such things. ³ But consider this, you person, you who judge those who practice such things although you do the same things. Will you escape from the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you think so little of the riches of his kindness, his delayed punishment, and his patience? Do you not know that his kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵ But it is to the extent of your hardness and unrepentant heart that you are storing up for yourself wrath on the day of wrath, that is, the day of the revelation of God's righteous judgment. ⁶ He will pay back to every person according to his actions: ⁷ to those who according to the perseverance of good deeds have sought glory, honor, and incorruptibility, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But to those who are self-seeking, who disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness, wrath and fierce anger will come. ⁹ God will bring tribulation and distress on every human soul that has practiced evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁰ But glory, honor, and peace will come to everyone who practices good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹¹ For there is no partiality with God. ¹² For as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and as many as have sinned with respect to the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but it is the doers of the law who will be justified. ¹⁴ For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature the things of the law, they are a law to themselves, although they do not have the law. ¹⁵ By this they show that the actions required by the law are written in their hearts. Their conscience also bears witness to them, and their own thoughts either accuse or defend them ¹⁶ on the day when God will judge the secrets of all people, according to my gospel, through Jesus Christ.

¹⁷ But if you say that you are a Jew and rest upon the law and boast in God, ¹⁸ and know his will and approve of what is excellent because you have been instructed from the law; ¹⁹ and if you are convinced that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰ an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, and that you have in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth, then how does this affect the way you live your life? ²¹ You who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²² You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who hate idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by transgressing the law? ²⁴ For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," just as it has been written. ²⁵ For circumcision is profitable to you if you obey the law, but if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ²⁶ If, then, the uncircumcised person keeps the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision? ²⁷ And will not the one who is naturally uncircumcised condemn you if he fulfills the law? This is because you have the written law and circumcision, yet you are a transgressor of the law! ²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is merely one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is merely outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter. The praise of such a person comes not from people but from God.

Romans 2

2:1-16

How were people "without excuse"?

[2:1]

Paul wrote that people were "without excuse" (ἀναπολόγητος/g0379). That is, they could not argue that they did not sin or they knew enough to worship God (see: Romans 1:20).

See: Hebrews 10:26

See: [Worship](#)

Paul spoke to someone. Who was this?

[2:1, 2:3]

In verse 1 and 3, Paul wrote about people who disagreed with the gospel he taught. He wanted people to know that they were Christians, but they were not Jews.

See: Romans 2:17

What did “judge” mean?

[2:2]

See: Matthew 7:1-5; John 8:7; Ephesians 2:11

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How did god judge “according to truth”?

[2:2]

God judges according to the truth. That is, God is always fair and just.

See: Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 9:7-8; 98:9; Zephaniah 3:5; Revelation 19:2

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

How does God’s judgment “falls on” someone?

[2:2]

Paul wrote about God’s judgment falling on someone. That is, God would judge people

See: Psalm 11:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

Why did Paul ask many questions?

[2:3, 2:4]

In ancient times, teachers often asked questions when they were teaching. This helped people to think about what they were teaching.

See: Proverbs 11:21; Matthew 23:33

What was “delayed punishment”?

[2:4]

God delayed punishment. That is, people would not be immediately punished for their sins. Instead, God will judge them on judgment day. Instead of immediately punishing people, God gave people time to repent.

See: Romans 9:22-23; 2 Peter 3:9

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did people store up wrath?

[2:5]

Paul wrote that people stored up wrath. That is, the more people sinned, the more they caused God to be angry. God became more angry the more people sinned.

See: Deuteronomy 32:34-35; Romans 9:22; James 5:3; 2 Peter 3:7; Jude 1:6

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What was the day of wrath?

[2:5]

See: Revelation 6:17; Amos 5:18; Obadiah 1:15; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 5:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:2

See: [Wrath](#); [Wrath](#)

What was “incorruptibility”?

[2:7]

Paul spoke about “incorruptibility”(ἀφθαρσία/g0861). Some scholars think Paul was writing about not sinning (see: Ephesians 6:24). More scholars think Paul was speaking about someone’s body after they are resurrected (see: 1 Corinthians 15:42, 50, 52-54). God would raise his people in bodies that would not decay or die.

See: 2 Timothy 1:10

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is eternal life?

[2:7]

See: Romans 5:21; 6:22-23; Galatians 6:8

See: [Eternal Life](#)

How was someone “self-seeking”?

[2:8]

Someone who was “self-seeking”(ἐπιθεία/g2052) did things they wanted to do, but did not help other people (see: 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:20; Philippians 1:17; 2:3). How was salvation “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”?

See: Romans 1:16

See: [Israel](#)

How is there “no partiality with God”?

[2:11]

There is no partiality with God. That is God treats all people fairly. He does not favor one person more than another. In ancient Israel, people did not think the Gentiles could be at peace with God. They did not think God would favor them. Paul taught that this was not true.

See: Deuteronomy 10:17; Acts 10:34; Colossians 3:25

How did someone sin “without the law”?

[2:12]

When Paul wrote about sin without the Law, he was speaking about the Gentiles, who did not try to obey the Law of Moses. God judged the Jews according to if they obey the Law of Moses. However, God judged the Gentiles in a different way.

See: Romans 4:15; 1 Corinthians 9:21

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What did it mean to be “justified”?

[2:13]

See: Exodus 23:7; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:11-12; James 2:21-25

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

Who are the gentiles who “do by nature the things of the law”?

[2:14]

Certain Gentiles do things of the law by nature. They obeyed the things taught in the Law of Moses even though they did not know the Law of Moses. Scholars think Paul spoke about different things.

1. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about something happening that could not happen. This is because no one could completely obey the Law of Moses.
2. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about living in the right way as much as they could by obeying their conscience.
3. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about Gentile Christians who lived in the right way because they believed in Jesus and God changed them. He made them want to live in a way that honors God.

See: Acts 10:35; 2 Corinthians 3:2

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Conscience](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

2:17-29

Who named himself a Jew?

[2:17]

Paul wrote about someone who named himself a Jew. This was a person who said they were a Jew. Paul was writing as if he was arguing with a Jewish person who thought they were at peace with God because they did good things or because they were a good person.

See: Isaiah 48:1-2; Revelation 2:9; 3:9

See: [Israel](#)

How did someone “rest upon the law”?

[2:17]

Paul wrote about someone resting upon the Law. Paul was writing about someone who depended on the obeying the Law of Moses so they could be at peace with God.

See: Matthew 3:9; John 5:45; 9:28-29

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Who was a “guide to the blind” and a “light to those who are in darkness”?

[2:19]

In the Bible, blindness and darkness were metaphors for people who did not know God. Paul wrote about people who thought they could help other people know about God and be at peace with God. They could not do this because they did not know God.

See: Matthew 15:14; John 9:39-41; Revelation 3:17-18

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was a “teacher of little children”?

[2:20]

Paul wrote about a teacher of little children. This was a metaphor. Little children were children who were very young (see: Matthew 21:16; Ephesians 4:14). Paul was speaking about people who did not understand the things about God or how to live in a way that honors God. The Roman Christians thought they could teach these people. However, they could not teach these people unless they came to believe in Jesus first.

See: 1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:13

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul ask, “do you not teach yourself”?

[2:21]

Paul wrote to Jews who thought they were better than the Gentiles. Because of this, they thought they should teach the Gentiles. However, these Jews needed to be taught the right things about God.

See: Psalm 50:16-21; Matthew 23:3-28; Luke 12:47

How did someone rob temples?

[2:22]

Paul wrote about someone robbing temples. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about Jews who did not pay the money they owed to the temple in Jerusalem (see: Malachi 3:8). Other scholars think they stole money from temples to false god. still others believe that it meant taking gold and silver derived from idol worship into their homes (see: Deuteronomy 7:25-26).

See: [False gods](#); [False gods](#)

Why did Paul say, “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you”?

[2:24]

Paul said that the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. He wanted people to know that the things the Jews did harmed the Gentiles. They caused the Gentiles to think the wrong things and say the wrong things about God. The Jews caused the Gentiles to sin.

See: Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:20-23; Titus 2:5

See: [Gentile](#); [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Gentile](#)

How did “circumcision becomes uncircumcision”?

[2:25]

The “circumcision” were Jews and the “uncircumcision” were Gentiles (see: Ephesians 2:11). Paul wanted the Jews to know that they were not better than the Gentiles because they did not obey God. The Jews thought the Gentiles did not obey God.

See: Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Galatians 6:15

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

What was circumcision which is “merely outward in the flesh”?

[2:28]

Paul wrote about a circumcision that was merely outward. He wanted people to know that if someone cut off the end of their penis but did not obey God, then they were not circumcised to obey God. They only cut off the end of their penis.

See: 2 Corinthians 3:6

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

Who was a Jew inwardly?

[2:29]

Paul wrote about a person who was at peace with God. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that anyone who was at peace with God was a Jew in some way. Gentiles could be Jews in some way. Other scholars think the Gentiles could not be Jews, even if they obeyed God.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

What was circumcision “of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter”?

[2:29]

Paul wrote about a circumcision of the heart. He was writing about God changing a person after they believe in Jesus. They want to live in a way that honors God. This is what God wanted. He did not want people to follow the Law of Moses unless they were doing it to honor God.

See: Deuteronomy 30:6; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Philippians 3:2-3; Colossians 2:11-12

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

What was “praise” from God?

[2:29]

When God praised someone, he said they did the right thing (see: Romans 3:30).

See: John 5:44; 2 Corinthians 10:18

See: [Praise](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision? ² It is great in every way. First of all, the Jews were entrusted with revelation from God.

³ For what if some Jews were without faith? Will their unbelief nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴ May it never be. Instead, let God be found to be true, even though every man is a liar. As it has been written,

"That you might be shown to be righteous in your words,
and that you might prevail when you come into judgment."

⁵ But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what can we say? Can we say that God is unrighteous to bring his wrath upon us? (I am using a human argument.) ⁶ May it never be! For then how would God judge the world? ⁷ But if through my lie the truth of God increases his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner? ⁸ Why not say, as we are slandered as saying, and as some affirm that we say, "Let us do evil, so that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.

⁹ What then? Are we excusing ourselves? Not at all. For we have already accused both Jews and Greeks, all of them, of being under sin. ¹⁰ This is as it is written:

"No one is righteous, not one;
¹¹ there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.
¹² They have all turned away;
together they have become useless.
There is no one who does good, no,
not even one."
¹³ "Their throat is an open grave.
Their tongues have deceived.
The poison of snakes is under their lips."
¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."
¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to pour out blood.
¹⁶ Destruction and suffering are in their paths.
¹⁷ These people have not known a way of peace."
¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to the ones who are under the law, so that every mouth may be shut, and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ For no flesh will be justified by the works of the law in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been revealed, to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ For God provided Christ Jesus as an atoning sacrifice through faith in his blood. He offered Christ as proof of his justice, because of his disregard of previous sins ²⁶ in his patience. This was to show his righteousness at this present time, so he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Where then is boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through a law of faith. ²⁸ We conclude then that a person is justified by faith without works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not also the God of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also. ³⁰ If, indeed, God is one, he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

³¹ Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! Instead, we uphold the law.

Romans 3

3:1-8

What was the benefit of circumcision?

[3:1]

Paul wrote about the benefit of circumcision. Being circumcised did not help people to be at peace with God. However, people who were circumcised were Jews. These people were taught about God. Therefore, this helped them to know more about God and helped them to believe in Jesus.

See: Genesis 25:32

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

What was the “revelation from God”?

[3:2]

God revealed certain things to the Jews through prophets. He gave them the Law of Moses (see: Acts 7:38). He also told them other prophecies (see: 1 Peter 4:11). Paul wanted people to know that God gave them Bible to people.

See: Deuteronomy 4:7-8; Psalm 147:19-20; Romans 9:4

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

How might Israel “abolish God faithfulness”?

[3:3]

Israel abolished God’s faithfulness by rejecting Jesus. That is, they were not faithful to God when God was faithful to them. Paul taught that even if they disobeyed the things God revealed to them, they were still true things.

See: Romans 3:31; Matthew 24:35; Romans 10:16; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 4:2

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did the phrase “may it never be” mean?

[3:4]

Paul wrote, “may it never be.” He wanted to say, “absolutely not!” (see: 1 Corinthians 6:15; Galatians 2:17; 3:21; 6:14; also Luke 20:16). Paul wrote these words 10 times in Romans (see: Romans 3:6; 3:31; 6:2; 6:15; 7:7; 7:13; 9:14; 11:1; 11:11).

Why did Paul say the same thing as Psalm 51:4?

[3:4]

Paul wrote the same thing as Psalm 51:4. He wanted people to know that God revealed himself to people in the Bible. He also wanted people to know that God kept the promises he made to people even if people sin.

See: Hebrews 6:18; 1 John 5:20

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What did “the truth of God” mean?

[3:4]

Paul wrote about the truth of God. That is God does not lie.

What was a “human argument”?

[3:5]

Paul wrote about a human argument. People thought in a certain way that was wrong. This type of thinking did not honor God.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:32

Why did Paul write, “multiplies his glory”?

[3:7]

Paul wrote about something multiplying God’s glory. That is, it makes God more glorious. Some people thought they should sin because it made people think God was more holy. They should not do this because it did not honor God.

See: Romans 9:17

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Sin](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What was “slandered as saying, and as some affirm that we say”?

[3:8]

Paul wrote, “slandered as saying, and as some affirm that we say.” He was writing about certain people lying about him. They said that Paul taught that people could sin and still be at peace with God.

See: Matthew 5:11; Romans 6:15; Galatians 5:13; 2 Peter 3:15-16

How was someone’s condemnation just?

[3:8]

People who attacked Paul did something evil. He wanted them to know that God is just. They will know this when he judges them and condemns them.

See: Psalm 34:21-22; Jude 4

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

3:9-20

Why did Paul write “are we excusing ourselves”?

[3:9]

Paul asked, “are we excusing ourselves?” Some scholars think Paul was asking if people are trying to defend or excuse themselves. Other scholars think Paul was asking if the Jews were better than the Gentiles in some way (see: 3:1-2). Why did Paul write many things that were also written in the Old Testament?

Why did Paul write many things that were also written in the Old Testament?

[3:10, 3:11, 3:12, 3:13, 3:14, 3:15, 3:16, 3:17, 3:18]

Paul wrote the same things that were written in the Old Testament. He wanted people to know that the gospel was teaching the same things about God that were written in the Old Testament.

See: Ecclesiastes 7:20; Psalm 5:9; 10:7; 14:1-3; 36:1; 53:1-3; 140:3; Isaiah 59:7

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How did someone seek God?

[3:11]

When someone sought God, they were humble and wanted to trust and obey God.

See: Isaiah 55:6-7; 65:1-2, Romans 10:20-21

How did Paul use the word “law” in this chapter?

[3:19]

Here, when Paul wrote about the Law, he was writing about the Old Testament.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How was every mouth shut?

[3:19]

A person with their mouth shut could not defend himself, and instead kept quiet. Paul wanted people to know that no one could defend their sins.

See: Job 40:4-5; Psalm 107:42

See: [Sin](#)

How was someone accountable to God?

[3:19]

People are accountable to God. That is, people should know that God will judge them.

What are “works of the Law?”

[3:20]

See: [Works \(Works of the Law\)](#)

3:21-31

How was God’s righteousness revealed?

[3:21]

God’s righteousness was revealed through Jesus. Jesus gave righteousness to those who believe in him.

See: Romans 1:17

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

How was God’s righteousness “witnessed by the law and the prophets”?

[3:21]

Paul said that the Law and prophets witnessed God’s righteousness. That is, the Old Testament told people about God’s righteousness.

See: John 1:45; Acts 10:43; Romans 1:2; 1 Peter 1:10-12

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How was there no distinction between different groups of people?

[3:22]

God made no “distinction”(διαστολή/g1293) between different groups of people. That is, God is just to everyone (see: Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 9:7-8; 98:9; Zephaniah 3:5; Revelation 19:2).

See: Acts 15:9; Romans 10:12; Colossians 3:11

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

How did something “come short of the glory of God”?

[3:23]

Paul wrote that all have come short of the glory of God. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about Adam and Eve. These scholars think that Adam and Eve had a type of glory you could see before they sinned. After they sinned, they lost this glory. More scholars think Paul was speaking about how everyone sins. They are not perfect like God and do not always do what God wants them to do.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How was someone justified?

[3:24]

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

What was the “redemption” that Jesus accomplished?

[3:24]

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

What was “propitiation”?

[3:25]

See: [Propitiation](#)

What was “through faith in his blood”?

[3:25]

When Paul wrote about faith in Jesus blood, he was writing about believing that Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God.

See: Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 5:9

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

How was boasting excluded?

[3:27]

Paul wrote about boasting being excluded. Boasting was when someone said or believed that he was righteous without Jesus. This insulted God.

See: Romans 4:2; 1 Corinthians 1:29-31; Ephesians 2:8-9

See: [Boast](#)

What was the “law of faith”?

[3:27]

Paul wrote about the law. Here, he was talking about general rules. He was not speaking about the Law of Moses. Paul wanted people to know that people are saved through faith, not because of the things they do.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul say that “God is one”?

[3:30]

Paul said that God is one because this is something the Jews said in all of their prayers (see: Deuteronomy 6:4). Paul wanted people to know that there is only one God.

See: Mark 12:29-32; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5

See: [Jesus is God](#)

How did someone nullify the law?

[3:31]

Paul wrote about someone destroying the law in some way. People thought Paul dishonored God because he did not obey the Law of Moses. However, he lived in a way that honored God.

See: Matthew 5:17; Galatians 2:21

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Chapter 4

¹ What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, found? ² For if Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had a reason to boast, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

⁴ Now for him who labors, his wage is not counted as a gift, but as what is owed. ⁵ But for him who does not work but instead believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness. ⁶ David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness without works.

⁷ He says,

"Blessed are those
whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the man
against whom the Lord will not count sin."

⁹ Then is this blessing pronounced only on those of the circumcision, or also on those of the uncircumcision? For we say, "Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness." ¹⁰ How was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before! ¹¹ Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them. ¹² He is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and to his descendants that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who live by the law are to be the heirs, faith is made empty, and the promise does nothing. ¹⁵ For the law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there is no transgression. ¹⁶ For this reason it is by faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all of Abraham's descendants—not only to those who are under the law, but also to those who share the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is written, "I have appointed you the father of many nations." Abraham was in the presence of him whom he trusted, that is, God, who gives life to the dead and calls the things that do not exist into existence. ¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he would become the father of many nations, according to what he had been told, "So will your descendants be." ¹⁹ Without becoming weak in faith, he considered his own body as dead (because he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰ But because of God's promise, Abraham did not hesitate in unbelief. Instead, he was strengthened in faith and gave glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that what God had promised, he was also able to accomplish. ²² Therefore this was also "counted to him as righteousness." ²³ But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone. ²⁴ They were written also for us, and it will be counted to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ This is the one who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Romans 4

4:1-12

How was Abraham "our forefather according to the flesh"?

[4:1]

Paul wrote that Abraham was their "forefather according to the flesh." Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that Abraham was the ancestor of every Jew. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. Paul wanted to say anyone who believed in God was a descendant of Abraham (see: Romans 4:11, 16).

See: Matthew 3:9; John 8:53, 56; Acts 13:26; 2 Corinthians 11:22

See: [Metaphor](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Abraham find something?

[4:1]

Paul wrote that Abraham found something. That is, Abraham found God's grace and mercy. This is a metaphor. God was gracious and merciful to Abraham.

See: Genesis 6:8; 18:3; 19:19

See: [Mercy](#); [Mercy](#)

What was a reason to boast?

[4:2]

Paul wrote about "boasting" (καύχημα/g2745). He was speaking about some who said they were righteous. This dishonored God because they were not righteous. Every person is a sinner. While Abraham did many good things, he could not be at peace with God by being righteous. Only God could give him righteousness and peace.

See: Romans 3:27; 1 Corinthians 1:29-31; Ephesians 2:8-9

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing as Genesis 15:6?

[4:3]

Abraham was written about in the Old Testament. Paul wanted people to know that the gospel agreed with the Old Testament. Abraham trusted God. Christians should also trust God.

See: Psalm 106:31; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Galatians 3:6-8; James 2:23

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing as Psalm 31:1-2?

[4:7, 4:8]

Paul wrote the same thing as David in Psalm 31:1-2. David was very happy God forgave him after his sin with Bathsheba. Paul was also very happy that God forgave him.

See: Psalm 51:4; Romans 3:4

How was someone blessed?

[4:7]

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How were sins covered and not counted?

[4:8] David often sinned. God forgave him even though David didn't deserve it. In the Bible, sins were covered before Jesus died. This changed when Jesus died. God did not count people sins. That is, people were at peace with God even though they sinned because Jesus died.

See: Mark 11:25; 1 John 1:9

See: Sin; [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

How was a blessing pronounced?

[4:9]

When David pronounced a blessing, he said a blessing to people.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

What was the “seal of righteousness”?

[4:11]

Paul wrote that circumcision was a “seal of righteousness. That is, Abraham was circumcised because he believed in God and was at peace with God. He was not at peace with God because he was circumcised, but because he had faith in God. Advice to Translators: This might be translated as “circumcision was the physical proof that he was already righteous.”

See: Genesis 17:11; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Revelations 9:4

See: Seal; [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How was Abraham the father of all?

[4:11]

Paul wrote that Abraham was the father of all. He was not an ancestor of everyone who believes in Jesus. However, people who believe in Jesus do the same types of things Abraham did (see: Romans 4:1). They believe in God in the same way Abraham believed in God.

See: Luke 19:9

See: [Family of God](#)

How did someone walk in the footsteps as someone else?

[4:12]

Someone who walked in the footsteps of someone else did the same types of things the other person did. This was a metaphor. People did the same types of things Abraham did.

See: Proverbs 2:20; John 8:39-40; 2 Corinthians 12:18; 1 Peter 2:21

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

4:13-25

What was an heir of the world?

[4:13]

God promised Abraham that he would be the “heir” (κληρονόμος/g2818) of the world. That is, he and his descendants would eventually become the owners of the whole world.

See: Psalm 2:8; Galatians 3:16-18, 29

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

How was faith made empty and a promise made void?

[4:14]

Paul wrote about faith being made empty and a promise made void. He meant that having faith in God would not have any value, and God’s promise would be broken. He was speaking about something as if it could happen, but it could not happen.

See: Isaiah 55:11; 1 Corinthians 15:17; Galatians 3:18-24; 5:4

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

How was there no transgression when there was no law?

[4:15]

Paul wrote that there is no transgression when there was no law. A “transgression”(παράβασις/g3847) was a certain type of sin, where someone disobeyed a command of God. If there was no Law of Moses, people would still sin, but they would not be disobeying God’s commands because they did not know the Law of Moses.

See: Romans 5:13; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Galatians 3:10, 19; Ephesians 2:1

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did the promise "rest on grace"?

[4:16]

Paul wrote that the promise rested on grace. That is God gives people what he promised through the grace that he gave to people, not through them obeying the Law of Moses.

See: Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:7

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How was Abraham the father of many nations?

[4:17]

Paul wrote that Abraham was the father of many nations. This is something God promised to Abraham (see: Genesis 17:4). Some scholars think Paul was speaking about how all Christians inherit the promises God gave to Abraham. Other scholars think that Christians do not inherit these promises, but they do the same types of things Abraham did.

See: Genesis 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:4; 17:16; 22:17; 1 Peter 2:10

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#)

How was Abraham in the presence of God?

[4:17]

Paul wrote that Abraham was in the presence of God. He wanted to say that Abraham obeyed God and did the things God wanted him to do.

See: Psalm 19:14; 142:2; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 12:19

See: [Presence of God](#)

How did God call things that do not exist into existence?

[4:17]

God called things that do not exist into existence. That is, God made things from nothing. He did this just by speaking. He made everything in the universe by speaking.

See: John 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:28

How did Abraham believe in hope and against hope?

[4:18]

Abraham believed in him and against hope. He was confident that God would do everything he promised. He did this even when people did not think God could do the things he promised.

See: Ruth 1:12; Psalm 39:7; Romans 15:13; 1 Peter 1:3

See: [Hope](#)

Why did Paul write “so will your descendants be”?

[4:18]

God promised Abraham that he would have more descendants than the number of stars someone can see in the sky. This is hyperbole.

See: Genesis 15:5

See: [Hyperbole](#)

How was Abraham’s body and Sarah’s womb dead?

[4:19]

Paul wrote that Abraham’s body and Sarah’s womb were dead. They were not dead. This was a metaphor. They were too old to have children. Abraham was 99 years old (see: Genesis 17:1). Sarah was very old and past the age when she could have children (Genesis 18:11).

See: Hebrews 11:11-12

How did someone hesitate in unbelief?

[4:20]

Paul wrote that someone hesitated in unbelief. That is, they did not think that God would fulfill his promises. That is, they did not trust God.

See: Isaiah 7:9b; Matthew 6:30; 8:26; Mark 9:23-24; 1 Corinthians 16:13

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

How was Jesus “delivered up for our trespasses”?

[4:25]

Jesus was delivered up for our trespasses. That is, Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God.

See: Galatians 1:4; 1 John 4:9-10

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

How was Jesus “raised for our justification”?

[4:25]

Paul wrote that Jesus was raised for our justification. That is, Jesus was resurrected so that Christians can be at peace with God. Jesus needed to be resurrected (see: Romans 10:9-10; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:45).

See: 1 Corinthians 15:17; Colossians 1:18

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only this, but we also boast in our tribulations. We know that tribulation brings about perseverance. ⁴ Perseverance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not make ashamed because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who was given to us. ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous person, though perhaps someone would dare to die for a good person. ⁸ But God proves his own love toward us, because while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more, then, now that we are justified by his blood, we will be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, after having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. ¹¹ Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we now have received this reconciliation.

¹² So then, as through one man sin entered into the world, in this way death entered through sin. And death spread to all people, because all sinned. ¹³ For until the law, sin was in the world, but there is no accounting for sin when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who did not sin like Adam's disobedience, who is a pattern of him who was to come.

¹⁵ But the gift is not like the trespass. For if by the trespass of one the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many! ¹⁶ For the gift is not like the outcome of that one man's sin. The judgment followed one trespass and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one, death ruled through the one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ So then, as one trespass led to condemnation for all people, so also through the one act of righteousness came justification and life for all people. ¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one will the many be made righteous. ²⁰ But the law came in to increase the trespass. But where sin abounded, grace abounded even more. ²¹ This happened so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness for everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5

5:1-11

How was someone justified by faith?

[5:1]

See: Exodus 23:7; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:11-12; James 2:21-25

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What does "boast" mean?

[5:2]

In Romans 2-3, "boasting" (καυχάομαι/g2744) was when someone said or believed that he was righteous in himself and without needing God. This dishonored God. Here, Paul wrote about another type of boasting. This honored God because it was boasting about the things God did.

See: Romans 4:2; 1 Corinthians 1:29-31; Ephesians 2:8-9

What is the hope of the glory of God?

[5:2]

Paul wrote that mankind fell short of God's glory when Adam sinned (see: Romans 3:23). Christians know that they will be with God and have a glorious body in heaven.

See: Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 4:17

See: [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Heaven](#)

How does perseverance produce character?

[5:4]

Paul wanted Christians to know that the difficult parts of their life helped Christians to live in a way that honors God and to do the same types of things Jesus did.

See: Romans 8:18, 21; James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 2 Peter 1:5-8

How does hope not make someone ashamed?

[5:5]

Christians are confident that God will do the things he promised to do. They will not be ashamed because God will do these things.

See: Isaiah 28:16; Philippians 1:20; Romans 9:33

How was the love of God poured into someone's hearts?

[5:5]

Paul wrote that the love of God was poured in people's hearts. This is a metaphor. God greatly loved Christians. The word "poured" (ἐκχέω/g1632) when used literally referred to freely pouring out a liquid. Here it was a metaphor, that God was generous in loving his people.

See: Galatians 4:6; Hebrews 6:18-19

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

When were Christians weak?

[5:6]

Paul wrote about Christians being weak. This is a metaphor. They could not live in a way that honors God. They were not strong enough to be at peace with God. They needed God to help them.

See: Ephesians 2:1-5; Titus 3:3-5

Why did Paul use the words "much more" in verses 9, 10, 15, and 17?

[5:9, 5:10, 5:15, 5:17]

Paul used the words "much more" in verses 9, 10, 15, and 17. In ancient times, people often used these words when they wanted people to know if something happened, then something else would also happen (see: Romans 11:12; 11:24; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Corinthians 3:7-11).

How were enemies reconciled?

5:10]

Paul said that people were enemies of God before they believed in Jesus. When they believed in Jesus, God reconciled them to himself. That is, people have peace with God after they believe in Jesus.

See: Romans 11:28; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20-22

5:12-21

How did sin enter the world through one man?

[5:12]

Before Adam sinned, no one had ever sinned. Because of this, the world was perfect. After Adam sinned, things began to die and people were not at peace with God.

See: Genesis 2:16-17, 3:3, 4, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

See: [Sin](#)

How was there no accounting for sin?

[5:13]

Paul wrote that there was no “accounting”(ἐλλογέω/g1677) for sin. Paul wanted to say that before the Law of Moses, people did not know what was a sin because they did not have the Law of Moses.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:56; 1 John 3:4

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did death reign from Adam to Moses?

[5:14]

Paul wrote that death reigned from Adam to Moses. Sin ruled in the way a king reigned. This was a metaphor. People were controlled by their sins (see: Romans 5:14, 17, 21; 6:12).

See: Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 15:45

See: [Metaphor](#)

How was Adam a pattern of Jesus?

[5:14]

Paul spoke about a pattern of him who was to come. He was speaking about Adam was like Jesus in some way. However, Jesus was greater than Adam. Paul wanted people to learn about Jesus by learning how Jesus was greater than Adam.

What was the “gift of righteousness”?

[5:17]

The “gift of righteousness” was something God gave to people who believe in Jesus. That is, God made them righteous so they could live in heaven with him.

See: Isaiah 53:11; 2 Corinthians 9:15; Ephesians 2:8; 1 John 4:9-10

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How did sin reign in life?

[5:17]

Since Adam sinned, Paul wrote aht sin reigned over the people as if it were their king (see: 5:14). That is, people sinned because they wanted to sin. When Paul wrote about Christians reigning, he was writing about how Christians will rule over the world after they are resurrected (see: Romans 8:17).

See: Genesis 3; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 22:5

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did the Law of Moses increase the trespass?

[5:20]

Paul wrote that the Law of Moses increased “trespasses”(παράπτωμα/g3900). That is, people broke the law more because of the Law of Moses. They did not sin more. They broke the law more because they had many laws to obey in the Law of Moses. Paul wanted people to know why God gave the Law of Moses to Israel. While people could not be at peace with God because they followed the Law of Moses, the Law of Moses helped them to know they were sinners (see: 4:15; 7:7-9). Then they would know that they needed Jesus to save them.

See: John 15:22; 2 Corinthians 3:7-9; Galatians 3:19-25

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “as sin reigned in death, grace might reign in righteousness”?

[5:21]

Paul wrote that “as sin reigned in death, grace might reign in righteousness.” He wanted to say that people obeyed their sinful desires. That is, they sinned because they wanted to sin. However, because of God’s grace, people can now live in a way that honors God.

See: John 1:16-17

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Grace](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Chapter 6

¹ What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound? ² May it never be. We who died to sin, how can we still live in it? ³ Do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death. This happened in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also be united with his resurrection. ⁶ We know this, that our old man was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be destroyed. This happened so that we should no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ He who has died is declared righteous with respect to sin. ⁸ But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live together with him. ⁹ We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer rules over him. ¹⁰ For in regard to the death that he died to sin, he died once for all. However, the life that he lives, he lives for God. ¹¹ In the same way, you also must consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Therefore do not let sin rule in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts. ¹³ Do not present the members of your bodies to sin, to be tools used for unrighteousness. But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present the members of your bodies to God as tools to be used for righteousness. ¹⁴ Do not allow sin to rule over you. For you are not under law, but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be. ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey? You are either slaves to sin, which leads to death, or slaves to obedience, which leads to righteousness. ¹⁷ But thanks be to God! For you were slaves of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching that you were given. ¹⁸ You have been made free from sin, and you have been made slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak like a man because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented the members of your bodies as slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness, resulting in more lawlessness, in the same way, now present the members of your bodies as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. ²¹ At that time, what fruit then did you have of the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been made free from sin and are enslaved to God, you have your fruit for sanctification. The result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6

6:1-11

How did grace abound?

[6:1]

Paul wrote that grace abounded. That is, it grew or increased. He was speaking as if someone was saying that sinning caused God to be more gracious. This is not true.

See: 1 Peter 2:16

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write, “may it never be”?

[6:2]

Paul wrote, “may it never be.” He wrote this often. He wanted to say that something should never happen (see: Romans 3:4).

How did someone die to sin?

[6:2]

God said that Christians were dead in some way. Christians cannot be punished for their sins and they did not have to sin.

See: Galatians 5:24; Colossians 3:3; 1 Peter 2:24

See: [Sin](#)

How was someone baptized into Christ Jesus and into his death?

[6:3]

People who were “baptized”(βαπτίζω/g0907) by water were united with Christ. When they are baptized into his death, they are also joined with Jesus’ death in some way.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How was someone buried with Jesus?

[6:3]

Paul wrote that a Christian is buried with Jesus. This is a metaphor. He wanted people to know that they did not need to live in the same way they used to live before believing in Jesus.

See: Matthew 27:57-61; 1 Corinthians 15:4

What was the newness of life?

[6:4]

See: Romans 7:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How was someone united with Jesus?

[6:5]

Paul wrote about being united with Jesus. Here, he was speaking about people who were identified with Jesus. That is, people would know they believe in Jesus and followed him.

See: John 15:5-6; Philippians 3:10-11

What was the old man?

[6:6]

See: Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Ephesians 4:21-24; Colossians 3:9-10

See: [Old and New Self](#)

What was the body of sin?

[6:6]

Paul wrote about the body of sin. He was writing about someone being controlled by their sin. That is, they sinned because they wanted to sin.

See: Romans 8:10; Ephesians 4:22

How was something destroyed?

[6:6]

Paul wrote about something being “destroyed”(καταργέω/g2673). It lost its power (see: Romans 3:3; Galatians 3:17). A person was no longer controlled by their desire to sin.

See: [Sin](#)

How was someone enslaved to sin?

[6:6]

See: [Sinful Nature](#); [Sinful Nature](#)

How was someone declared to be righteous?

[6:7]

Paul wrote that someone was “declared righteous” or justified.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How did someone live together with Jesus?

[6:8]

Paul wrote that Christians will live together with Jesus. Some scholars think Paul was writing about Christians being resurrected to be with Jesus (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:17). Other scholars think Christians already live together with Jesus. This is a metaphor. They are now joined together with Jesus and have the Holy Spirit living in them (see: Galatians 2:20).

See: John 14:19; Colossians 3:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:11-12

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write “consider yourselves”?

[6:11]

Paul wrote “consider yourselves.” He wanted Christians to think and to know that they did not need to sin.

See: [Sin](#)

6:12-23

What were members?

[6:13]

Members were parts of a person’s body.

See: Romans 12:4a; 1 Corinthians 12:12a; James 3:6; Matthew 5:29-30

What was a tool?

[6:13]

A tool was something that was used to help someone do something. Paul did not want sin to use Christians. This is a metaphor. If Christians allowed sin to use them, then sin could use a person to do evil things.

See: Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:15

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How could people present themselves as slaves?

[6:16]

Someone who presents themselves as a slave to sin voluntarily submit himself to being controlled by someone or something.

See: Joshua 24:15; John 8:34; 2 Peter 2:19

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

How did someone obey from the heart?

[6:17]

Someone who obeyed from the heart obeyed God's command to believe the gospel.

See: Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:8

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was a pattern of teaching?

[6:17]

Paul wrote about a pattern of teaching. He was writing about certain things Christians taught. The Roman Christians knew these things.

See: 2 Timothy 1:13

How was someone made free from sin?

[6:18]

Paul continued the metaphor of slavery. The term "made free" (ἐλευθερώω/g1659) was the normal term for freeing a slave from his master. Now Christians were freed from their old master, sin, and have become slaves of God. They do not need to sin and can now live in a way that honors God.

See: John 8:32; 1 Corinthians 7:21-23; Galatians 5:1; 1 Peter 2:16

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is sanctification?

[6:19]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

How was someone free from righteousness?

[6:20]

Paul wrote that people were free from righteousness. Non-Christians are free from righteousness. That is, non-Christians do not live in a way that honors God. They cannot do things that honor God.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What was the fruit people had before they believe in Jesus?

[6:21]

In the Bible, people often spoke about doing good things as if they were fruit. Here, Paul was writing about evil things people did as if they were fruit.

See: Matthew 3:8; 7:15-20; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

What were the wages of sin?

[6:23]

Wages were the money people earned because they worked (see: Luke 3:14). Paul wrote about people earning something because they sinned. That is, a person deserves to be punished because they sinned.

See: Matthew 25:46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; James 1:17

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What was the gift of eternal life?

[6:23]

Paul wrote about eternal life. This was something that God gave to people who believe in Jesus.

See: [Eternal Life](#)

Chapter 7

¹ Or do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to people who know about law), that the law rules over a person for whatever time he lives? ² For the married woman is bound by law to the husband while he lives, but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³ So then, while her husband is living, if she lives with another man, she will be called an adulteress. But if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so she is not an adulteress if she lives with another man. ⁴ Therefore, my brothers, you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ. This is so that you could be joined to another, that is, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might produce fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in the members of our bodies to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law. We have died to that by which we were bound. This is so that we might serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

⁷ What will we say then? Is the law itself sin? May it never be. However, I would never have known sin, if it were not through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law said, "You must not covet." ⁸ But sin took the opportunity through the commandment and produced every kind of coveting in me. For apart from the law, sin was dead. ⁹ At one time I was alive without the law, but when the commandment came, sin regained life ¹⁰ and I died. The commandment that was to bring life turned out to be death for me. ¹¹ For sin took the opportunity through the commandment and deceived me. Through the commandment it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

¹³ So did what is good become death to me? May it never be. But sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin, brought about death in me through what was good, and through the commandment sin might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh. I have been sold under slavery to sin. ¹⁵ For what I do, I do not really understand. For what I want to do, I do not do, and what I hate, I do. ¹⁶ But if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law that the law is good. ¹⁷ But now it is no longer I who do it, but the sin that lives in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, lives no good thing. For the desire for good is with me, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹ For the good that I want, I do not do, but the evil that I do not want, that I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, then it is no longer I who am acting, but rather sin that lives in me. ²¹ So, I find this law: When I want to do good, evil is present with me. ²² For I rejoice in the law of God with my inner person. ²³ But I see a different law in the members of my body. It fights against that new law in my mind. It takes me captive by the law of sin that is in the members of my body. ²⁴ I am a miserable man! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. However, with the flesh I serve the law of sin.

Romans 7

7:1-6

What law did Paul write about here?

[7:1]

When Paul wrote about the law, he often wrote about the Law of Moses. Here, he wrote about the laws made by people or the government.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why was bound by the law and released by the law?

[7:2]

Paul wrote about the law binding people. That is, people needed to obey these laws. Paul also wrote about people being released from the law. That is, they did not need to obey the laws.

How was someone made dead to the law?

[7:4]

Paul wrote that someone was made dead to the law. That is, people did not need to obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul write about the body of Christ?

[7:4]

Paul wrote about Jesus' body. This is a metaphor. He was speaking about Jesus' body dying. Because Jesus died, people did not need to obey the Law of Moses.

See: Colossians 1:22; Hebrews 10:10

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How did someone "live with another" and become "joined to another"?

[7:4]

Paul wrote about someone living with another man or becoming joined to another man. Paul wanted to say that this woman was having sex with this man. Paul did not say if these two people were married.

See: Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Matthew 5:32

See: [Adultery](#)

How did someone produce fruit for God or for death?

[7:4, 7:5]

"Fruit" was a metaphor for how a person lived. Paul wrote about people living in a way that honors God of living in an evil way that dishonors God (see: Romans 6:21).

See: Matthew 3:8; 7:15-20; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11, 22

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

How did someone serve in newness of the Spirit?

[7:6]

Paul wrote about someone serving in the newness of the Spirit. They served God because God gave the new life which the Holy Spirit gave to them.

See: Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 2:19-20

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What was the oldness of the letter?

[7:6]

Paul wrote about the oldness of the letter. This is a metaphor. He was speaking about the way someone used to live. He was enslaved to sinning.

See: [Old and New Self](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Metaphor](#); [Old and New Self](#)

See: John 5:47; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Timothy 3:15

7:7-13**Who was Paul talking about in this passage?**

Some scholars think Paul was thinking about himself in this passage. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about all people. Other scholars think he was speaking about Adam.

What did Paul ask if the Law is sin?

[7:7]

People accused Paul of speaking against the Law of Moses. However, Paul did not do this. He wanted people to know that the Law of Moses is not evil. He also wanted them to know that they should not try to follow the Law of Moses anymore. However, the Law of Moses helped people to know that they sinned and needed God to save them.

See: Acts 21:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:56; Galatians 3:13; James 1:13-15

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “may it never be”?

[7:7]

See: Romans 3:4

How did sin regain life?

[7:9]

While the law of Moses was not sinful, people disobeyed the Law of Moses. Because of this, people sinned. They sinned more than they would have if they did not have the law.

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write, “I died”?

[7:10]

Paul wrote, “I died” because he sinned and deserved to be punished and die because he sinned. He was also separated from God.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

See: Galatians 3:10

How was someone sinful beyond measure?

[7:13]

Paul wrote about someone being sinful beyond measure. Because of the Law of Moses, people sinned much more.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

7:14-25**Who was the miserable man Paul spoke about in this passage?**

Some scholars think Paul was writing about himself before he became a Christian. Other scholars think he was writing about a Jewish man who was not a Christian. This was not a certain people. Other scholars think Paul was writing about himself just after he became a Christian. Other scholars think Paul was writing about Adam, who was a leader of all people or all Israelites.

How was the Law spiritual?

[7:14]

When Paul wrote about something spiritual, he was speaking about something the Holy Spirit did (see: 1 Corinthians 2:15; 10:4; 12:1; 14:1). Paul wanted people to know that the Law of Moses came from God through the Spirit. Because of this, it was good.

See: [Law of Moses](#), [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul write, “I am of the flesh”?

[7:14]

Paul wrote about the flesh. He was not speaking about his body. This was a metaphor. He was speaking about being separated from God and unable to do good things.

See: Romans 8:8; Galatians 5:19-21, 24; 1 John 2:16

See: [Flesh](#)

How was Paul sold under slavery to sin?

[7:14]

Paul wrote about being sold under slavery to sin. In ancient times, slaves were sold in a market. Here, Paul used a metaphor. Paul was controlled by his desire to sin.

See: 1 Kings 21:20, 25; 2 Kings 17:17

See: [Sinful Nature](#); [Sinful Nature](#)

What is the inner person?

[7:22]

See: [Inner Person](#)

What was the body of death?

[7:24]

Paul spoke about the body of death. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about his body dying. He would die because of sin. Other scholars think this is a metaphor. Paul was speaking about having to die because of sin.

See: Metaphor; [Sin](#)

Chapter 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was unable to do because it was weak through the flesh, God did. He sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be an offering for sin, and he condemned sin in the flesh. ⁴ He did this in order that the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, we who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ⁵ Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit to God's law, nor is it able to do so. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed God's Spirit lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him. ¹⁰ If Christ is in you, the body is dead with respect to sin, but the spirit is alive with respect to righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, but not to the flesh to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you are about to die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the body's actions, you will live. ¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ You did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you live in fear again; but you received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, "Abba, Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. ¹⁷ If we are children, then we are also heirs, heirs of God. And we are joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the eager expectation of the creation waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be delivered from slavery to decay, and that it will be brought into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together even now. ²³ Not only that, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly, as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he can see? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit also helps in our weakness. For we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groans. ²⁷ He who searches out the hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes on behalf of God's holy people according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that for those who love God, he works all things together for good, ^[1] for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ Because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ Those whom he predestined, these he also called. Those whom he called, these he also justified. Those whom he justified, these he also glorified.

³¹ What, therefore, can we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but delivered him up on behalf of us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any accusation against God's chosen ones? God is the one who justifies. ³⁴ Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written,

"For your benefit we are killed all day long.
We were considered as sheep for the slaughter."

³⁷ In all these things we are more than conquerors through the one who loved us. ³⁸ For I have been convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor governments, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Footnotes

8:28 ^[1]Instead of

Romans 8

8:1-17

How was there no condemnation?

[8:1]

Paul wrote that there was no condemnation. Paul wanted people to know that God would never condemn people who believe in Jesus.

See: John 3:17-18; Romans 1:18

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

What are the law of the spirit of life and the law of sin and death?

[8:2]

The first law of the spirit of life was the Holy Spirit's power to free people from sin (see: Romans 7:5, 7-11). Scholars disagree about what Paul was writing about when he wrote about the law of sin and death. Some scholars think he was writing about the Law of Moses. Other scholars think that non-Christians trying to obey the Law of Moses made the sin further and deserve to be punished for disobeying God.

See: 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 2:19

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Die \(Death\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How was the law weak through the flesh?

[8:3]

Paul wrote that the law was weak through the flesh. He was speaking about the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses could not make people righteous because they did not obey it. People have the ability to obey the Law of Moses, but they cannot because of sin. They did the things they wanted to do and did not do things that honor God.

See: Acts 13:39; Hebrews 7:18-19

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

How was the sin in the likeness of sinful flesh?

[8:3]

Jesus came to earth as a human. He had a body just like every other person and looked like every other person. However, he did not sin.

See: John 1:14; Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:7

See: [Sin](#); [Flesh](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write about an offering for sin and condemning sin in the flesh?

[8:3]

Paul wrote about an offering for sin and condemning sin in the flesh. Like the animals that were offered on the altar in the temple, Jesus was an offering for human sins. God punished the sins of human beings in the “flesh” or body of Jesus as he hung on the cross.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:21

See: [Cross](#); [Sin](#); [Flesh](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Cross](#)

How did someone walk or live in the flesh or in the spirit?

[8:4]

Someone walked or lived in the flesh when they did things that were evil and did not honor God (See: Psalm 1:1; 119:1; Proverbs 4:14-15; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:8). Someone who walked or lived in the spirit obeyed the Holy Spirit. They lived in a way that honored God.

See: Galatians 5:16-25

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Flesh](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How did someone set their minds on something?

[8:5]

Paul wrote about people setting their minds on something. Paul was speaking about people who focused on sinning or doing the will of God.

See: Philippians 2:5; 3:19; Colossians 3:1-3; Mark 8:33

See: [Will of God](#); [Sin](#); [Will of God](#)

How was the body dead to sin but the spirit alive?

[8:10]

Paul wrote that “the body is dead with respect to sin.” Some scholars think Paul was speaking about how a non-Christian’s body was dead. This is a metaphor. It was useless and could not serve God. Other scholars think Paul wanted to say the non-Christian would die soon. This was not a metaphor. Paul wrote that “the spirit is alive.” Some scholars think the spirit of the Christian was alive. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit gave Christians life. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit would make people alive when they are resurrected.

See: Galatians 6:8

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “give life also to your mortal bodies”?

[8:11]

When Paul wrote about a mortal body, he was saying that a person would die. When Paul spoke about life, he was writing about how the Holy Spirit would raise believers from the dead in the future and give them eternal life.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:50-54; 2 Corinthians 4:11, 14; Philippians 3:21

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How could people be debtors to the flesh?

[8:12]

A debtor was a person who was needed to repay someone money or to do something for someone else. Paul alluded again to the metaphor of a slave, who had to obey whatever his master wanted.

See: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 4:2-3

See: [Metaphor](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone put to death the body's actions?

[8:13]

Paul wrote about putting to death the body's actions. Paul wanted Christians to stop sinning. They must stop doing the wrong things they used to do.

See: Colossians 3:5-10; Titus 2:12; 1 Peter 2:11

What were the spirits of slavery and adoption?

[8:15]

Paul used the word "spirit" in two ways in verse 15. When Paul wrote about the "spirit of adoption," he was speaking about the Holy Spirit who came to live in the Christian. God adopted all Christians and made them his children. Paul wrote that the spirit of slavery. Non-Christians were slaves to their sin. That is, they were controlled by their desire to sin.

See: 1 Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:7

See: [Sin](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Family of God](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write. "Abba, Father"?

[8:15]

"Abba" (Ἀββᾶ/g0005) was an Aramaic word used by Christians. It means father.

See: John 20:17; Galatians 4:5-7

See: [God the Father](#)

How did the Spirit bear witness with the Christian's spirit?

[8:16]

Paul wrote that the Spirit bore witness with the Christian's spirit. The Holy Spirit helped Christians to know that they are at peace with God.

See: 2 Corinthians 1:22; Galatians 3:14; 1 John 4:13

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How were Christians heirs?

[8:17]

See: Inherit (Inheritance, Heir) How will Christians be glorified with Jesus? Paul wrote that Christians will be glorified with Jesus. He was thinking about when Christians will be resurrected.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Colossians 3:4; 1 Peter 4:13; 1 John 3:2

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

8:18-30**What was the “eager expectation of the creation”?**

[8:20, 8:21]

Paul wrote about the eager expectation of the creation. Paul was speaking about everything in the world, but not people. He was speaking about these things as if there were a person. He wanted people to know that God would make the whole world perfect in the future.

See: [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#)

How was subjected to futility and decay?

[8:20]

Paul said that the world was subject to futility and decay. He was thinking about Genesis 3:17-19. Because Adam sinned, the world was not perfect. Everything dies or is destroyed. This is because Adam sinned. After this, the world did not the purpose God originally created it for.

See: [Sin](#)

How did someone groan in the pain of childbirth?

[8:22]

When a woman has a baby, it is very painful. Paul wrote about this as a metaphor. He was talking about suffering, but this suffering would end and something new would come.

See: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Matthew 24:8

What were the firstfruits of the Spirit?

[8:23]

Paul wrote about the firstfruits of the spirit. He was speaking about the Holy Spirit beginning to live in Christians was the first of God’s blessings to come to Christians. Christians would also have more blessings.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

When did Christians groan?

[8:23]

Paul wrote that Christians groan. Christians suffer while they wait for their future resurrection.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:2-5

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What was adoption, the redemption of our body?

[8:23]

Paul wrote about adoption, the redemption of our body. Christians are adopted by God and children of God. This will completely happen when they are resurrected. When Paul wrote about the redemption of the body, he was speaking about the body after it is resurrected.

See: Ephesians 1:14

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

How did the Holy Spirit intercede for Christians with inexpressible groans?

[8:26]

The Holy Spirit intercedes for Christians. He prays for Christians. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about the Holy Spirit giving Christians the gift of speaking in tongues. He helps Christians to pray for the right things (see: 1 Corinthians 14:2). Others scholars think the Holy Spirit prayed for people but he does not need to speak.

See: Ephesians 2:18

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)[Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#);[Speaking in Tongues](#)

How did the person who searches the hearts know the mind of spirit?

[8:27]

Paul wrote that the person who searches the hearts, knows the mind of the spirit. He was speaking about God knows what the Holy Spirit says was saying in prayer, even if the Christian does not. These prayers were always perfect and in agreement with God's will for people. Thus it was certain that God would respond to those prayers.

See: Jeremiah 17:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

How was someone called according to God's purpose?

[8:28]

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#)

What was foreknown?

[8:29]

God foreknows things. He knows that they are going to happen before they happen. Some scholars think God knows things about Christians (see: Acts 26:5; 2 Peter 3:17). Other scholars think God chose who would believe in Jesus (see: Jeremiah 1:5; Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:2; also 1 Peter 1:20).

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

How was someone predestined?

[8:29]

See: [Predestine \(Predestination\)](#)

How was someone conformed to the image of his son?

[8:29]

Paul wrote about people being conformed to the image of his son. Christians will be resurrected and will be changed to be like Jesus. Perhaps Paul was thinking about how Christians gradually become more like Jesus. That is, Christians begin to do more of the types of things that Jesus did.

See: Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Colossians 1:15

See: [Son of God](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#)

Who was the firstborn?

[8:29]

See: [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#)

How was someone justified?

[8:30]

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

How are people glorified?

[8:30]

Paul wanted people to know that God returned people to the glory that Adam lost in Eden (see: Genesis 3; Romans 3:23). Some scholars think Paul was speaking about the future resurrection of Christians (see: Romans 5:2; 8:17, 18, 21; 2 Corinthians 4:17). Other scholars think Paul was speaking about Christians doing the types of things Jesus did after they believe in Jesus.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

8:31-39

Why did Paul write, “God is for us”?

[8:31]

Paul wrote that God is for us. He wanted people to know that God blessed and favored people in many ways. Christians are not enemies of God.

See: 1 Samuel 14:6; Psalm 118:6; Jeremiah 1:19; John 10:28-30; 1 John 4:4

How did Jesus not spare his own son?

[8:32]

Paul wrote that God did not spare his own son. That is, he did not stop Jesus from dying. Perhaps Paul was also thinking about Abraham being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac (see: Genesis 22:1-14).

See: John 3:16; 1 John 4:10

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Who were God’s chosen people?

[8:33]

Paul wrote about God choosing Christians.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

What was nakedness?

[8:35]

Paul wrote about nakedness. He was speaking about someone who did not have enough clothes on. They did not have enough clothes to protect them against the cold.

See: 1 Corinthians 4:11; 2 Corinthians 11:27

How were Christians like sheep for the slaughter?

[8:35]

Paul wrote the same thing as Psalm 44:22. This psalm was about how God abandoned Israel to being slaughtered like animals. Other verses in the Old Testament use the same metaphor (see: Jeremiah 11:19;

12:3; 51:40; Zechariah 11:4-5). Paul was not speaking about an animal sacrifice on an altar. He was speaking about animals that were butchered for their meat. Paul was speaking about Christians being persecuted as if they were animals.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:30-31; 2 Corinthians 4:8-12

See: [Metaphor](#)

What were things present and things to come?

[8:38]

Paul wrote about things present and things to come. Paul wanted Christians to know that nothing could separate Christians from God. In ancient Israel, people thought that all things could be divided into this age and the age to come (see: Matthew 12:32).

See: Ephesians 1:21; 2 Timothy 1:12

What were powers?

[8:38]

Paul wrote about certain powers. He was speaking about angels.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16; 1 Peter 3:22

See: [Angel](#)

Chapter 9

¹ I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie, and my conscience bears witness with me in the Holy Spirit ² that for me there is great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself would be cursed and set apart from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴ They are Israelites. They have adoption, the glory, the covenants, the gift of the law, the ministry in the temple, and the promises. ⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs from whom Christ has come with respect to the flesh—he who is God over all. May he be praised forever. Amen.

⁶ But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For it is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel. ⁷ Neither are all Abraham's descendants truly his children. But, "It is through Isaac that your descendants will be called." ⁸ That is, the children of the flesh are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. ⁹ For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and a son will be given to Sarah." ¹⁰ Not only this, but after Rebekah also had conceived by one man, our father Isaac— ¹¹ for the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad, so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand, ¹² not because of actions, but because of him who calls—it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³ It is just as had been written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

¹⁴ What then will we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be. ¹⁵ For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

¹⁶ So then, it is not because of him who wills, nor because of him who runs, but because of God, who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, so that I might demonstrate my power in you, and so that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸ So then, God has mercy on whom he wishes, and whom he wishes, he makes stubborn.

¹⁹ You will say then to me, "Why does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will?" ²⁰ On the contrary, man, who are you who answers against God? Will what has been molded say to the one who molds it, "Why did you make me this way?" ²¹ Does the potter not have the right over the clay to make from the same lump a container for honorable use, and another container for dishonorable use? ²² What if God, who is willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience containers of wrath prepared for destruction? ²³ What if he did this in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon containers of mercy, which he had previously prepared for glory? ²⁴ What if he did this also for us, whom he also called, not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles? ²⁵ As he says also in Hosea:

"I will call them 'my people' who were not my people,
and her 'beloved' who was not beloved.

²⁶ Then it will be that where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,'
there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel,

"Though the number of the sons of Israel were as the sand of the sea,
it will be a remnant that will be saved,

²⁸ for the Lord will execute his word
on the earth completely and without delay."

²⁹ As Isaiah had said previously,

"If the Lord of hosts
had not left us descendants,
we would be like Sodom,
and we would have become like Gomorrah."

³⁰ What will we say then? That the Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, laid hold of righteousness, the righteousness by faith. ³¹ But Israel, who did pursue a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. ³² Why not? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if by works. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling, ³³ as it has been written,

"Look, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling
and a rock of offense.
He who believes in it will not be ashamed."

Romans 9

9:1-5

Why did Paul speak in solemn oaths?

[9:1]

In ancient Israel, when people wanted to insist that they were telling the truth, they sometimes invited God or Jesus to be a witness of what they said. Paul often did this. Here he used a solemn oath in Jesus and the Holy Spirit and implied. He believed God would punish him if he lied. He also appealed to his own conscience.

See: Romans 1:9; 9:1; 2 Corinthians 1:23; 11:31; Galatians 1:20; 1 Thessalonians 2:5, 10

See: [Conscience](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Conscience](#)

How was someone "cursed and set apart from Christ"?

[9:3]

Paul wrote about being "cursed and set apart Christ." This could not happen to Paul. God would not condemn Paul to save Israel. Someone who is cursed is condemned by God and sent to be punished in hell forever (see: 1 Corinthians 16:22; Galatians 1:8-9; also 1 Corinthians 12:3). They were separated from Jesus forever (see: Romans 8:35).

See: Exodus 32:32; Galatians 1:8-9

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

Who were Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh?

[9:3]

Paul spoke his kinsmen according to the flesh. He was speaking about the Jews.

See: Esther 8:6; Acts 13:26; Romans 4:1

See: [Flesh](#)

How did Israel have adoption?

[9:4]

Paul wrote that God adopted Israel. They were God's people and that he was their Father.

See: Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Hosea 11:1; Romans 8:15-17

See: [People of God](#); [God the Father](#); [People of God](#)

How did Israel have glory?

[9:4]

Israel had glory from God. Paul was speaking about how God could often be seen in Israel. He was in a pillar of fire and a cloud (see: Exodus 14:24), on Mount Sinai (see: Exodus 24:16), in an assembly (see: Numbers 16:19; 20:6), in the tabernacle (see: Exodus 40:34), in the temple (see: 1 Kings 8:10-11). In all these cases, the glory of God was a blessing only for Israel.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Temple](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did Israel have the “ministry in the temple”?

[9:4]

Paul wrote about the “ministry”(λατρεία/g2999), “worship”, or “service” to God (see: John 16:2; Hebrews 9:1). Some scholars think that this was Israel’s worship of God. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about the sacrifice Israel made according to the Law of Moses.

See: 1 Chronicles 6:31, 48, 49; Ezra 6:18; Luke 1:8-9; Hebrews 9:1

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Who were the Israelite’s patriarchs?

[9:5]

Paul wrote about the patriarchs or fathers of Israel. Some scholars think he was speaking about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about all the ancestors of the Israelites (see: Acts 2:29; 7:9).

See: Matthew 3:9-10; Romans 15:8; Hebrews 7:4

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

How did Jesus come with respect to the flesh?

[9:5]

Paul wrote about Jesus coming with respect to the flesh. He came to the earth as a person. He was an Israelite.

See: John 1:14; Romans 1:3; 8:3; 1 Timothy 3:16

See: [Flesh](#)

9:6-18

How was it that “it is not as though the Word of God has failed”?

[9:6]

People could say that the word of God failed in some way. That is, God lied. Paul disagreed with this. The things God said would happen did happen.

See: Numbers 23:19; Isaiah 55:10-11; Matthew 24:35; Romans 3:3; Hebrews 6:17-18

See: [Word of God](#)

Who were the children of the flesh?

[9:8]

Paul wrote about the children of the flesh. He was speaking about Abraham's descendants.

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

Who were the children of promise?

[9:8]

Paul wrote about the children of promise. He was writing about the children who were born as a result of the promise God gave Abraham. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about Christians who were also Jews. Others scholars think that it referred to all Christians.

See: Galatians 3:26-29; 4:22-31

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#)

What was "the purpose of God according to choice"?

[9:11]

Paul wrote about the "purpose of God according to choice." He was saying that God's plan that he made earlier would continue to be carried out, because it was based on the choice that God himself made.

See: Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2 Peter 1:10

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

How did God love Jacob and hate Esau?

[9:13]

Paul wrote that God loved Jacob, but God hated Esau. This was the same thing written in Malachi 1:3, God loved the nation of Israel and he hated the nation of Edom. Some scholars think God hates the people of Edom. Other scholars think Paul was just contrasting how God felt about these two nations (see: Genesis 29:30-33; Deuteronomy 21:15).

See: Matthew 10:37; Luke 14:26

Why did Paul use questions in this passage?

[9:14]

Paul used questions and answers as a way to help people. People often taught in this way. The teacher said what someone would say if they disagreed with the teacher. This person would ask questions of the teacher. The teacher then answered these questions. Here, Paul asked questions that a Jewish person would ask him if the Jewish person rejected the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#)

Is there unrighteousness with God?

[9:14]

God is perfectly righteous. There is no unrighteousness in him. Paul asked this question so that he could reject it.

See: Deuteronomy 32:4; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Psalm 145:17; Revelation 16:7

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Why did Paul write, "may it never be"?

[9:14]

See: Romans 3:4

How was Pharaoh raised up?

[9:17]

Paul wrote the same things as Exodus 9:16. God raised up Pharaoh. God gave Pharaoh permission to rule. He served God even though he did not want to serve God.

See: Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 45:1-3; Daniel 5:18-21

9:19-33

Why did Paul ask, “why does he still find fault”?

[9:19]

Paul imagined how someone might object to the gospel.

See: Daniel 4:35; James 1:13-14

See: [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write about someone who makes pots?

[9:20]

Paul wrote the same thing as Isaiah 45:9. Paul spoke about someone who makes pots. This is a metaphor. He wanted people to know that people have no right to tell God how to treat them.

See: Job 33:13; 40:2; Isaiah 29:15-16; 45:9-11; 64:8-9; Jeremiah 18:1-6

See: [Metaphor](#)

What were containers for honorable and dishonorable uses?

[9:21]

Paul wrote about containers made of clay (see: Luke 8:16; John 4:28). One type was only used for specific reasons. The other type could be used for any reason. This was a metaphor. Paul wanted people to know that God had the right to use people as he desired.

See: Acts 9:15; 2 Timothy 2:20-21

Why did Paul write about containers of wrath prepared for destruction and containers of mercy?

[9:22, 9:23]

God's wrath was going to destroy container of wrath. Sometimes the metaphor of smashing a clay jar was a symbol of God's judgement in the last days (see: Psalm 2:9; Isaiah 30:14; Jeremiah 19:11; Revelation 2:27). God was already ready to show mercy to people.

See: Exodus 9:16; Proverbs 16:4; 1 Peter 2:8; Jude 4

See: [Mercy](#); [Metaphor](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Last Days](#); [Mercy](#)

How were the riches of God's glory made known?

[9:23]

The riches of God's glory were made known. That is, God decided to show his glory to people.

See: Colossians 1:27; Ephesians 3:8; Titus 3:6-7

Why did Paul say the same thing Hosea wrote?

[9:25, 9:26]

Paul wrote the same thing Hosea wrote in Hosea 1:10 and 2:23. Hosea wrote about God restoring the northern kingdom of Israel. This kingdom rejected God. Paul wanted people to know that God's plans would now include Gentiles.

See: 1 Peter 2:10

See: [Gentile](#) ; [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[9:27, 9:28, 9:29]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote. Paul defended the gospel and wanted people to know that it was prophesied that only a few Israelites believed in Christ (see: Isaiah 1:9; 10:22-23).

Why did Paul write about the sands of the sea and the remnant?

[9:27]

God promised Abraham that his descendants would be like the sand of the sea (see: Genesis 22:17; 32:12). This is hyperbole. Abraham would have more descendants than he could count. However, Isaiah wrote that only "remnant" of his descendants would receive salvation. That is, only a few of his descendants would live forever with God in heaven.

See: Ezra 9:8, 14; Isaiah 11:11; Ezekiel 6:8

See: [Heaven](#); [Hyperbole](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Heaven](#)

How did God execute his word?

[9:28]

Paul wrote that God executed the word of God. That is, God would do what he said and finish the things he wanted to do on the earth.

See: Isaiah 10:23; 28:22; Acts 17:31

Why did Paul write about Sodom and Gomorrah?

[9:29]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 1:9). He warned the Israelites that they would be like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah if they rejected Jesus. They would be greatly punished (see: Genesis 18-19).

See: Deuteronomy 29:23; Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 49:18; 50:39-40; Amos 4:11; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7

See Map: Sodom and Gomorrah

How did someone pursue a law of righteousness?

[9:31]

The Jews tried to be at peace with God by doing good things. Some scholars think this is what Paul was writing about when he wrote about the "law of righteousness." Other scholars think Paul was speaking about people trying to be at peace with God by obeying the Law of Moses (see: Romans 7:7, 12, 14). No one perfectly obeyed this law except Jesus.

See: Romans 8:3; 10:2; Galatians 3:21

Why did Paul write the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[9:33]

Isaiah wrote the same thing Isaih wrote (see: Isaiah 8:14; 28:16). He wrote about stumbling. This was a metaphor. People who believe in Jesus will live together with him in heaven. Those who reject Jesus will be punished foreverin hell.

See: Romans 9:32-33; 11:9, 11; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Peter 2:8

See: [Hell](#); [Metaphor](#); [Heaven](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#)

Chapter 10

¹ Brothers, my heart's desire and my plea to God is for them, for their salvation. ² For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For, failing to understand the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes. ⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the law: "The man who does these things will live by them." ⁶ But the righteousness that comes from faith says this: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down); ⁷ and do not say, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart." That is the word of faith, which we proclaim. ⁹ For if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and has righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For scripture says, "Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame." ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is Lord of all, and he is rich to all who call upon him. ¹³ For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. ¹⁴ How then can they call on him in whom they have not believed? How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? How can they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ Then how can they preach, unless they are sent?—As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news!"

¹⁶ But not all of them obeyed the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. ¹⁸ But I say, "Did they not hear?" Yes, most certainly.

"Their sound has gone out into all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world."

¹⁹ Moreover, I say, "Did Israel not know?" First Moses says,

"I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation.
By means of a nation without understanding, I will stir you up to anger."

²⁰ Then Isaiah was very bold when he says,

"I was found by those who did not seek me.
I appeared to those who did not ask for me."

²¹ But to Israel he says,

"All the day long I reached out my hands
to a disobedient and stubborn people."

Romans 10

10:1-15

How did someone have zeal for God?

[10:2]

A person who had zeal really wanted to do something. This could be something good or something evil. Paul wrote that the Jews really wanted to do this that honor God.

See: Matthew 5:20; Acts 22:3; 2 Corinthians 7:7; Galatians 1:14; Philippians 3:6

What was “not according to knowledge?”

[10:2]

Paul wrote that the Jews did not serve God according to knowledge. He wanted to write that the Jews did not know how to honor God or be at peace with him. This was because they rejected Jesus and the gospel.

See: Psalm 14:4; Proverbs 19:2; Philippians 1:9

See: [Gospel](#)

What was righteousness that comes from God?

[10:3]

Paul wrote about a righteousness that comes from God. This is righteousness that God gives to Christians. He gives this to Christians as a gift. They need it to be at peace with God. This does not mean that Christians are perfect or do not sin.

See: Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How did Israel try to establish their own righteousness?

[10:3]

The Jews wanted to be at peace with God by obeying the law of Moses. They mistakenly thought they could do enough good things to be righteous.

See: Luke 16:15; 18:9-12

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How was Jesus the fulfillment of the Law?

[10:4]

Paul wrote that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law of Moses. Scholars disagree about why Paul wrote this. Some scholars think that God wanted the Law of Moses to lead people to believe in Jesus. Other scholars think he wanted to say that the Law of Moses ended when Jesus was resurrected. Other scholars think Jesus perfectly obeyed the Law of Moses.

See: Matthew 5:17-18; John 1:17; Galatians 3:23-24

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Moses wrote?

[10:5]

Paul wrote the same thing Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Moses wanted the Jews to know that they knew what God wanted them to do because God gave them the Law of Moses. He wanted people to know the Law of Moses so they could know about God. Paul wanted people to what Jesus said and did so they can know about God.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was the abyss?

[10:7]

See: [Abyss \(Bottomless Pit\)](#)

What was the word of faith?

[10:8]

When Moses wrote about the word in Deuteronomy 30:14. The word Paul wrote about was the gospel message. People needed to believe in the gospel.

See: Galatians 3:2; 1 Timothy 4:6

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

How did someone confess Jesus as lord?

[10:9] Someone confessed Jesus as Lord when acknowledged that Jesus rules everything.

See: Luke 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 John 4:2-3

See: [Lord](#); [Lord](#)

How are Christians not going to be put to shame?

[10:11]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 28:16. He wanted people to know that he said the same types of things that Isaiah wrote about. The gospel does not contradict the Old Testament. to show that the Scriptures supported his gospel message. He also wanted Christians to know that God would do everything he promised.

See: Romans 1:16; Isaiah 49:23; 1 Peter 2:6

How is Jesus rich to all?

[10:12]

Paul wrote that Jesus is rich to all. Jesus had more than enough blessings to give to everyone. Jesus could bless any and all Christians.

See: Psalm 86:5; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 3:8; Philippians 4:19; Colossians 1:27; 2:2-3

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Joel wrote?

[10:13]

Paul wrote the same thing Joel wrote in Joel 2:32. The Jews did not think the Gentiles could be at peace with God. Paul wanted people to know that Joel taught that anyone could be at peace with God. Therefore, Gentiles could believe in the gospel and be at peace with Jesus.

See: Mark 1:3; John 12:41; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 10:4; 2 Corinthians 10:17; Acts 2:21

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Gospel](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did Paul write, how beautiful are the feet”?

[10:15]

In ancient times, people walked to the place where they delivered their message. In ancient Israel, people also thought feet were very dirty. Paul wrote that the people who told others about the gospel had beautiful feet. He wanted people to know that God sent these people. The gospel they taught was beautiful. This is a metaphor.

See: Isaiah 52:7; 53:1; Nahum 1:15; Ephesians 2:17; 6:15

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

10:16-21

How did someone obey the good news?

[10:16]

When someone obeyed the good news, they believed the gospel. God commanded people to believe the gospel.

See: Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 2:8; 6:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 2:8

See: [Gospel](#)

How did someone “believe our report”?

[10:16]

A “report” (ἄκοή/g0189) was a spoken message (see: Matthew 14:1). The report Paul wrote about was the gospel. Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 53:1. He wanted people to know that Isaiah prophesied that many of the Jews would not believe the message about Jesus (see: John 12:38).

See: Galatians 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:2

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What was the word of Christ?

[10:17]

Some scholars think the word of Christ was the gospel. Other scholars think the word of Christ is the Bible.

See: Luke 8:11; 2 Corinthians 2:17; Colossians 3:16; Revelation 1:9

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing that was written in Psalm 19:4?

[10:18]

Paul wrote the same thing that was written in Psalm 19:4. This psalm was about how the things God created helped people to know about God. They knew enough to believe in Jesus.

See: Romans 1:19-20

Why did Paul write the same thing Moses wrote?

[10:19]

Paul wrote the same thing Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 32:21. Moses wrote about the Gentiles. He said they were a nation and not a nation. This is because the Gentiles did not belong to God like the Israelites did. Paul wanted people to know that Moses prophesied that the Gentiles would believe God’s message about Jesus. The Jews in Paul’s day became angry and jealous because Paul taught that many Gentiles now belonged to God because they believe in Jesus.

See: Hosea 2:23

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

How did Paul understand the things Isaiah taught?

[10:20]

Paul wrote about certain things Isaiah taught (see: Isaiah 65:1-2). Isaiah wrote about Israel. Paul taught that the first part of this verse was about the Gentiles when Paul lived. He taught the second part of the verse was about the Jews who rejected Jesus.

See: Isaiah 52:15; 55:4-5; Matthew 22:1-10; Acts 13:46-47; 1 Thessalonians 2:16

Chapter 11

¹ I say then, did God reject his people? May it never be. For I also am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel? ³ "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have broken down your altars. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." ⁴ But what does God's answer say to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not bent the knee to Baal." ⁵ Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant because of the choice of grace. ⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer based on works. Otherwise grace would no longer be grace. ¹⁷ What then? The thing that Israel was seeking, it did not obtain, but the chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened. ⁸ It is just as it is written:

"God has given them a spirit of dullness,
eyes so that they should not see,
and ears so that they should not hear,
to this very day."

⁹ Then David says,

"Let their table become a snare and a trap,
a stumbling block and a retribution for them.

¹⁰ Let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see,
and bend their backs continually."

¹¹ I say then, "Did they stumble so as to fall?" May it never be. Instead, by their trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them to jealousy. ¹² Now if their trespass is the riches of the world, and if their loss is the riches of the Gentiles, how much greater will their fulfillment be? ¹³ But now I am speaking to you Gentiles, and as long as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry. ¹⁴ Perhaps I will provoke to jealousy those who are of my own flesh. Perhaps we will save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump of dough. If the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, if you, a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them, and if you shared with them in the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not boast over the branches. But if you do boast, it is not you who supports the root, but the root that supports you. ¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." ²⁰ That is true. Because of their unbelief they were broken off, but you stand firm because of your faith. Do not be arrogant in your thoughts, but fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²² Look at, then, the kind actions and the severity of God: severity came on the Jews who fell, but God's kindness comes on you, if you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?

²⁵ For I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, of this mystery, so that you may not be wise in your own thinking: A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the full number of the Gentiles comes in. ²⁶ Thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written:

"Out of Zion will come the Deliverer.
He will remove ungodliness from Jacob,

²⁷ and this will be my covenant with them,
when I will take away their sins."

²⁸ As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake. But as far as election is concerned, they are beloved because of the patriarchs. ²⁹ For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For just as you were formerly disobedient to God, now you have received mercy because of their disobedience. ³¹ In the same way, now these Jews have been disobedient. The result was that by the mercy shown to you

they may also now receive mercy. ³² For God has shut up all into disobedience in order that he might show mercy on all.

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments,
and his ways beyond discovering!

³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the Lord
or who has become his advisor?

³⁵ Or who has first given anything to God,
that God must repay him?"

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Footnotes

11:6 ^[1]Some old copies read

Romans 11

11:1-10

Did God reject Israel?

[11:1]

When Paul wrote this, most of the Jews rejected Jesus. Therefore they were not at peace with God (see: Romans 10:1-4, 16-21). However, God saved some of the Jews, including Paul. Therefore, God did not reject the people of Israel. God still had a plan for Israel.

See: 1 Samuel 12:22; Psalm 94:14; Hosea 9:17

Why did Paul write, "may it never be"?

[11:1]

See: Romans 3:4

How did God foreknow Israel?

[11:2]

See: 1 Samuel 12:22; Psalm 94:14; Romans 8:29-30

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

Why did Paul write, "do you know"?

[11:2]

Paul wrote, "do you know." He wanted to remind people of something they already knew.

See: Romans 6:3, 16; 7:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:2; James 4:4

How did Elijah plead against Israel?

[11:2]

Paul wrote the same thing that was written in 1 Kings 19:10, 14. In that passage, Elijah appealed to God to do something about Israel's sin. Elijah felt like he was the only person in Israel who worshiped God. Paul talked about what happened to Elijah to show that God was doing the same thing in Paul's day. There were not many Jews who believed in Jesus.

See: Numbers 16:15a; Jeremiah 2:30

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write about breaking down God's altars?

[11:3]

An altar was a stone platform on which people offered sacrificed animals. Israel was supposed to destroy altars to false gods (see: Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5; Judges 2:2). However, Elijah wanted people to know that the Israelites destroyed the altars that served God.

See: [False gods](#); [Sacrifice](#); [False gods](#)

How did God reserve 7000 people for himself?

[11:4]

In Elijah's day, God did not allow the entire nation of Israel to reject God. There were 7000 people who did not reject God. He kept 7000 people who were dedicated to serve him.

See: Isaiah 10:20; 28:5; Micah 2:12; Zechariah 8:11

See: [Remnant](#)

How did someone bend their knee to Baal?

[11:4]

Paul wrote about people bending their knee to Baal. People knelt before a statue of Baal to worship Baal. They worshipped Baal.

See: 1 Kings 19:18; Isaiah 45:23; Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

How were the rest of the people hardened?

[11:7]

Paul wrote that the rest of the people were hardened. People could make themselves "hard" or stubborn. The term was sometimes also used when God made people to be more stubborn in their sin. This is a metaphor. They rejected God and it made it more difficult for them to believe in God. Some scholars think that Paul was writing about Jews who rejected Jesus. Other scholars think that Paul wrote about anyone who rejected Jesus.

See: Exodus 10:1-2; 14:17-18; Joshua 11:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

See: [Metaphor](#); [Sin](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul use metaphors in verses 8-10?

[11:8, 11:9, 11:10]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote and David wrote (see: Isaiah 29:10; Psalm 69:22-23). When Paul wrote about the "spirit of dullness," he was using a metaphor. He wanted people to know that non-Christians could not think clearly about God. When he spoke about people being blind and deaf, he wanted to say that they were not able to believe the gospel. When Paul wrote about a net and a trap, this was also a metaphor. People ate at a table and used nets to catch animals. Their enemies would defeat them.

See: Isaiah 6:9-10; John 12:39-40; Acts 28:25-27; 2 Corinthians 3:14; 4:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

See: [Walk](#)

11:11-24

How did someone stumble so as to fall?

[11:11]

Paul wrote about someone stumbling and falling. This is a metaphor. He wanted to write that Israel did not reject God forever.

See: Romans 9:32-33; 11:9, 11; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Peter 2:8

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#); [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#); [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

Why did Paul write about God rejecting and accepting Israel?

[11:12]

Paul wrote about God rejecting and accepting Israel in verse 15.

Why did Paul write, “how much greater”?

[11:12]

Paul wrote, “how much greater.” People often said this in ancient times. He wanted to say that if something is true, then something else must happen or something else must also be true.

See: Romans 5:9

How did Paul provoke the Jews to jealousy?

[11:14]

Paul wrote about provoking people of his own flesh to jealousy. He was speaking about the Jews (see: Romans 8:3; 9:3, 5, 8). He believed that if Gentiles believe in Jesus, then Israel would also believe in Jesus too (see: Deuteronomy 32:21).

See: Hosea 2:23

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write, “their acceptance be but life from the dead”?

[11:15]

Paul wrote that “their acceptance be but life from the dead.” He was speaking about a time when Israel would no longer reject God. Some scholars think when Paul wrote “life from the dead,” he was writing about the final resurrection. At this time, Israel would be saved around the time of Jesus’ return to the earth. Others scholars think Paul was think Paul was writing about when God saved Israel. When this happens, many people around the world will believe in Jesus.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Ephesians 1:10

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is firstfruit?

[11:16]

See: Firstfruit (metaphor)

Why did Paul write about branches?

[11:17, 11:18]

Paul wrote about branches. This is a long metaphor. When Paul wrote about the branches that were cut off, he was writing about the Jews who did not believe in Jesus. The branches that were added were the Gentiles who believed in Jesus. Some scholars think Paul used the word “root” to talk about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Others think Paul was talking about the remnant of Israel. Others think Paul was talking about the Messiah.

See: Jeremiah 11:16; also Zechariah 4:11-14 Psalm 52:8; Matthew 8:11-12; 21:43; John 10:16; 15:1-8

See: [People of God](#); [Remnant](#); [Gentile](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [People of God](#)

How were the branches broken off?

[11:17]

Paul wrote about branches that were broken off. This was part of the metaphor of the olive tree. When God “broke off” branches, he rejected people who previously favored.

See: Jeremiah 11:16; Ezekiel 15:6-8; Matthew 21:43; 26:33

See: [Metaphor](#)

How did someone think too highly of himself?

[11:20]

Paul wrote about someone thinking too highly of himself. A proud person thought he was better than other people. He did not want the Gentile Christians to be proud or arrogant.

See: Proverbs 16:18; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Philippians 2:3-4

See: [Pride](#)

Why did Paul write that the wild branches were contrary to nature?

[11:24]

Paul wrote that the wild branches were contrary to nature. This was part of Pauls’ metaphor about the olive tree. A farmer who might take a branch from a wild tree and cut it so he could make it part of another tree on his farm. This did not happen naturally. Someone had to do this to make it happen. This is what God did with the Gentiles.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul wrote, “how much more”?

[11:24]

See: Romans 5:9

11:25-36

What was a mystery?

[11:25]

See: [Mystery](#)

What was the mystery Paul wrote about in verse 25? Paul wrote about a mystery in verse 25. This mystery had to do with Israel’s hardness. That is, Israel rejected Jesus and this made it harder to believe in Jesus. Paul knew this because God revealed it to him. Paul knew that Israel would not reject God forever. After

God saved a certain number of Gentiles, then God would help Israel to stop rejecting Jesus. All Israel would believe in Jesus.

See: Ezekiel 36:16-38; 2 Corinthians 3:14-16

See: [Mystery](#)

How would the full numbers of the Gentiles come in?

[11:25]

many Gentiles would be saved. Other scholars think was writing about God completely blessing the Gentiles.

See: Luke 21:24; Ephesians 1:9-10

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Who is Israel in verse 26?

[11:26]

See: Israel; People of God

Why did Paul use the word “saved” in verse 26?

[11:26]

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote?

[11:26, 11:27]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote (see: Isaiah 59:20-21, 27:9, Jeremiah 31:33-340. He wanted people to know that the Bible proved that God would one day save Israel. In the Old Testament, God often saved Israel. Here, Paul wrote about Jesus.

See: [Zion](#); [Israel](#); [Zion](#)

What covenant did Paul write about in verse 27?

[11:27]

Paul wrote about a covenant in verse 27. Some scholars think Paul was writing about the new covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:33-34). Other scholars think that Paul was writing about the covenant God made with Abraham (see: Romans 11:28).

See: Jeremiah 31:31-34; 50:20; Ezekiel 36:25-29; 2 Corinthians 3:1-11; Hebrews 7:22; 8:6-12; 10:16; 12:24; 13:20

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#); [New Covenant](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#)

How were the Israelites enemies for your sake?

[11:28]

Paul wrote that the Israelites were enemies for your sake. The Israelites who reject God were enemies of God. Because of this, they were also enemies of Christians. However, God wanted the Gentiles to be reconciled to himself.

See: Acts 14:2; 17:5-7, 13; 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16

How did God shut up all into disobedience?

[11:32]

Paul wrote that every person is a sinner (see: Romans 3:19). Paul wanted people to know that if Jews or Gentiles were saved, they were saved from being an enemy of God. They would stop fighting against God.

See: Galatians 3:22

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[11:24, 11:35]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 40:13). He wanted people to know that God was perfectly wise and knows everything. People could not understand God because they are people and not God. No person knows what God is thinking. No person can say that God owes them something.

See: Psalm 92:5; 1 Corinthians 2:16

Why did Paul write, “from him and through him and to him are all things”?

[11:36]

He wanted people to know that God created everything. God also keeps everything alive. If God wanted nothing to exist in the world, then everything would stop existing. Every was also created to honor God.

Chapter 12

¹ I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This is your reasonable service. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Do this so that you can test and approve what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

³ For by the grace that was given to me I say to everyone among you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather, think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has given you. ⁴ For we have many members in one body, but not all the members have the same function. ⁵ In the same way, we who are many are one body in Christ, and are individually members of each other. ⁶ We have different gifts according to the grace that was given to us. If one's gift is prophecy, let it be done according to the proportion of his faith. ⁷ If one's gift is service, let him serve. If one has the gift of teaching, let him teach. ⁸ If one's gift is encouragement, let him encourage. If one's gift is giving, let him do it generously. If one's gift is leading, let it be done with diligence. If one's gift is in showing mercy, let it be done with cheerfulness.

⁹ Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; hold on to that which is good. ¹⁰ Concerning love of the brothers, be affectionate to one another. Concerning honor, respect one another. ¹¹ Concerning diligence, do not be hesitant. Concerning the spirit, be eager. Concerning the Lord, serve him. ¹² Rejoice in hope, endure tribulation, be faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share in the needs of God's holy people. Find many ways to show hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not think in proud ways, but accept lowly people. Do not be wise in your own thoughts. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil. Do good things in the sight of all people. ¹⁸ If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people. ¹⁹ Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give way to the wrath of God. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay," says the Lord."

²⁰ But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him.
If he is thirsty, give him a drink.
For if you do this, you will heap coals of fire on his head."

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12

12:1-2

What was a living sacrifice?

[12:1]

In ancient Israel, people killed animals as sacrifices to God. When the priest offered these animals to God, the animals were already dead. When Paul wrote about a living sacrifice people were probably confused. However, he wanted Christians to know when they lived in a way that honored God, this was a type of sacrifice or offering to God.

See: Isaiah 56:7; Romans 6:13; 1 Peter 2:5

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

What is a reasonable service?

[12:1]

Paul wrote about a reasonable service. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that it was right for them to serve God. This is because God was gracious and merciful to people. Other scholars think Paul wanted people to serve God completely.

See: Psalm 19:14; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

See: [Mercy](#); [Mercy](#)

How was someone conformed to this world?

[12:2]

Someone who was conformed to this world did evil things. They did the same types of things non-Christians did.

See: John 15:19; Ephesians 4:22-24; 1 Peter 1:14; 1 John 2:15-17

See: [World](#)

How were Christians to be transformed by the renewal of their mind?

[12:2]

God wanted Christians to think in a different way than they thought about before they were Christians. God changed Christians so that they could think in a new way.

See: Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 13:14; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10

See: [Mind](#)

What is the will of God?

[12:2]

See: [Will of God](#)

12:3-8

How did people think highly of themselves?

[12:3]

Paul wrote about people thinking highly of themselves. People often think they are greater than they are and deserve to be honored more than they should be honored. This was wrong. It is pride.

See: Proverbs 26:12; Micah 6:8; 2 Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 6:3; Philippians 2:3-4; James 4:6, 10

See: [Pride](#)

How did someone think with sober judgment?

[12:3]

Paul wrote about someone thinking with sober judgment. He wanted people to think carefully and wisely about the things they did.

See: 1 Peter 4:7; 5:8; Titus 2:2

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What is the measure and proportion of faith?

[12:3]

Paul wrote about the measure (see: Romans 12:3) and proportion of faith (see: Romans 12:6). Some scholars think Paul was writing about the amount of faith that God gave to a person. Other scholars think that Paul was writing about the spiritual gift of faith that God gave to certain people.

See: John 3:34; Ephesians 4:7-13

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What were the body and its members?

[12:4]

Paul wrote about a person's body. A body has many different parts or "members"(μέλος/g3196). Each body part did something specific. Paul used this as a metaphor. He wanted every Christian to know that they each served God in a specific way.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 5:30; Colossians 1:18

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did people have different gifts?

[12:6]

Paul wrote that Christians have different gifts. He was writing about spiritual gifts.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10-11

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of prophecy?

[12:6]

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

12:9-21

How did someone hold on to something good?

[12:9]

Paul wrote about holding on to something good. This is a metaphor. Paul wanted Christians to always try to do good things.

See: Psalm 34:14; Amos 5:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:11

See: [Metaphor](#)

How did someone hesitate?

[12:11]

Someone hesitated when they thought too much about what they were going to do and did not do anything because of it. Perhaps they did this because they did not want to do anything or did not want to do something at a certain time. That is, they were lazy.

See: Proverbs 13:4; Matthew 25:5-6; Hebrews 6:11-12; 10:38; Revelation 3:15-16

How did Paul want people to be eager?

[12:11]

Paul wrote, "concerning the spirit, be eager." Some scholars think Paul wanted Christians to be eager or excited to do something. Other scholars think Paul wanted people to know that the Holy Spirit can help them be eager or excited to do something.

See: 1 Peter 1:22

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How did someone rejoice in hope?

[12:12]

Someone rejoiced in hope when they trusted God's plan for them. They knew God would favor them. Therefore, they should rejoice.

See: Psalm 16:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17; 1 Peter 4:13

See: [Hope](#); [Hope](#)

How does someone share in the needs of people?

[12:13]

Paul wrote about people sharing in the needs of other people. Paul wanted Christians to help poor people who need things to live.

See: Acts 11:27-30; 2 Corinthians 9:12; Galatians 2:10; Hebrews 6:10; 13:16

What is hospitality?

[12:13]

See: [Hospitable \(Hospitality\)](#)

How were people of the same mind toward one another?

[12:16]

Paul wrote about people being the same mind toward one another. He wanted Christians to be at peace with one another.

See: Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Peter 3:8

See: [Mind](#)

How did Paul want Christians to live?

[12:18]

Paul wrote about how Christians should live. He did not want them to repay evil for evil (see: Romans 12:17). He also did not want Christians to avenge themselves (see: Romans 12:19). He did not want Christians to do evil things to people because they did evil things to them.

See: Exodus 23:4-5; 1 Samuel 25:26, 31, 33-34; Proverbs 20:22; Matthew 5:39; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:9

How did someone give way to the wrath of God?

[12:19]

In the last days, God will punish people with his wrath. He will punish people for doing evil things. Paul did not want Christians to try to punish people. He knew God would punish people. This is something that God should do. People should not do this because they do not know everything.

See: Ezekiel 25:12-14; Nahum 1:2-3; Romans 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Last Days](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Moses wrote?

[12:19]

Paul wrote the same thing Moses wrote (see: Deuteronomy 32:35). He wanted people to know that he taught the same things Moses taught. He wanted people to trust that God would punish people.

See: Hebrews 10:30

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Solomon wrote?

[12:20]

Paul wrote the same thing Solomon wrote (see: Proverbs 25:21). Solomon wanted the Israelites to help their enemies and not take revenge on them. Paul wrote that this will heap coal of fire on their heads. This is a metaphor. Some scholars think the person will be ashamed if a Christians is kind to them after they do something evil to the Christian. Other scholars think Paul was writing about God punishing them. If Christians do not try to punish this person, then God will punish them more (see: Psalm 140:10).

See: 2 Kings 6:22; Matthew 5:43-45

See: [Fire](#); [Metaphor](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Fire](#)

How was someone not overcome by evil or overcome evil with good?

[12:21]

Paul wrote about someone not being overcome by evil. He did not want people to get so angry that they tried to punish people. Instead, he wanted them to good things even though people did evil things to them.

See: Proverbs 16:32; Luke 6:27-30; 1 Peter 3:9

Chapter 13

¹ Let every soul be subject to higher authorities, for there is no authority unless it comes from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God. ² Therefore he who rebels against that authority opposes the command of God; and those who oppose it will receive judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers are not a terror to those who do good deeds, but to those who do evil deeds. Do you desire to have no fear of the one in authority? Do what is good, and you will receive his praise. ⁴ For he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for he does not carry the sword for no reason. For he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath on the one who does evil. ⁵ Therefore you must be subject, not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience. ⁶ Because of this you pay taxes also. For authorities are servants of God, who attend to this very thing continually. ⁷ Pay to everyone what is owed to them: tax to whom tax is due, toll to whom toll is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due.

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another. For he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet," and if there is any other commandment it is summed up in this, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

¹¹ Because of this, you know the time, that it is already the hour for you to awake out of sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. ¹² The night has advanced, and the day is near. Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk appropriately, as in the day, not in drunken celebrations or drunkenness; and let us not walk in sexual immorality or in uncontrolled lust, and not in strife or jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts.

ROMANS 13

13:1-7

What is the soul?

[13:1]

See: [Soul](#)

How was someone subject to their rulers?

[13:1]

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

What were the higher authorities?

[13:1]

Paul wrote about higher authorities. These were the rulers of a city or country.

See: Proverbs 8:15-16; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17

How were the authorities a terror?

[13:3]

Paul wrote about rulers. These rulers caused someone to be afraid. If a person did something wrong, they would be afraid of being caught and punished.

See: Proverbs 20:2; 14:35; 1 Peter 3:13-14

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did people receive praise from rulers?

[13:3]

If people obeyed those who ruled them, then the rulers might commend them for following their law.

See: Nehemiah 2:8b; Daniel 1:9; Acts 7:10

How was a ruler a servant of God to you for good?

[13:4]

Paul taught that God gave people permission to rule other people. Although God knew that rulers were not perfect, Paul taught that the rulers helped people to do the right things.

See: 2 Chronicles 19:6; Daniel 2:21

How did rulers carry the sword?

[13:4]

In ancient times, people carried sword when they fought in a war. This was a symbol that the rulers could punish people and kill them for doing the wrong things.

See: [Symbol](#)

What is an avenger for wrath?

[13:4]

God's wrath is his anger at sin. Paul said that Christians were to not take vengeance on their enemies (see: Romans 12:19-21), because God punishes every evil thing people do. Paul wanted people to know that God might use rulers to punish people.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:6

See: [Sin](#)); [Wrath](#); [Sin](#)

What is a tax and a toll?

[13:6, 13:7]

See: [Tax \(Tax Collector, Toll\)](#)

13:8-10

Why did Paul not want Christian to owe people anything?

[13:8]

Paul did not want Christians to owe people anything. He did not want Christians to owe money to the government or to other people.

See: Proverbs 3:27-28; Matthew 22:21; James 5:4

How did love fulfill the law?

[13:8]

Paul wrote that love fulfilled the Law of Moses. A person who loves someone else would not harm that person in any way. Therefore, when a person truly loves others, that person has satisfied all the demands of the Law of Moses.

See: Exodus 20:13-15, 17; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-40; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

How was the Law of Moses summed up in Leviticus 19:18?

[13:9]

Paul wrote about love fulfilling the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses wrote about loving other people (see: Leviticus 19:18). If someone truly obeyed this one rule, they would follow all of the Law of Moses.

See: Mark 12:31; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8-10

See: [Law of Moses](#) ; [Law of Moses](#)

13:11- 14

Why did Paul write about awakening out of sleep?

[13:11]

In the Bible, being asleep was sometimes used as a metaphor to talk about someone who does not want to try to live in a way that honors God or to learn about God. Paul did not want people to be lazy. Instead, people should do the things that God wants them to do.

See: Mark 13:35-37; Ephesians 5:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7

See: [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul wrote about the night and the day?

[13:12]

Paul wrote about the time, he was writing about the last days. When he wrote about the night because it was dark and the day because it was light. In the Bible, these were often metaphors about good and evil. Paul warn.

See: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3; 1 Peter 4:7; 2 Peter 3:11

See: [Last Days](#); [Metaphor](#); [Last Days](#)

What were the works of darkness and the armor of light?

[13:12]

Paul wrote about works of darkness and the armor of light. This is a metaphor. He wanted people to live in a way that honors God and not do things that dishonor God. Christians should prepare in some way to do the right things.

See: Ephesians 5:11; Colossians 3:8-17; James 1:21

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone walk appropriately?

[13:13]

Paul wrote that Christians should walk appropriately. This is a metaphor. He wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: Ephesians 5:15; Colossians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 4:12; 1 John 2:6; 2 John 4, 6; 3 John 4

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone put on Jesus?

[13:14]

Paul wrote that Christians should put on Jesus. This is a metaphor. Christians should completely obey Jesus and live in a way that honors God.

See: Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-12

How did someone not make provision for the flesh

[13:14]

Paul wanted Christians not to make provision for the flesh. He did not want Christians to do the evil things they wanted to do. This would only want to make them sin more.

See: Galatians 5:16-17, 24; 1 Peter 2:11

See: [Flesh](#)

Chapter 14

¹ Receive anyone who is weak in faith, without giving judgment about arguments. ² One person has faith to eat anything, another who is weak eats only vegetables. ³ May the one who eats everything not despise the one who does not; and may the one who does not eat everything not judge the other who eats everything. For God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you, you who judge a servant belonging to someone else? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ⁵ One person values one day above another. Another has concluded that every day is equal. Let each person be convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord; and he who eats, eats for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God. He who does not eat, refrains from eating for the Lord; he also gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for himself, and none dies for himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Then whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this purpose Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and those who are living. ¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother? And you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

"As I live," says the Lord, "
to me every knee will bend,
and every tongue will confess to God."

¹² So then, each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

¹³ Therefore, let us no longer judge one another, but instead decide this, that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for his brother. ¹⁴ I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean by itself. Only for him who considers anything to be unclean, for him it is unclean. ¹⁵ If because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food one for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ So do not allow what you consider to be good to be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not about food and drink, but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For the one who serves Christ in this way is acceptable to God and approved by people. ¹⁹ So then, let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God on account of food. All things are clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone to stumble. ²¹ It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything over which your brother stumbles. ²² The faith you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. ²³ He who doubts is condemned if he eats, because it is not from faith. And whatever is not from faith is sin.

Romans 14

14:1-12

How did someone receive or accept people?

[14:1]

Paul wrote about someone receiving or accepting people. He was speaking about Christians accepting other Christians. Paul wanted Christians to love other Christians and to treat all Christians well. This is because God accepted all Christians into his family.

See: Romans 15:7, 1 Corinthians 9:22; 2 John 10

See: [Family of God](#)

How was someone weak in faith?

[14:1]

Paul wrote about Christians who were weak in faith. These Christians believed all Christians should obey more rules than God really expected of them. For example, they believed they must only eat vegetables, must not drink any wine, and must celebrate special days in order to please God (see: Romans 14:2, 5, 21). However, the strong in faith did not feel the need to observe these kinds of rules (see: Romans 15:1).

Some scholars think that the weak in faith were Jewish Christians. Others think that they included both Jewish and gentile Christians.

See: Isaiah 35:3-5; Ezekiel 34:4, 16; Matthew 14:31

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How did someone give judgment about arguments?

[14:1]

Paul wrote about someone giving judgment about arguments. Some scholars think Paul did not want Christians to argue about whether the strong or the weak were right in what they did. More scholars think Paul did not want the strong Christians to condemn the weak Christians.

See: 1 Timothy 1:6

What did Paul write about eating anything or everything?

[14:2]

Paul wrote about eating anything or everything. He was writing about Christians who did not think it was wrong to eat certain foods. However, the weak Christians believed that eating certain foods dishonored God.

See: 1 Corinthians 10:25, 29-30; Titus 1:15

How is someone despised?

[14:3]

A person who felt himself to be strong might “despise” (ἐξουθενέω/g1848) the weak Christians. These Christians did not hate other Christians. Instead, they were proud of themselves disrespect those who were different.

See: Proverbs 1:22; 3:34

How did someone judge?

[14:3]

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How were people servants?

[14:4]

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

How did someone stand or fall?

[14:4]

See: [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#)

How did someone value or observe a day?

[14:5]

When someone valued or observed a day, they thought this day was different than other days. They did this to honor God. Some scholars think Paul was writing about Christians resting on the Sabbath (see: Exodus 20:8-11). Other scholars think Paul was writing about special days of fasting (see: Ezra 8:21) or feasting (see: 1 Kings 8:65) or some other thing the Jews did. Other scholars think that the Gentile Christians believed that certain days were lucky or unlucky.

See: Galatians 4:10; Colossians 2:16-17

See: [Gentile](#); [Fasting](#); [Gentile](#)

How was someone convinced in his own mind?

[14:5]

Someone who was convinced in his own mind knew that he honored God in the things he did.

See: 1 John 3:19-21

See: [Mind](#)

How did someone stand before the judgment seat of God.

[14:10]

See: Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 25:31-32; Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Jude 14-15; Revelation 20:11-15

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Paul write the same things Isaiah wrote?

[14:11]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 45:23). He did this to prove from the Scriptures that every person will have to stand before God and tell him what he did and why he did it.

Why did someone bend their knee?

[14:11]

When someone bent their knee, they did this to worship and submit to someone or something.

See: Romans 11:4; Philippians 2:10-11; Revelation 5:14

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#); [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

What did every tongue confess to God?

[14:11]

Paul and Isaiah wrote about every tongue confessing to God. They wanted people to know that every person will worship God even if they rejected God.

See: Romans 10:9-10, 13; Philippians 2:11

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

How did someone give an account of himself to God?

[14:12]

When someone gave an account of himself to God, he explains why he did the things he did to God. He did this for every sin he committed.

See: Matthew 12:36; 18:23-35; 1 Peter 4:5

See: [Sin](#)

14:13-23

What was a stumbling block and a snare?

[14:13]

A snare was a metaphor like a stumbling block. He was writing about someone sinning.

See: Luke 17:2; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; 10:32; 2 Corinthians 6:3; Revelation 2:14

See: [Sin](#); [Metaphor](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write, “I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus?”

[14:14]

Paul wrote, “I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus. Paul knew the truth about the things the weak Christians believed. Paul knew it was not necessary to follow these rules. He knew that he was right, and knew that Jesus taught the same thing. Paul did not explain how he knew this.

See: Philippians 2:24; 1 John 3:21

How was nothing unclean by itself?

[14:14]

Paul wanted people to know that nothing was made unclean. According to the Law of Moses, certain foods were unclean. However, they were not unclean because they were made unclean.

See: Mark 7:2, 5; Acts 10:14, 28; 11:8; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:15

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

How was something unclean?

[14:14]

Paul wrote about things being “unclean” in two ways. Certain things were unclean because God said they were unclean (see: 2 Corinthians 12:21). Other things were unclean because someone thought they were unclean. If a person thought some food was unclean, and he ate it anyway, this was wrong.

See: 1 Corinthians 8:7

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

How could a Christian hurt another Christian?

[14:15]

Paul wrote about Christians hurting other Christians. These Christians tempted or caused other Christians to sin.

See: 1 Corinthians 8:11-12

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How was good spoken about as if it were evil?

[14:16]

Paul wrote about people speaking about good things as if they were evil things. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about certain foods. People said it was evil to eat these foods when it was not evil. Other

scholars think Paul was teaching Christians that non-Christians would say bad things about them if they saw Christians fighting with one another.

What is the kingdom of God?

[14:17]

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

How was someone approved by people?

[14:18]

Paul wanted God's approval. He wanted God to say that he did the right thing, even if people thought Paul did the wrong thing.

See: Acts 24:16; 2 Corinthians 5:11; 8:21

How did Christians build up one another?

[14:19]

Paul wrote about Christians building up one another. This is a metaphor. They helped other Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: 1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 4:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:11-12

How is something clean?

[14:20]

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

What is wine?

[14:21]

See: [Wine \(Winepress\)](#)

What is faith?

[14:22]

Paul wrote about faith. He was not writing about believing in Jesus. Instead, he was writing about Christians being confident that they were free to eat what they wanted and did not need to follow the rules other people made.

See: Hebrews 11:6

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

How is someone who doubts condemned?

[14:23]

Paul wrote that people who doubted would be condemned. Some scholars think that the weak Christians who felt that they did something wrong condemned themselves. They sinned because they thought they sinned. Other scholars think that on judgment day God would consider that person guilty of sinning.

See: Titus 1:15

See: [Sin](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Sin](#)

How was something not from faith?

[14:23]

Paul wrote about something that was not from faith. If a person did not think he did the right thing, then he did not do the right thing. It was then a sin for him to do it.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and ought not to please ourselves. ² Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, in order to build him up. ³ For even Christ did not please himself. Instead, it was just as it is written, "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me." ⁴ For whatever was previously written was written for our instruction in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures we would have hope. ⁵ Now may the God of patience and of encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with each other according to Christ Jesus. ⁶ May he do this in order that with one mind you may glorify with one mouth the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Therefore receive one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God. ⁸ For I say that Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision on behalf of God's truth, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and for the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will give praise to you among the Gentiles
and sing praise to your name."

¹⁰ Again it says,

"Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

¹¹ And again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples praise him."

¹² Again, Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse will come,
the one who rises to rule over the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles will have hope."

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

¹⁴ I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers. I am convinced that also you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge. I am convinced that you are also able to instruct one another. ¹⁵ But I am writing more boldly to you about some things in order to remind you again, because of the grace given me by God. ¹⁶ This grace was that I should be a servant of Christ Jesus sent to the Gentiles, to offer as a priest the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ In Christ Jesus I have reason to boast of my service for God. ¹⁸ For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me for the obedience of the Gentiles. These are things done by word and action, ¹⁹ by the power of signs and wonders, and by the power of the Spirit of God. This was so that from Jerusalem, and round about as far as Illyricum, I might fully carry out the gospel of Christ. ²⁰ In this way, my desire has been to proclaim the gospel, but not where Christ is known by name, in order that I might not build upon another man's foundation. ²¹ It is as it is written:

"Those to whom no report of him came will see him,
and those who have not heard will understand."

²² Therefore I was also hindered many times from coming to you. ²³ But now, I no longer have any place in these regions, and I have been longing for many years to come to you. ²⁴ I hope to see you when I pass through there on my way to Spain, and to be helped by you on my journey there, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. ²⁵ But now I am going to Jerusalem, serving God's holy people. ²⁶ For it was the

good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution to the poor among God's holy people who are in Jerusalem. ²⁷ Yes, it was their good pleasure, and they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they owe it to the Jews to minister to them with their material things. ²⁸ Therefore, when I have completed this task and have made sure that they receive all that was collected, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

³⁰ Now I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me. ³¹ Pray that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's holy people. ³² Pray that I may come to you in joy through the will of God, and that I may, together with you, find rest. ³³ May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

ROMANS 15

15:1-13

How was someone weak?

[15:1]

Paul wrote about Christians who were weak in faith. These Christians believed all Christians should obey more rules than God really expected of them. For example, they believed they must only eat vegetables, must not drink any wine, and must celebrate special days in order to please God (see: Romans 14:2, 5, 21). However, the strong in faith did not feel the need to observe these kinds of rules (see: Romans 15:1).

Some scholars think that the weak in faith were Jewish Christians. Others think that they included both Jewish and gentile Christians.

See: Isaiah 35:3-5; Ezekiel 34:4, 16; Matthew 14:31

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How did someone bear the weakness of the weak?

[15:1]

Paul wanted the strong Christian not to judge, hate, or shame the weak in faith. Instead, the strong Christians should accept and love the weak Christians. To "bear" their weaknesses did not mean to agree that they were correct, but to tolerate them and try to help them.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:22; Galatians 6:1

How did a Christian please someone?

[15:2]

A Christian pleased someone when they considered the other person's needs and tried to help the other person. Paul did not want Christians to focus on the things they wanted. Jesus served other people. How did Christians build one another up? Paul wanted Christians to build one another up. This is a metaphor. He wanted Christians to help one another to know more about God and to live in a way that honors God.

See: Acts 9:31; Romans 14:19; 1 Corinthians 14:6, 17

Why did Paul write the same thing David wrote?

[15:3]

Paul wrote the same thing David wrote (see Psalm 69:9). Christians know this is a prophecy about Jesus suffering (see: Matthew 27:34; John 15:25; 19:29). When Paul used the word "me," he was writing about Jesus. When Paul used the word "you," he was writing about God the Father. Jesus was willing to be

reproached. That is, Jesus was willing to be dishonored and insulted by dying on a cross. He did this to glorify God and to help people be at peace with God.

See: John 5:30

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#) ; [God the Father](#); [Cross](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Paul write about something previously written?

[15:4]

When Paul wrote about something that was previously written, he was writing about the Old Testament.

See: Romans 3:21; 15:9; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 2 Corinthians 9:9; Galatians 4:27

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How could Christians have the same mind?

[15:5]

Paul wanted Christians to have the same mind. He wanted all Christians to think the same way and to agree because they know what is right.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:10; 10:11; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8

See: [Mind](#)

How could Christians glorify God with one mouth?

[15:6]

Paul wanted Christians to glorify God with one mouth. This is a metaphor. He wanted all Christians to worship God together because they were at peace with one another.

See: Zephaniah 3:9; Acts 4:32

See: [Worship](#); [Metaphor](#); [Worship](#)

How did someone receive or accept people?

[15:7]

Paul wrote about someone receiving or accepting people. He was speaking about Christians accepting other Christians. Paul wanted Christians to love other Christians and to treat all Christians well. This is because God accepted all Christians into his family.

See: Romans 15:7, 1 Corinthians 9:22; 2 John 10

See: [Family of God](#)

How was Jesus a servant of the circumcision?

[15:8]

Jesus was a servant of the circumcision. This is a metaphor. Jesus served the Jews. He wanted them to believe in him and know that he is the messiah.

See: Matthew 15:24; John 1:11; Acts 3:26; Galatians 4:4-5

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul write the same things many other people wrote?

[15:9, 15:10, 15:11, 15:12]

Paul wrote the same things about the Gentiles that many other people wrote (see: Psalm 18:49, Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 117:1, and Isaiah 11:10). Paul wanted people to know that these people also taught that the Gentiles would glorify God. Paul wanted the Gentile and Jewish Christians to be at peace with one another and to worship God together.

See: Romans 3:29; Ephesians 2:11-22; Revelation 7:9-17

See: [Worship; Glory \(Glorify\); Worship](#)

What was the root of Jesse?

[15:12]

Paul wrote the same words Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 11:10). “Root of Jesse” was a metaphor about a descendant of Jesse. Jesse was the father of king David, and Jesus was a descendant of David and Jesse. This ancestor of Jesse was the messiah.

See: Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 12:21; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5; 22:16

See: [Messiah \(Christ\); Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\); Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

15:14-22

How was Paul like a priest?

[15:16]

In the Old Testament, priests offered sacrifices to God to please him. Paul brought gentiles to God by teaching them the gospel. The gentiles who believed the gospel were pleasing to God. These Gentiles were like an offering God gave to God.

See: Acts 9:15; Philippians 2:17

See: [Gospel; Offer \(Offering\); Sacrifice; Gentile; Gospel](#)

How could Paul boast about serving God?

[15:17]

Paul could “boast”(καύχησις/g2746) of what he did for God, because he knew that it was God who did the work through him.

See: 2 Corinthians 12:1, 11-21

What was the obedience of the Gentiles?

[15:18]

When Paul wrote about the obedience of the Gentiles, he was writing about the Gentiles obeying his command to believe the gospel.

See: Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5

See: [Gospel; Gospel](#)

What were signs and wonders?

[15:19]

See: [Sign](#)

Where was Illyricum?

[15:19]

See Map: Illyricum

How did Paul fully carry out the gospel?

[15:19]

Paul fully carried out the gospel. That is, he carefully preached the gospel in the way that God wanted.

See: Colossians 1:25; 2 Timothy 4:17

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How did someone build on another man's foundation?

[15:20]

Paul did not want to build on another man's foundation. This is a metaphor. The foundation was tell people about Jesus and the gospel. Paul did not want to work in a place where someone else had already done this. Instead, he wanted to go to a place where no one had heard about Jesus before.

See: 1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 2 Corinthians 10:13-16

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write the same thing Isaiah wrote?

[15:21]

Paul wrote the same thing Isaiah wrote (see: Isaiah 52:15). Isaiah 52-53 was a prophecy about the messiah. Paul used this verse to explain why he wanted to preach the gospel only in new places. He believed that this was how God wanted Paul to serve him.

See: [Gospel](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

15:23-33

How did Paul not have any place?

[15:23]

Paul wrote that he no longer had any place to go to tell people about Jesus. He wanted to find a new place to go to tell people about Jesus.

Where was Spain?

[15:23]

See Map: Spain

What was the contribution?

[15:26]

The churches with more Gentiles than Jews gave money to help the poor Christians in Jerusalem. When Paul left Corinth, he began to travel to Jerusalem in order to deliver it (see: [Introduction](#)).

How did the Gentile Christians owe help to the Jewish Christians?

[15:27]

Paul wanted the Gentile Christians to help the Jewish Christians. These Jewish Christians suffered greatly and they helped the Gentile Christians to know about Jesus.

See: Galatians 6:6; Philemon 19

What were material things?

[15:27]

Paul wrote about material things. He was writing about money. The Jerusalem Christians were persecuted and very poor. Paul wanted the Gentile Christians to send them money to help them.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:11

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write about sealing fruit?

[15:28] Paul wrote about sealing fruit. This was a metaphor. He wanted to bring this money to the Christians in Jerusalem.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How do Christians strive together?

[15:30]

When Christians strive together with Paul, they work hard together to serve God and to pray together.

See: Romans 1:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:1

See: Pray (Prayer)

Chapter 16

¹ I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is in Cenchreae, ² in order that you may receive her in the Lord. Do this in a manner worthy of God's holy people, and provide her with whatever help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many and to myself as well.

³ Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who for my life risked their own lives. I give thanks to them, and not only I, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

⁵ Greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epänetus my beloved, who is the firstfruit of Asia to Christ.

⁶ Greet Mary, who has labored hard for you.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and fellow prisoners. They are well known among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

¹⁰ Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

¹² Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, laborers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has labored much in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.

¹⁵ Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all God's holy people who are with them.

¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

¹⁷ Now I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned. Turn away from them. ¹⁸ For people such as these do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach. By their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent. ¹⁹ For your example of obedience reaches everyone. I rejoice, therefore, over you, but I want you to be wise as to that which is good, and innocent to that which is evil. ²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen. ²² I, Tertius, who write this epistle down, greet you in the Lord. ²³ Gaius, the host for me and for the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, with Quartus the brother. ²⁴[\[1\]](#)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to make you strong according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,

according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages

²⁶ but now has been revealed and made known through the prophetic writings to all nations, by the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever. Amen.

Footnotes

16:24 ^[1]The best ancient copies do not have this verse. (See: Romans 16:20). v. 24

Romans 16

16:1-16

How did Paul commend Phoebe?

[16:1]

Paul commended Phoebe. That is, he spoke kindly about Phoebe. In ancient times, an author often commended the person who carried a letter for him to the place it was supposed to go.

See: Acts 18:27; Philippians 2:19-30; 3 John 12

How was Phoebe a servant of the church in Cenchrea?

[16:1]

Phoebe was a woman from Cenchrea. She was a serve of the church in this city. Some scholars think Phoebe helped other Christians. Other scholars think the Christians gathered together to worship God in her house. Other scholars think Phoebe was a deacon (see: Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8, 12; 4:6)..

See: Matthew 23:11-12; Romans 12:11; 2 Corinthians 4:5

See: [Church](#); [Worship](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Cenchrea

How were people to receive Phoebe in the lord?

[16:2]

Paul wanted the Roman Christians to receive Phoebe in the lord. Paul wanted these Christians to accept Phoebe as a Christian who represented Paul in some way.

See: Philippians 2:29; Colossians 4:10; Philemon 17; 2 John 10; 3 John 5-10

Why did Paul greet many people?

[16:3]

In ancient times, the person who wrote the letter would greet people at the end of the letter. Paul greeted people who were Jews and Gentiles. He greet men and he greeted women.

See: Philippians 4:21; Colossians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:19

See: [Gentile](#)

How was a church in someone's house?

[16:5]

In ancient times, Christians often gathered together to worship God in a person's house. In Rome, Christians gathered in the house of Aquila and Priscilla.

See: Acts 18:7; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 2

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

How was Epaphroditus the firstfruit of Asia to Christ?

[16:5]

Epaenetus was the first person in Asia to believe in Jesus. After he believed in Jesus, many other people would also believe in Jesus.

See: 1 Corinthians 16:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:18; Revelation 14:4

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

See Map: Asia

How were Andronicus and Junia Paul's kinsmen and fellow prisoners?

[16:7]

Andronicus and Junia were Paul's kinsmen and fellow prisoners. They were Jews and were also put into prison with Paul for being Christians.

See: Colossians 4:10; Philemon 23

How were Andronicus and Junia well known to the apostles?

[16:7]

Andronicus and Junia were well known to the apostles. Some scholars think that Andronicus and Junia had served God so well that even the apostles knew about and respected them. Other scholars think they both had the spiritual gift of apostle.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the household of Aristobulus and Nacissus?

[16:10, 16:11]

Paul wrote about people in the household of different families. Some scholars think he was greeting slaves who served these families. Other scholars think Paul greet Christians who met in the homes of these people.

See: Acts 16:31-34; 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16; 16:15; Philippians 4:22

16:16-20

What was a holy kiss?

[16:16]

In ancient times, people only kissed people in their family. They kissed each other on the cheek. When Christians kissed one another, they did this because they are part of the family of God.

See: 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14

How were false teachers going beyond the teaching that the Romans learned?

[16:17]

Paul wrote that the false teacher went beyond the things the Roman Christians were taught. That is, they taught things that the Roman Christians knew was not true.

See: 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Timothy 6:3-5

See: [False Teacher](#)

How did someone stumble?

[16:17]

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

How did someone turn away from false teachers?

[16:17]

When someone turned away from false teachers, they rejected the things the false teachers taught.

See: 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 3:10; 2 John 7-11

See: [False Teacher](#)

How did the false teachers serve their own stomachs?

[16:18]

Paul wrote that the false teachers served their own stomach. Some scholars think they ate too much food. Other scholars think they did the sinful things they wanted to do. Other scholars think they taught Christians not to eat certain foods because of the Law of Moses.

See: Philippians 3:19; Titus 1:10-12

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How was someone wise and innocent?

[16:19]

Paul wanted Christians to be wise in a certain way. He wanted them to know the right thing to do. Paul also wanted Christians to be innocent in a certain way. He did not want them to know about evil things because they did evil things. Perhaps Paul was thinking about Adam and Eve. They were innocent but Satan tempted them to become wise.

See: Genesis 3; Jeremiah 4:22; 1 Corinthians 14:20; Philippians 2:15

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

How would God soon crush Satan under their feet?

[16:20]

Paul wrote about Satan being crushed. He was thinking about Genesis 3:15. Some scholars think Paul wanted them to know that God would help them to stop the false teachers very soon. Other scholars think Paul wanted them to know that Jesus would soon return to the earth (see: Revelation 20:7-10).

See: Luke 10:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-27; Hebrews 2:8

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [False Teacher](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

16:21-24

Why did people greet the Roman Christians?

[16:21, 16:22]

In ancient times, it was common for other people to also send their greetings to the people of a letter. The people with Paul also sent greetings to the Roman Christians.

See: Romans 16:21-23; 1 Corinthians 16:19-20; Philippians 4:21-22; 2 Timothy 4:21

Who was Tertius?

[16:22]

Paul spoke the words written in this letter. When he did this, Tertius wrote it down.

See: [Ancient Letters](#)

16:25-27

Paul wrote about a mystery. What was this?

[16:25]

See: [Mystery](#); [Mystery](#)

What were the prophetic writings?

[16:26]

Paul wrote about the prophetic writings. He was writing about the prophecies about the Messiah in the Old Testament.

See: Luke 24:25-27, 44-47

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was the obedience of faith?

[16:26]

Paul wrote about the obedience of faith. Paul wanted to write that people who believe in Jesus try to obey God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Book: 1 Corinthians

Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Overview

The Christians in Corinth had many problems. Before they believed in Jesus, they sinned, did evil things, and worshipped false gods. Paul wanted these Christians to begin to do things that honored God. Therefore, he taught them about how to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Sin](#); [False gods](#); [Worship](#)

Who wrote this letter?

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul started the church that met in Corinth. He was staying in the city of Ephesus when he wrote this letter.

See: Pharisees; [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Church](#)

See Map: Tarsus; Roman Empire; Ephesus

To whom did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Corinth. Corinth was a major city in ancient Greece. Because it was near the Mediterranean Sea, many travelers and traders came to buy and sell things there. This resulted in the city having people from many different places. At this time, people believed that the people in Corinth did many evil things.

See Map: Corinth; Greece; Mediterranean Sea

Why did Paul write this letter?

1 Corinthians is a letter that Paul wrote to the Christians in the city of Corinth. Paul had heard that there were problems among the Christians there. They were arguing with each other. Some of them did not understand some of the Christian teachings. Some of these Christians did evil things. In this letter, Paul responded to them and encouraged them to live in a way that honored God.

Outline 1 Corinthians

1. Divisions in the church (1:10-4:21)
2. Sinning against God(5:1-13)
3. Christians taking other Christians to court (6:1-20)
4. Marriage and related matters (7:1-40)
5. Christians doing evil things (8:1-13; 10:1-11:16)
6. Paul's rights as an apostle (9:1-27)
7. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
8. The gifts of the Holy Spirit (12:1-31)
9. Love (13:1-13)
10. The gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy and tongues (14:1-40)
11. The resurrection of Christians and the resurrection of Jesus (15:1-58)
12. Closing (16:1-24)

See: [Church](#); [Apostle](#); [Lord's Supper](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Speak in Tongues](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

1 Corinthians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, called by Christ Jesus to be an apostle by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

² to the church of God at Corinth, those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy people, together with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is their Lord and ours.

³ May grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace of God that Christ Jesus gave to you. ⁵ He has made you rich in every way, in all speech and with all knowledge, ⁶ just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed as true among you. ⁷ Therefore you lack no spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, who called you into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

¹⁰ Now I urge you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and that there be no divisions among you. I urge that you be joined together with the same mind and by the same purpose. ¹¹ For I have been informed concerning you, my brothers, by Chloe's people that there are factions among you. ¹² I mean this: Each one of you says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," or "I am with Cephas," or "I am with Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you, except Crispus and Gaius. ¹⁵ This was so that no one would say that you were baptized into my name. ¹⁶ (I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know if I baptized any others.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel—not with clever speech, in order that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. But among those who are being saved, it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.
I will set aside the understanding of the intelligent."

²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this world? Has not God turned the wisdom of the world into foolishness? ²¹ Since the world in its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. ²² For Jews ask for miraculous signs and Greeks seek wisdom. ²³ But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. ²⁴ But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ as the power and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than people, and the weakness of God is stronger than people.

²⁶ Look at your calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise according to the flesh. Not many of you were powerful. Not many of you were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame what is strong. ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world. He even chose things that are regarded as nothing, to bring to nothing things that are held as valuable. ²⁹ He did this so that no flesh would have a reason to boast before him. ³⁰ Because of what God did, now you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God. He became our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. ³¹ As a result, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 1 Commentary

1:1-9

Why does Paul use the word “called”?

[1:1]

Paul's wrote the word “called”(κλητός/g2822) twice in the first two verses because he wanted the Christians to know God was doing things in the lives of his people. Paul also used the word “called” to talk about himself. He said that God “called” him to be an apostle. That is, he planned for Paul to be an apostle before he was even born (see: Galatians 1:15).

In the same way God called Paul, God called all Christians to himself and called all Christians to be his people before the world was created (see: Ephesians 1:4). God also calls all Christians to be “holy”(ἅγιος/g0040) and to be changed into the “image” of Jesus (see: Ephesians 1:4; Romans 8:29). That is, the things they do and think are to be more like the things Jesus did, said, and thought. They are the things Jesus told Christians to do.

See: [Image](#); [People of God](#); [Apostle](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Image](#)

What was the “church” of God in Corinth?

[1:2]

The “church” of God Paul wrote to Christians in Corinth who came together and worshiped God together in Corinth. Paul's wrote the word “church” to show that this Christians who come together, not about a certain building, house, or temple. He also said the words “of God” (see: 1:2) to say that the church is God's, did not belong to someone. The Christians in Corinth worshiped together in multiple homes.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

See Map: Corinth

How is the church “sanctified” in Christ Jesus?

[1:2]

When Paul wrote that the church in Corinth was “sanctified”(ἁγιάζω/g0037) in Christ Jesus because the church was set apart from other people for God because of Jesus (see 1:30). That is, Jesus made the Corinthian Christians pure and without guilt (see 1:8). This was not because of the good things they did. It was only because of Jesus' sacrifice (see 1:30). Paul that Jesus sanctified the church (see: 1 Corinthians 6:11).

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Guilty](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote, “you were made rich in him”?

[1:5]

When Paul wrote that “you were made rich in him,” it was a type of metaphor. He wanted people to know that God gave different gifts to the Corinthian Christians. Paul said God made the church rich in “all speech” and “all knowledge.” These were very valuable gifts, but they were not money. Perhaps these are two of the spiritual gifts talked about later in the letter (see 1 Corinthians 12:8; 14:1-19; 2 Corinthians 8:7).

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Church](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the “testimony about Christ”?

[1:6]

The testimony about Christ was the gospel. That is, the things Jesus said and did. He died for people's sins and was raised back to life. It was also about the kingdom of God and the things he did to save people (see: 15:1-11).

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Atonement](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

What was meant by the phrase, "you lack no spiritual gift"?

[1:7]

Paul said "you lack no spiritual gift." Some scholars think that God gave the Christians in Corinth every spiritual gift. Other scholars think the words meant that God gave the Christians in Corinth spiritual gifts in the same way he gave all other Christians in other parts of the world spiritual gifts. However, he did not give them every type of spiritual gift.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What is the "revealing" of Jesus?

[1:7]

When Paul talked about the "revealing" (ἀποκάλυψις/g0602) of Jesus, he was talking about a time when Jesus returns to the earth (see 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7). Paul knew the Corinthians "eagerly waited" (ἀπεκδέχομαι/g0553) for this to happen.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is the "day of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

[1:8]

The "day of our Lord Jesus Christ" is when Jesus returns to the earth to start the kingdom of God and judge people (see 1 Corinthians 3:13; 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:14). The Old Testament prophets also spoke about the day of the Lord use similar phrases (see Joel 2:31; Amos 5:18-20).

See: [Prophet](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophet](#)

What is the "fellowship of his Son"?

[1:9]

The "fellowship of his Son" Paul wrote about is how each Christian are connected and how all Christians are connected to each other. In other letters, Paul wrote about Christians being connected because they are children of God (see: Romans 8:29; Galatians 4:4-6). In this letter, Paul really wanted people to know that all Christians are connected because of the problems the Corinthian Christians were having with one another. This "fellowship" between Christians is through Jesus, and also a way for Christians to worship and obey Jesus (see Acts 2:42; Galatians 2:9).

See: [Children of God](#); [Son of God](#); [Children of God](#)

1:10-17

Was the Christian church at Corinth divided?

[1:10]

Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthian church because they were not united. That is, they disagreed with one another and did not all want to do the same types of things. Some scholars think the church was very divided. They think the Christians divided over the things Paul talked about in this letter. Other scholars think the church was not divided, but Paul warned them because he wanted them to remain united.

Advice to translators: When people are united they think the same types of things, they want the same things, and they do the same types of things.

How can the Corinthians be of the same mind and purpose?

[1:10]

Paul wanted the Corinthians to be of the same mind and purpose. That is, they needed to agree with one another about the gospel which Paul taught them and teaching the same things that Jesus taught. Paul wanted the Christians at Corinth to obey the things written in Scripture not just do what they thought was right. Because Paul preached and taught the gospel to the Corinthians, he helped them to be unified.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Who was Chloe?

[1:11]

Scripture does not say much about Chloe. Some scholars think she was a businesswoman in either Ephesus or Corinth. Some scholars think “Chloe’s people” were Chloe’s family, slaves, or business partners. Other scholars think that if Chloe lived in Corinth, she had friends in Ephesus who told Paul the news of the church of Corinth while Paul was in Ephesus.

See Map: Ephesus

Who were Apollos and Cephas?

[1:12]

Cephas was Peter’s name in the Aramaic language many people spoke at this time. Peter was one of Jesus’ apostles. Apollos was someone who became a Jew and was from the city of Alexandria who taught in Ephesus and later went to Corinth after Paul left (see Acts 18:24-19:1).

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

See Map: Ephesus and Alexandria

What did Paul mean when he asked, “Is Christ divided?”

[1:13]

Paul asked, “Is Christ divided?” Scholars think the question expected a “no” answer because Jesus could not be divided into two parts. These scholars think that in the same way it was not possible to divide Christ, the body of Christ, the church, must also not be divided.

See: [Church](#); [Body of Christ](#); [Church](#)

Who were Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanas?

[1:14, 1:16]

Crispus was the leader of the synagogue in Corinth. He became a Christian when Paul was in Corinth (see: Acts 18:8). Scholars think that Gaius was the man Paul wrote about as the “host of Paul and the whole church”(see: Romans 16:23). Those who lived in Stephanas’ household were the first to become Christians in Achaia (see: 1 Corinthians 16:15). The household was likely richer than most families in Corinth since the house was large enough to hold the entire church.

See: [Synagogue](#)

See Map: Achaia

What were “words of human wisdom”?

[1:17]

Paul spoke about “words of human wisdom.” Some scholars think that Paul spoke about ways of writing and speaking when he used the words “with words of human wisdom.” The word “wisdom”(σοφία/g4678), was sometimes used to speak about they way someone spoke and the way they argued for something.

Paul wanted to say the power of the gospel is different than the power of good arguments. The first comes from God. The second comes from man. The Greeks respected people who spoke well when they spoke and argued in front of other people. Paul wanted the Corinthians to trust the gospel than “human words of wisdom.”

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

In what way can the cross be “emptied of its power”?

[1:17]

Paul said that the cross can be emptied of its power. Paul taught that the message of the cross does not give anything to those who try to come to God by human wisdom. The power of the cross helped people to know about God’s wisdom. That is, the death and resurrection of Jesus is the only way to come to God and be at peace with God. This means that Jesus alone is the only way to be saved from being punished for your sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

1:18-31

What was the “message about the cross”?

[1:18]

The “message”(λόγος/g3056) about the cross was the gospel story. That is, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (see: 15:1-4). The gospel is the message people need to be saved from the punished caused by their sins. However, it was foolishness to the people who did not believe in Jesus.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Who were “the ones perishing”?

[1:18]

“The ones perishing” were people who did not believe the gospel. They are judged, but they will be fully judged after the “day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (see: 1:9; Amos 5:18-20).

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of the Lord](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Who were “the ones being saved”?

[1:18]

“The ones being saved” were people who believed in the gospel and believed in Jesus. A person who believed in Jesus was not only forgiven of their sins, but they were also given a promise that their bodies will be made new (see: 15:51-54). Christians bodies will be made new when Jesus comes back (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Gospel](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul quote Isaiah 29:14?

[1:19]

Paul quoted Isaiah 29:14 to say that God’s thoughts about wise and smart people on earth were the same even in the time of the Old Testament. It meant that God will show that those who are wise, by human standards, will ultimately die spiritually. That is, they will be separated from God forever. Also, God will destroy all the things that smart people thought they knew because these things only end in death.

See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Die \(Death\)](#)

How did God say that the world's wisdom is foolish?

[1:20]

God helped people to know that he controlled what happened after people died by raising Jesus after he died. The wise and smart thought this was foolish. God helped people to know that what people thought was wise in the world was foolish because it did not show anyone how to know God.

See: [Atone\(Atonement\);Resurrect \(Resurrection\);World; Cross;Atone\(Atonement\)](#)

What is the "the wisdom of God"?

[1:24]

Paul talked about the "wisdom of God." He meant God planned from the beginning of the world to save people through Jesus' death on the cross. That is, he did not do what people thought was good and wise. By God's wisdom, Jesus' death and resurrection was preached to people around the world. The wisdom of the world did not teach it to people. The "wisdom of the world" only caused pride and did not help anyone know God. "The wisdom of God" does not have pride because it is pure, peaceable, and leads to righteousness (see: James 3:14-18).

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\);Atone\(Atonement\); Resurrect \(Resurrection\); Preach \(Preacher\);Pride;Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What is the "foolishness" and "weakness" of God?

[1:25]

When Paul wrote about the "foolishness" and "weakness" of God, he meant that non-Christians thought that what God did was foolishness and weakness. When Jesus died and came back to life to save people from sinning, God's "foolishness" became the greatest act of wisdom and power. Jesus death and resurrection helped people to know that God's power, at what men thought was very weak, it was stronger than the power of any man.

See: [\(Atone\(Atonement\); Resurrect \(Resurrection\); Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\); Atone\(Atonement\)](#)

How do the foolish shame the wise?

[1:27]

Paul talked about the foolish shaming the wise. Scholars think Paul spoke about when God judges the world. When he does this, people will know that what God does is opposite to the "wise" things the world. Things the world thinks is right. These scholars think Paul told the wise that they will one day know great humiliation. That is, because their wisdom said to reject the Gospel.

See: [Gospel;Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\); Day of Judgment; World; Gospel](#)

How do the weak shame the strong?

[1:27]

The weak people are saved from their sinning. That is, the weak are those who because of their humility and accepting of the gospel. The strong will not be saved from their sinning. That is, the strong are those who try to honor God by doing enough good on their own. They think they are strong enough and do not need God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\); Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What is boasting in God's presence?

[1:29]

To boast in the presence of God was to say that a person made themselves righteous to God. That is, their own wisdom was able to find a way to save them from sinning. They were able to pay their own debt owed

to God by doing enough good things. Paul said that no human wisdom or human strength is able to pay the debt owed to God because of sin. That is, no wisdom or strength can make someone righteous. Only Jesus' death was able to pay this debt own to God and make people righteous. It was a gift from God (see: Ephesians 2:8-9).

See: [Atone\(Atonement\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Atone\(Atonement\)](#)

How are Christians “in Christ Jesus”?

[1:30]

See: [In Christ](#)

How is Jesus wisdom to Christians?

[1:30]

Paul said that Jesus became wisdom to Christians when he died. After he died, people knew God's wise plan to save Christians. People also knew God's wise plan to judge those who do not believe Jesus. The greatest wisdom is to know and believe that Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Atone\(Atonement\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How is Jesus righteousness to Christians?

[1:30]

Because Jesus completely obeyed God, People can now be at peace with God. They cannot be at peace with God without this or because of anything they do (see: 1 Corinthians 13:12; Galatians 3:1-9; Philippians 3:9-10).

How does Jesus sanctify Christians?

[1:30]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

How does Jesus redeem Christians?

[1:30]

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

How do Christians “boast in the Lord”?

[1:31]

To “boast in the Lord” is to know that God is the only way to be saved from sinning and to honor him. Humans are not to boast of their own wisdom, strength, or riches. They are only to boast of God's wisdom, strength, riches. They are to boast about who God is and what he does (see: Jeremiah 9:23-24). Christians are also to boast because God saved them God (see: 1:26-30).

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

Chapter 2

¹ When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence of speech or wisdom as I proclaimed hidden truths about God. ^[1]² For I decided to know nothing when I was among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴ And my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not be in the wisdom of humans, but in the power of God.

⁶ Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this world, or of the rulers of this age, who are passing away. ⁷ Instead, we speak God's wisdom in hidden truth, the hidden wisdom that God predestined before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But as it is written,

"No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no human heart has imagined
what God has prepared for those who love him"—

¹⁰ For God has revealed these things to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything out, even the deep things of God. ^[2]¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of the person in him? So also, no one knows the deep things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² But we did not receive the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, so that we might know the things freely given to us by God. ¹³ We speak about these things in words not taught by human wisdom but by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people. ¹⁴ The unspiritual person does not receive the things that belong to the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. He cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The one who is spiritual judges all things, but he is not judged by others.

¹⁶ "For who can know the mind of the Lord,
that he can instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

Footnotes

2:1 ^[1]A few important and ancient Greek copies read,

2:10 ^[2]Some ancient Greek copies say

1 Corinthians 2

2:1-5

Why did Paul not speak with “eloquence or wisdom”?

[2:1]

Paul did not speak with “eloquence or wisdom.” Some scholars think Paul did not use eloquent speech or to speak in the way an educated person speaks. This is because human wisdom does not allow anyone to know God. People come to know God through the message of the gospel. Other scholars think Paul did not use eloquent speech because his own ability to speak with wisdom and to argue for the truth of the gospel. He was unable to bring anyone to know Jesus. Instead, he chose to preach the message of the gospel plainly (see: 1:17,21, 23-25).

Advice to translators: When someone speaks eloquently, they speak clearly and perhaps in a beautiful way.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

What is the “mystery” about which Paul wrote?

[2:1]

See: [Mystery](#)

Why did Paul say he wanted to know nothing but “Jesus Christ, and him crucified”?

[2:3]

Paul said that he only wanted to know “Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” Some scholars think Paul’s said he wanted to say that he only wanted to speak the message of the gospel. That is, there is no other way for people to be at peace with God except through believing in Jesus (see: 1:18-25). Paul did not want anything to keep the Christians in Corinth from the knowing Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul speak of weakness, fear, and trembling?

[2:3]

Paul spoke about weakness, fear, and trembling. Some scholars think Paul was physically weak. This is because Paul came from Philippi. There, they beat him and put him in prison. However, Paul did not talk badly about his weakness. He knew God strengthened him because of this weakness (see: 2 Corinthians 12:10). Other scholars think Paul’s weakness was because of a physical illness.

Other scholars think Paul’s “fear and trembling” was because God made him a messenger of the gospel. This was not a message that came from human wisdom. So Paul did not try to use human wisdom to preach the gospel. Fear and trembling showed how careful Paul was to only preach the gospel he was taught (see: Galatians 1:11-12).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Why did Paul not use “persuasive words of wisdom”?

[2:4]

Paul did not try to get people to believe the gospel because he used “persuasive words of wisdom.” That is, he did not use certain arguments to convince people the truth of the gospel. He chose only to preach the gospel. Only the Holy Spirit can truly convince people to believe the gospel. Paul knew it was the Holy Spirit who showed people their sin and their need to believe in Jesus in order to be at peace with God. Also, it is the Holy Spirit who leads people to believe in Jesus. Paul knew that if someone convinces a person to believe in Jesus, another person can get this same person to reject Jesus later.

See: [Sin](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Sin](#)

2:6-16

Who were the “mature”?

[2:6]

Some scholars think Paul used the word “mature” (τέλειος/g5046) to talk about Christians in the same way he used the word spiritual. That is, the mature Christian is one who obeyed Holy Spirit who lived inside of them. Mature Christians want to know God more. They obey God. They want to know God’s wisdom and not human wisdom (see: Philippians 3:12-15).

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Grow in Faith](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

Who were the “rulers of this age”?

[2:6]

Paul spoke about the “rulers of this age.” Some scholars think the “rulers of this age” were demons who influenced certain people. The New Testament writers sometimes use the word “ruler” (ἄρχων/g0758) when they wanted to talk about people who were given permission to rule but who also could not be seen (see: Ephesians 2:2). That is, they are demons and not humans. Other scholars think the “rulers of this age” were human rulers in the time of Paul. That is, the king and other political leaders when Paul was writing. Eventually, there will be no more rulers in the world because they die. And they die because the world is dying (see: 1 Corinthians 7:31).

See: [Demon](#)

How is God’s wisdom hidden?

[2:7]

Although God planned for Jesus to die for people's sins before he created the world, Jesus did not die until a certain time in history (see: Ephesians 3:4-6). God told the prophets and Jewish leaders to look for the Messiah's coming. However, God did not tell them when the coming of the Messiah would happen (see: 1 Peter 1:10-12). The hidden wisdom of God is that he offered to save all people. Also, this hidden wisdom is that Jesus will live within each Christian (see: Ephesians 3:5-7; Colossians 1:26-27).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophet](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How is God’s wisdom “for our glory”?

[2:7]

Our glory means living together with God forever in heaven (see: Romans 8:29-30). Before God created the world, he planned that those who believed in Jesus will live together with him in heaven. This also means that Christians are given glorified bodies when Jesus comes back to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Heaven](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul quote from the Book of Isaiah?

[2:9]

Paul quoted Isaiah so that people would know that God knew the people in Paul's time were not going to understand the gospel. Isaiah's words meant that the gospel was not imagined in the wisdom of man. Also, Paul used Isaiah's words to speak about how those who love God both understand and know God's wisdom. That is, the gospel.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

How is God’s words to Paul and others “through the spirit”?

[2:10]

God's words to Paul were “through the spirit.” Scholars think the spirit of God helped people to know the plans of God. That is, because the Spirit truly knows the things of God, he can help people to know his plans. Only God's power shows people God's wisdom. That is, Paul wrote only “through the Spirit” can people know God's power (see 2:4-5).

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

What are the “deep things of God”?

[2:10]

Paul spoke about the “deep things of God.” Scholars think that Paul wrote the “deep things of God” to talk about how Jesus death and resurrection saves people from sinning. Also, it was from the wisdom of God (see: Romans 11:33).

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What is the difference between the “the spirit of the world” and “the spirit from God”?

[2:12]

“The spirit of the world” only knows the wisdom of the world and is unable to know the wisdom of God. “The spirit from God” knows the wisdom of God and knows that the wisdom of the world will not last. God gives “the spirit from God” to all Christians. Without “the spirit from God,” no human is able to understand the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Gospel](#)

What were the “things freely given to us by God”?

[2:12]

Paul spoke about “things freely given to us by God.” Some scholars think that the “things freely given to us by God” is the gift of being saved by Jesus. Fewer scholars think Paul also wrote about the “spiritual gifts” that he wrote about later in the letter.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What words did the spirit teach?

[2:13]

Paul wrote that he used words taught to him by the Holy Spirit (see: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). That is, he did not speak about the things of God using only words taught by people. This is because human wisdom cannot teach the things of God.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What are the “spiritual truths” that those who are “spiritual” know?

[2:14]

Paul talked about “spiritual truths” that those who are “spiritual” know. Scholars think Paul spoke about the things Old Testament said about the messiah. The Old Testament spoke about the messiah, but people did not know that they spoke about Jesus. Now, Christians knew those truths because God showed them his hidden truths.

Advice to Translators: Those who are “spiritual” are those who obey the Holy Spirit.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who were the “unspiritual” people?

[2:14]

Some scholars think the “unspiritual” people were not Christian. They did not know or believe in Jesus. They thought the things of God were foolish. Paul wrote that unspiritual people do know the things from the Holy Spirit. Other scholars think the “unspiritual” people were Christians, but they were Christians who did not obey the Holy Spirit. That is, they did things that did not honor God.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How does the one who is spiritual judge all things?

[2:15]

Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit searches into all things, even God (see: 2:10). That is, Christians have the Holy Spirit living inside them know God and what he wants them to do. The Holy Spirit gives Christians the ability to know the things that are holy, right and good from the things that are unholy, wrong, and bad. When Paul said Christians are judged by no one, he wanted to say that only God judges what each person does and says (see: Hebrews 4:12).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How do Christians have the mind of Jesus?

[2:16]

Christians have the mind of Jesus because the Holy Spirit shows them how to think about things. That is they are to focus on what Jesus' death meant for how they lived their lives (see: 2:12; Philippians 2:5). Christians are given the ability to know God's word. It is a gift from God through the "Word" (λόγος/g3056). That is, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. They allow a Christian to know the thoughts of God.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 3

¹ And I, brothers, could not speak to you as spiritual people, but instead as to fleshly people, as to little children in Christ. ² I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it; and even now you are not yet ready. ³ For you are still fleshly. For where jealousy and strife exist among you, are you not living according to the flesh, and are you not walking by human standards? ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another says, "I follow Apollos," are you not merely human beings? ⁵ Who then is Apollos? Who is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, just as the Lord gave tasks to each. ⁶ I planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So then, neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything. But it is God who gives the growth. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his own wages according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's garden, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God that was given to me as a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation and another is building on it. But let each man be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid, that is, Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, ¹³ his work will be revealed, for the day will reveal it. For it will be revealed in fire. The fire will test the quality of what each one has done. ¹⁴ If anyone's work remains, he will receive a reward; ¹⁵ but if anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, as though escaping through fire.

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and so are you.

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a "fool" that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written,

"He catches the wise in their craftiness."

²⁰ And again,

"The Lord knows that the reasoning of the wise is futile."

²¹ For this reason, let no one boast in men. All things are yours, ²² whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. All things are yours, ²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

1 Corinthians 3

3:1-9

Who are "fleshly people"?

[3:1]

Paul said the Christians in Corinth were "fleshly people." He wanted to say that the Christians tried to live as Christians by doing whatever they thought was right instead of doing the types of things taught in the Scriptures and the things Jesus taught. These Christians lived in the same way as people who were not Christians.

See: [Flesh](#)

What were the "milk" and "food" about which Paul wrote?

[3:2]

Some scholars think that the "milk" Paul wrote about was a metaphor about the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 1:17-18; 2:2; 15:3-4). That is, in the same way that milk is more digestible for babies so it is easy for people to know the gospel and to obey God. However, as Christians begin to act more and more like Jesus,

they learn more about the different things they need to do to obey and to honor God. It is more difficult for them to live in a way that honors God. Paul used the metaphor of “food”(βρῶμα/g1033) to talk about obeying God after Christians learn more about God and the things he wants them to do.

Advice to translators: Many scholars think that Paul used the word “fleshly”(σάρκινος/g4560) in 3:1 to show that the Corinthians wanted to do things that non-Christians wanted to do. Paul used the word “fleshly”(σαρκικός/g4559) in 3:3 to show that the Corinthians wanted to do things they wanted to do. Some other scholars think there is little difference between the two words.

See 1 Corinthians 1:30

See: [Grow in Faith](#); [Gospel](#); [Grow in Faith](#)

In what way did Paul write about “jealousy and strife”?

[3:3]

Paul used the word “jealousy”(ζήλος/g2205) to write about the Corinthians' strong desire to do the things they wanted to do and the things they thought. Some scholars think division over leadership caused jealousy. That is, some of the Christians thought of Paul being the leader, while others thought Apollos was their leader. The jealousy caused “strife” among the Christians. That is, it caused arguments about who was their leader (see: 1:11). Paul said jealousy and strife showed that the Christians still lived in the flesh. That is, they lived in the same way as those who are not Christians. In the Book of Galatians, Paul called jealousy and strife “works of the flesh” (see Galatians 5:19-21).

See: [Flesh](#)

How did the Corinthians “walk by human standards”?

[3:3]

Some scholars think Paul used the words, “walking by human standards” to mean they lived in the same way as those who were not Christians. Living in this way is “fleshly” and is opposite of walking “by the spirit” (see: Galatians 5:16-18).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Flesh](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote, “as the Lord gave to each one”?

[3:5]

When Paul wrote “as the Lord gave to each one,” he wrote about the specific roles in the church that God gave to Paul and Apollos (see: 1:1; 3:6; 2 Corinthians 10:12-16). Later in the letter, Paul talks about the roles in the church God gave to the Christians in Corinth (see: 12:27-31).

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

How is the growth of the church the same as the growth of a farm?

[3:6, 3:7. 3:8, 3:9]

1. Paul said he “planted”(φύτεύω/g5452). Some scholars think Paul spoke about his preaching the gospel to the Corinthians. Other scholars think Paul spoke about helping the Christians in Corinth to bring people together for prayer and to worship God. That is, he helped them begin a church.
2. Paul said Apollos “watered”(ποτίζω/g4222). That is, after Paul preached the gospel to the Corinthians, Apollos came to the church in Corinth to help it to grow (see Acts 19:1). Most scholars think that Apollos taught and preached the scriptures.
3. Paul wrote that God “gave growth”(αὐξάνω/g0837). That is, God caused the Christians to know more of the Word of God. God chose to use Paul and Apollos to cause God’s work to happen(see 3:5). It was God’s power that caused the Christians in Corinth to grow in their knowledge of God (see 1 Corinthians 2:4-5).
4. Paul wrote that the planter and waterer “are one.” That is, there is no difference between one planting and the one watering. They are both equal. Both the planter and the waterer are God’s servants and workers with one another (see 3:5; 3:9). They were one both through Jesus and in

their purpose to work for him. Their purpose was to see Christians grow to know and obey God more.

5. Paul said Christians were God's field. That is, Christians were not Paul's or Apollos'. They are only God's.

Advice to translators: In 3:6, the form of the Greek verb Paul used for "planted" (φύτεύω/g5452) and "watered" (ποτίζω/g4222) said that

Paul and Apollos did these actions at a particular time in the past. It was completed. The form of the Greek verb Paul used for "gave growth" (αὐξάνω/g0837) said that God did work while Paul and Apollos worked and God continued to work when they were finished.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Worship](#); [Church](#); [Grow in Faith](#); [Word of God](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

3:10-17

What was "the grace of God given" to Paul?

[3:10]

When Paul wrote about "the grace of God given" to him, he wrote about a specific gift from God. He did not mean the message of the gospel in general (see: 1:4). Instead, Paul wrote about God making him an apostle, a "planter," and a "wise builder" in the church (see: 3:6; 3:10).

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#); [Church](#)

What was meant by the phrase, "skilled, master builder"?

[3:10]

A "skilled master builder" was a person who took someone else's design for a building or other project, drew up plans, and watched over the building of the project. God showed Paul and the other apostles how he designed the church. God's planned this before the world began. However, he did not show all of his plan until Paul lived (see: Ephesians 1:3-5; 3:8-10).

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

How did Paul lay a "foundation"?

[3:10]

When Paul lived, people built large buildings on a solid rock "foundation" (θεμέλιος/g2310). In the same way, God's church is built upon a solid, unchanging rock. This is a metaphor for God. That is God's solid, unchanging plan. The scriptures show people God's plan, instructions on how to live and God's promises. Paul laid a foundation for the church by faithfully preaching and teaching the scriptures God showed to him.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Church](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

How is another "building" on the foundation Paul laid?

[3:10]

Paul spoke about someone "building" on the foundation Paul laid. Some scholars think Paul spoke about leaders who caused the church to be divided. Those leaders spoke about "being of Paul" or "being of Apollos" (see: 1:12).

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How is Jesus the foundation?

[3:11]

Jesus is the foundation because knowing about who Jesus is, and the things that he did, causes people to become Christians and then continue to live as Christians. The foundation is the unchanging truth about the things that Christians are given through Christ (see:1:30).

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

Why did Paul write about “gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and straw”?

[3:12]

Paul still spoke about the Christian leaders building on the foundation, which is Jesus. Some of them built by teaching about things that Christians believe. Others do this by helping Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: Galatians 3:3; 5:1-6

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is the “day” about which Paul wrote?

[3:13]

Most scholars think the “day” about which Paul wrote will be the day when Christians come to the “judgment seat of Christ” (see: 2 Corinthians 5:10). Christians will be judged on how they lived their lives on earth. That is, they will be judged on whether they did what God wanted them to do or if they did not do what God wanted them to do. This is not when people will be judged for rejecting Jesus.

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

In what way will fire “test” each person’s work?

[3:13]

Many times in the scriptures fire is a metaphor of judgment. In scripture, fire also meant something was being purified, tested, or even destroyed. Here, Paul used fire to speak about God judging the things each person does. God judges perfectly because he is able to judge the “purposes of the heart”(see 1 Corinthians 4:5). For example, silver and gold are purified by fire. The heat of the fire brings impurities to the surface area, and the impurities can be taken off. The testing of silver and gold was done in the same way. Fire tested the metals to show the impurities.

Advice to translators: When a metal is not all one thing, but has other metals in it that you do not want, then it is impure. These other metals are called impurities.

See: [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Fire](#); [Metaphor](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#)

What was meant by the phrase, “he will suffer loss”?

[3:15]

Paul said that “he will suffer loss.” Paul wanted to say that the person will not be rewarded for the things he does. Instead, the person whose work comes through the fire without being burned away will be given a reward (see: 3:8,14).

See: [Fire](#); [Fire](#)

What did Paul mean by writing that “he himself will be saved, as though through fire”?

[3:15]

Fire tested something and proved its quality. Paul said clearly that the testing fire showed the quality of the things each person did for God (see: 3:13). This is a metaphor. If the things a person did were burned by fire, then he would still be saved. This is because Jesus saves Christians because of God’s kindness (see: Ephesians 2:8-9).

Advice to translators: The phrase “do you not know” implies that the author expected the audience to know the following claim.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Fire; Test](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing that “you are God’s temple”?

[3:16]

Paul wrote that “you are God’s temple.” In this passage, Paul spoke about the temple being the place where the Holy Spirit lived. The Holy Spirit used to live in the temple, which was a building. Now, God’s Spirit lives inside of Christians. Christians are called his body or his “temple.” Later in the letter, Paul wrote that each person in the Corinthian church was also a temple of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:19).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How does someone “destroy” God’s temple?

[3:17]

Many scholars think Paul wrote about people in Corinth who tried to tell Christians to follow the Law of Moses in order to obey God. Trying to do the things in the law “destroys”(φθείρω/g5351) God’s temple. This is because God created the new temple, Christians, though his favor and not by people doing what the Law of Moses said to do (see: Galatians 2:16; 3:3).

Paul warned those people trying to destroy God’s temple. He said God will destroy them. Some scholars think God will destroy those people on the day of judgment (see: Matthew 18:6). Other scholars think Paul spoke about a punishment that happened when he wrote.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Temple](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What is meant by the phrase, “God’s temple is holy”?

[3:17]

The temple of God is “set apart”(ἅγιος/g0040) because the Spirit of God lives there (see 3:16). In the Old Testament, the section of the temple where God’s spirit stayed was “set apart”(see: Exodus 26:33; Leviticus 16:2). Now, Christians have the Holy Spirit in them. Earlier in the letter, Paul wrote that the Corinthian church was “sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy”(see 1 Corinthians 1:2). This is because the Holy Spirit is in them.

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#) ; [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

3:18-23

What does it mean to be “wise in this age”?

[3:18]

Paul talked about being “wise in this age.” Some scholars think Paul wrote to those people who tried to know the things of God by thinking about them and not by reading the scriptures. These scholars think Paul wanted people to accept the gospel, which was foolish to those who thought they were wise without God. Paul made it clear that no one knows certain about God except the Holy Spirit (see: 2:10; Psalm 139:6; Isaiah 55:8-9). Paul also made it clear that the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men (see: 1:25).

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Gospel](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How does God “catch the wise in their craftiness”?

[3:19]

Paul said that God “catch the wise in their craftiness.” Some scholars think God does this by showing them that no human wisdom causes someone to be at peace with God. It does not help the church to grow. In other words, the craftiness of human wisdom only led people away from God and to be destroyed (see: 1:18-25). God helped them to know that using human wisdom, thoughts, and reasonings to speak about spiritual things was not possible.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What was meant by the phrase, “let no one boast in men”?

[3:21]

Paul said, “let no one boast in men.” Once again Paul told the Christians in Corinth that it is God who builds and grows his church. Neither Paul nor Apollos caused any of the growth in the church. Paul said “let no one boast in men” whether Paul, Apollos, or any other leader in the church (see: 3:5-6).

See: [Church](#)

How are “all things are yours”?

[3:21]

Paul said, “all things are yours.” Some scholars think Paul taught the Christians that they belonged to each other, not to him or Apollos. That is, Christians all have God’s love and kindness equally. In other words, for Christians to boast in Paul or Apollos was wrong because only God causes his church to grow.

Paul wrote a short list of the things all Christians shared. He said that they all shared life and death. Most scholars think when Paul spoke about life and death, he wanted to say that everyone lives and dies. For Christians, they know that after they die, they will live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars think Paul also spoke about how none of their current problems were able to separate them from God (see: Romans 8:38-39).

See: [Heaven](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote, “you are Christ’s”?

[3:23]

When Paul wrote, “you are Christ’s” he meant that all Christians belonged to Christ (see: 6:17-20). Instead of being divided, Paul told Christians to live together as one. That is, not only did they belong to each other, they also all belonged to Christ (see: 6:19; Philippians 2:1-4).

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was meant by the phrase, “Christ is God’s”?

[3:23]

Paul used the phrase “Christ is God’s.” He spoke about Jesus saving people. Though completely God, Jesus submitted himself as a human to the things God the Father wanted him to do so that he could save those who believe in him (see: John 6:38-40).

See: [God the Father](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Submit \(Submission\)](#); [God the Father](#)

Chapter 4

¹ This is how a person should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the hidden truths of God. ² Now what is required of stewards is that they are found to be trustworthy. ³ But for me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. For I do not even judge myself. ⁴ I am not aware of any charge being made against me, but that does not justify me. The one who judges me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore do not pronounce judgment about anything before the time, before the Lord comes. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his praise from God.

⁶ Now, brothers, I applied these principles to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that from us you might learn the meaning of the saying,

"Do not go beyond what is written."

This is so that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against the other. ⁷ For who sees any difference between you and others? What do you have that you did not receive? If you have received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? ⁸ Already you have all you could want! Already you have become rich! You began to reign—and that quite apart from us! Indeed, I wish you did reign, so that we could reign with you. ⁹ For I think God has put us apostles on display as the last in line, in a procession and like men sentenced to death. We have become a spectacle to the world—to angels, and to human beings. ¹⁰ We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we are held in dishonor. ¹¹ Up to this present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed, we are beaten, and we are homeless. ¹² We labor hard, working with our own hands. When we are slandered, we bless. When we are persecuted, we endure. ¹³ When we are slandered, we speak with kindness. We have become as the refuse of the world and the filthiest of all things, even till now.

¹⁴ I do not write these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children. ¹⁵ For even if you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ¹⁶ So I urge you to be imitators of me. ¹⁷ That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways in Christ, just as I teach them everywhere and in every church. ¹⁸ Now some of you have become puffed up, acting as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills. Then I will know not merely the words of these who are so puffed up, but I will see their power. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power. ²¹ What do you want? Should I come to you with a rod or with love and in a spirit of gentleness?

1 Corinthians 4

4:1-5

Who were the “us” about whom Paul wrote?

[4:1]

Some scholars think that when Paul wrote “let people consider us,” he continued to write about Paul, Apollos, and Cephas (see: 1 Corinthians 3:22). Other scholars think he also wrote about leaders in the church.

See: [Church](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote that they were “servants” of Christ?

[4:1]

Paul wrote that they were “servants” of Jesus. He wanted people to know that church leaders were servants (see: 1 Corinthians 3:5; 3:21-23). Paul did not want Christians to think certain Christians were greater than other Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 3:4-5; 12:12-20). Instead, Paul wanted to know it was

God caused things to grow (see: 1 Corinthians 1:29-31; 3:6). This is a metaphor. He was writing about the church growing in some way.

See: [Church](#); [Metaphor](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Church](#)

What did it mean to be a “steward”?

[4:1]

In ancient times, masters gave “stewards” (οἰκονόμος/g3623) permission to care for their household. Stewards also did things to serve the household. They always had to please their master. In the same way, God wanted the apostles to care for the church (see: 2:1-5; 3:5-6,10). One day, God will judge how they served him.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Discipline \(To Disciple\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What were the “mysteries” of God?

[4:1]

Paul spoke about the “mysteries of God” (μυστήριον/g3466). These were the hidden plans which God made before the world began. People Jesus died, people did not know about the gospel and the church (see: 2:7,10; Ephesians 3:1-6). God waited until the resurrection of Jesus to reveal these things.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Church](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “stewards are required to be found faithful”?

[4:2]

Paul wrote that “stewards are required to be found faithful.” He wanted people to know that God did not judge stewards by how well they said something or how much they knew (see: 1 Corinthians 2:1; 3:8; 3:13-15). Since God is faithful, he required his “stewards” to be faithful (see: 1 Corinthians 1:9). He did not want people to add to or leave out parts of the gospel (see: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Galatians 1:6-10).

See: [Gospel](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Why was it a small thing for Paul to be “judged” by human courts?

[4:3]

Paul was not concerned if people “judged” him in a court. He was more concerned about the day God will judge him (see: Joel 1:15; 1 Corinthians 1:7-8; 3:13; 5:5).

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Paul not even judge himself?

[4:3]

Some scholars think Paul did not judge himself because he was a servant and steward of God. Because of this, he was not able to judge himself. Only God could rightly judge Paul. Only God could judge if Paul was a faithful apostle, servant, and steward of the word of God. Although Paul did not think he did wrong things, he still knew that God would judge him (see: 4:4-5). He also knew that he did some wrong things.

See: [Word of God](#); [Steward](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Word of God](#)

When will “the Lord come”?

[4:5]

No one knows when “the Lord will come” (see: Matthew 24:36-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

See: Lord; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What were the “hidden things of darkness”?

[4:5]

When Paul wrote about the “hidden things of darkness,” he was speaking about why people did certain things. Only God knows why people do what they do (see: Romans 2:16; Ephesians 5:11-13). God is not concerned only with what people do, but also why people do what they do (see: Matthew 6:16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:12).

What was the “praise” about which Paul wrote?

[4:5]

Some scholars think Paul was speaking about how God will give a test to each Christian on the day of judgment (see: 3:10-15). God will see everything the Christian has done. He will reward each Christian for the good things they have done.

See: [Reward](#); [Test](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Reward](#)

4:6-13

What “principles” were applied to both Paul and Apollos?

[4:6]

Scholars think Paul was speaking about the best ways to preach and teach the gospel. They think he was speaking about certain things he already wrote about (See: 1 Corinthians 3:5-15). Paul wanted the church leaders to learn from the things he and Apollos did.

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Church](#)

What was meant by the words “do not go beyond what is written”?

[4:6]

Scholars think that when Paul wrote “do not go beyond what is written,” he wrote about the Old Testament. Perhaps Paul was writing about the things he wrote that were also written in the Old Testament (see: 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1:31; 2:9; 3:19; 3:20).

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “what do you have that you did not receive”?

[4:7]

Paul asked, “What do you have that you did not receive?” He was writing that a Christian’s gifts come from God (see: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 2:12; 3:10). Christians are only saved because of what God did (see: 1 Corinthians 1:30). Since Christians received all things from God, no one is able to boast because of the things they can do (see: 1 Corinthians 3:7; 4:6).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “you already have enough,” “you are already rich,” and “you reign without us”?

[4:8]

Scholars think Paul rebuked the Christians in Corinth for acting like they had every spiritual thing they needed. They thought they no longer needed Paul. The Christians in Corinth also mistakenly thought that the kingdom of God had already arrived. They had forgotten how much Paul had taught them. Like the church in Laodicea, they thought they were rich, but were really poor (see: Revelation 3:17). This is a metaphor. They thought they had everything they wanted. However, they did not. They needed to learn more about what God wanted from them.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Church](#); [Metaphor](#)

See Map: Laodicea

Why did Paul write “I wish you did reign, so that we could reign with you”?

[4:8]

Paul wrote “I wish you did reign, so that we could reign with you.” He waited for the day when Christians would reign. This is something that he really wanted. However, that day had not come yet (see: 1 Corinthians 1:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2).

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

How were the apostles “last in line... and like men sentenced to death”?

[4:9]

Some scholars say that Paul used a metaphor when he wrote about the apostles being “last in line...and like men sentenced to death.” He was thinking about a Roman parade. During a Roman parade, a general marched through the city with his army. The “last” ones in the parade were often slaves. These slaves followed the army to the arena. There the slaves would be “were sentenced to death.”

Other scholars think Paul was thinking about the Old Testament prophets. The apostles were waiting to die just like the prophets did. In those days, faithful people were killed because they believed in God and obeyed him. In the same way, the apostles were persecuted and killed because they believed in Jesus and obeyed him (see: 2 Corinthians 11:23-33).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How were the apostles a “spectacle”?

[4:9]

Some scholars think Paul described the apostles as a “spectacle”(θέατρον/g2302) because they lived in a different way than those who did not believe in Jesus. For this reason, many people thought the apostles were strange. They also thought they were men who taught strange things. The apostles may have spoken about mysteries which human beings could not always understand. Yet, the angels really wanted to know these mysteries (see: Ephesians 3:4-6; 1 Peter 1:10-12).

See: [Angel](#); [Mystery](#); [Angel](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote that the Corinthian Christians were “wise in Christ,” “strong,” and “honored”?

[4:10]

Some scholars think that when Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians were “wise in Christ”, “strong,” and “honored,” he did not think they were these things. Paul had already stated how the Christians in Corinth were were not living in this way (see: 1 Corinthians 3:1-4). The apostles were preaching the gospel and living in a way that honored God. This was foolishness for the non-Christians who watched the apostles (see: 1 Corinthians 1:18). The non-Christians watching the apostles thought that the gospel was only for the foolish, weak, and despised (see: 1 Corinthians 1:26-28). Other scholars think the Corinthian Christians were proud of their great wisdom. Because of this, Paul scolded them for their wrong ways of thinking.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What did Paul mean with the words, “up to this present hour”?

[4:11]

Despite their wrong ideas about the ways God does things, Paul told the Corinthian Christians that even “up to this present hour,” the gospel still needed to be preached. For this reason Paul and the apostles were willing to be persecuted to obey God and to finish the things God wanted them to do.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What did it mean to be “reviled”?

[4:12]

When someone was “reviled,” they were greatly insulted. They were insulted because someone hated them. People “reviled” the apostles by saying evil things about them.

See: [Apostle](#)

How were Paul and the apostles “persecuted”?

[4:12]

Paul and the apostles were persecuted. Scholars think Paul was speaking about when the apostles were beaten, imprisoned, or publicly shamed for preaching the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What did Paul mean by writing that the apostles were “the refuse of the world and the filthiest of all things”?

[4:13]

Paul wrote that the apostles were “the refuse of the world and the filthiest of all things.” He wanted people to know what some non-Christians thought about the apostles. The gospel the apostles preached and the way they lived was different that the things non-Christians believed and the way they lived (see: 1 Corinthians 1:26-28).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

4:14-21

What did Paul mean by writing “I do not write these things to shame you”?

[4:14]

Paul wrote “I do not write these things to shame you.” He wanted people to know that he was not insulting or disrespecting the Corinthian Christians. The Corinthian Christians were his “brothers and sisters” and his “beloved children” in the Lord (see: 1 Corinthians 1:10; 4:14).

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “I write these things to correct you”?

[4:14]

Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth to “correct” them. He wanted to warn them about their wrong ways of thinking. He loved them as if they were his own children.

Why did Paul call the Corinthian Christians his “children”?

[4:14]

Paul called the Corinthian Christians his “children.” He wrote this to tell them that he loved them. Paul described these Christians as infants. This was a metaphor. They were living in a way that did not honor God. They were living as if they just became Christians. However, they had been Christians for a long time. They should know how to live in a way that honors God and they should do this (see: 1 Corinthians 3:1; 3:6).

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “become imitators of me”?

[4:16]

When Paul wrote “become imitators of me,” he wanted Corinthian Christians to live in the same way he lived. He wanted them to think the right things when they were persecuted and suffering.

See: [Suffer](#) ;[Suffer](#)

Who was Timothy?

[4:17]

Timothy was served with Paul (see: Acts 16:1-4). When Paul preached the gospel in Corinth, Timothy helped him. Timothy was with Paul when he wrote some of his letters to the churches (see: 2 Corinthians 1:1; 1:19; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Timothy led the Christians in Ephesus.

See: [Church](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Ephesus

What did Paul mean by writing that Timothy was his beloved “child”?

[4:17]

When Paul wrote that Timothy was his beloved “child” he meant that Timothy was his spiritual son. He taught Timothy about God how to live in a way that honors God. Timothy did these same things for the Christians in Corinth. Timothy did this well (see: Philippians 2:22).

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing that Timothy was faithful in the Lord”?

[4:17]

Paul also wrote that Timothy was “faithful in the Lord.” Paul wrote this so people would know that Timothy could serve the church in Corinth for Paul.

See: Lord; [Church](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Corinth

How were Paul’s “ways in Christ”?

[4:17]

Paul’s ways were in Christ because Paul lived in the same way that Jesus did (see: 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6). Paul did this because Jesus taught Paul (see: Galatians 1:12). In this letter, Paul wrote that his ways “in Christ” meant that he must reject any way of living which did not focus on God. Paul wanted to live in a way that honored God, even if suffered for living in this way (see: 4:9-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-5).

See: [In Christ](#); [In Christ](#)

What did Paul mean by writing that some Corinthian Christians were “arrogant”?

[4:18]

When Paul wrote that some Corinthian Christians were “arrogant”(φυσιόω/g5448), he meant that some Christians in Corinth had rejected the things he taught before. These people thought Paul would never visit them again to correct them. However, Paul said that he would soon return (see: 4:19).

Why did Paul write “if the Lord wills”?

[4:19]

Paul wrote “if the Lord wills,” even though he fully intended to come to the Corinthian Christians. When he wrote these words, Paul knew that God could change his plans. If God wanted Paul to be somewhere else, he would go and be there.

See: Acts 18:21; James 4:15

See: [Will of God](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “I will see their power”?

[4:19]

Paul wrote “I will see their power.” He wanted people to know that when he came to Corinth, he would listen to what those opposing him said. Then he would judge their “speech” by looking to see if the things they taught had the power to change people to live in a way that honors God (see: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5). Paul had already written about certain people who spoke well (see: 1 Corinthians 1:5). Scholars think that some Corinthian Christians wrongly claimed to possess a gift which helped them make great speeches. When Paul eventually visited the Corinthian church, he planned on listening to the speech of these people. He promised he would do this to make sure Corinthian Christians were encouraging other Christians. He would make sure that others in the Corinthian church were doing more than just speaking so people would honor them (see: 1 Corinthians 8:1).

See: [Church](#)

How was the kingdom of God about “power”?

[4:20]

Paul wrote that the kingdom of God was about “power.” He was speaking about the power of God. He was speaking about Jesus delivering Christians from the power of sin and death (see: Colossians 1:13).

See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Sin](#); [Die \(Death\)](#)

What did Paul mean by writing “shall I come to you with a rod or with love and in a spirit of gentleness”?

[4:21]

When Paul lived, a rod was a staff or a stick that a teachers used to correct people. When Paul asked “shall I come to you with a rod or with love and in a spirit of gentleness,” he was talking about he was the Corinthians’ spiritual father, not their “teacher”(see: 4:15). Paul wanted them to know that he would correct them with the love of a father, not the rod of a teacher.

See: [Family of God](#)

Chapter 5

¹ We heard a report that there is sexual immorality among you, a kind of immorality that is not even permitted among the pagans: A man has his father's wife. ² You are puffed up! Should you not mourn instead, so that the one who did this deed might be removed from among you? ³ For even though I am absent in body, I am present in spirit. I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as though I were there. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ deliver this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. ⁶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole loaf? ⁷ Cleanse yourselves of the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough, unleavened, just as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ So let us then celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of bad behavior and wickedness. Instead, let us celebrate with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰ In no way did I mean the immoral people of this world, or the greedy, or swindlers, or idolaters, since to stay away from them you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother but who is living in sexual immorality, or who is greedy, or is an idolater, or is verbally abusive, or is a drunkard, or a swindler. Do not even eat a meal with such a person. ¹² For how am I involved with judging those who are outside the church? Instead, are you not to judge those who are inside the church? ¹³ But God judges those who are on the outside.

"Remove the evil person from among you."

1 Corinthians 5

5:1-8

How did Paul hear about the sexual immorality in Corinth?

[5:1]

People told Paul about the things certain Christians did in Corinth. Some scholars think that Chloe's people told Paul. Other scholars think that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, or other people told Paul (see: 1 Corinthians 1:11; 16:7).

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did Paul mean with the words, "not even permitted among the gentiles"?

[5:1]

Paul was shocked that the Corinthian Christians did not rebuke people for their certain things they did. Their sexual immorality was worse than the non-Christians. The non-Christians forbid people to do the things the Christians were doing. The Christians were supposed to honor God, but they did things more evil than the non-Christians.

See: Leviticus 18:7-8

See: [Gentile](#)

How was a person "be removed" from among the church?

[5:2]

When Paul said that a person was to be "removed" from the church, he wanted the person who sinned to not be allowed to join the other Christians when they gathered together. Scholars think this is because God required people to be holy and sanctified (see: 1:2; 3:16-17).

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

How was Paul “present in the spirit”?

[5:3]

When Paul wrote that he was “present in the spirit,” some scholars think he wanted people to know he was with them in some way even though he was not in Corinth. Other scholars think Paul said this because all Christians have the Holy Spirit living inside of them.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul write, “hand this man over to Satan”?

[5:5]

When Paul wrote “hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,” he wanted the Christians in Corinth to separate from this man (see: 1 Corinthians 5:13). He did not want them to allow this man to join the other Christians when they gathered together. He was not allowed to worship with them. He was not allowed to eat meals with the other Christians. These Christians were to hand this man over to Satan. This is a metaphor. This man wanted to obey Satan and not Jesus. Paul wanted them to do this so that the man would repent of his evil deed.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What was “the destruction of the flesh”?

[5:5]

Paul commanded this sinning man to be separated from other Christians. Scholars think that “the destruction of the “flesh”(σάρξ/g4561) was the same idea as that of “crucifying” the flesh (see: Galatians 5:24). When the Christians separated from this man, they did this so he would stop sinning in this way. He wanted the man to repent. If he did not stop sinning, God would punish him and he would die. Paul also did not want the things this man did to cause other Christians to start sinning.

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

Why did Paul write about “leaven”?

[5:6]

Paul wrote here about the leaven and dough. This is a metaphor. When a small amount of leaven was placed into a lump of bread dough, the leaven caused the dough to rise and grow. In the same way, if ignored a small amount of sin can grow and hurt other Christians. Therefore, Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to separate themselves from the wrong, sinful behavior of this man.

See: [Sin](#); [Metaphor](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul call Christ “our Passover lamb”?

[5:7]

In the Old Testament, the Jewish people sacrificed the Passover lamb for the forgiveness of their sins (see: Numbers 28:16-22; Ezekiel 45:21-22; Hebrews 10:1-4). This gave them peace with God. Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb” because like the Old Testament sacrifices, Jesus’ death served as the sin offering for all Christians. What Jesus did was greater than all other sacrifices. Jesus’ sacrifice the final sacrifice for all Christians (see: Hebrews 10:1-12).

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Sin Offering](#) ; [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did Paul command the Corinthians to “celebrate the festival”?

[5:8]

Paul commanded the Corinthians to “celebrate the festival” because Jesus was the perfect Passover lamb (see: 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 10:12). Scholars think Paul wanted to say that Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. Because of this, Christians can celebrate that the new life Jesus gives to them.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Why were the Corinthians not to celebrate with leaven?

[5:8]

In the Bible, leaven was often used a metaphor. When it was used in this way, it was speaking about doing evil things. Paul wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

5:9-13

What was the letter about which Paul wrote?

[5:9]

Paul wrote another letter to the Christians in Corinth before he wrote this letter. That letter, however, is not in the Bible.

Why did Paul explain that he did not ban the Corinthian Christians from “immoral people of this world”?

[5:10]

Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians could not totally avoid non-Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 5:10). Yet, Christians could be “in the world” without “being of it” (see: 1 John 2:15-17). The Christians in Corinth were to live in a way that honored God. This would make the non-Christians also want to live in a way that honors God.

See: [World](#)

Why did Paul not want the Corinthian Christians to “associate” or “even to eat” with brothers or sisters involved in this list of sins?

[5:11]

Paul did not want people to think that the Christians in Corinth were evil (see: 1 Corinthians 1:2; 5:6-8). Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to remove the sexually immoral person from the church. He did not want these Christians to do evil things (see: 1 Corinthians 5:13). Paul wanted these people removed from the church, so they might also have had the opportunity for repentance and salvation (see: 1 Corinthians 5:5). Some scholars think Paul did not think people who sinned were Christians. Paul wanted them to be at peace with God. Other scholars think Paul knew they were Christians. If they kept sinning, God would punish them. They would die.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What was a drunkard?

[5:11]

A drunkard was someone who constantly drank much alcohol.

A “drunkard”(μέθυσος/g3183) was someone who constantly drank excessive amounts of alcohol. In Greco-Roman and Jewish culture wine was a common part of life. A “drunkard” differed from most people in that time because a drunkard consistently drank a lot of alcohol.

How were Christians to “judge those who are inside the church”?

[5:12]

Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to both separate from the sinning Christians and to the sinning Christian (see: 5:11; Galatians 6:1-4).

See: [Sin](#); [Church](#); [Sin](#)

Chapter 6

¹ When one of you has a dispute against another, does he dare to bring a lawsuit before the unrighteous rather than before God's holy people? ² Do you not know that God's holy people will judge the world? If then you will judge the world, are you not able to settle matters of little importance? ³ Do you not know that we will judge the angels? How much more, then, can we judge matters of this life? ⁴ If then you have to make judgments that pertain to daily life, why do you lay such cases as these before those who have no standing in the church? ⁵ I say this to your shame. Is there no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between brothers? ⁶ But one brother brings a lawsuit against another brother—and this before unbelievers! ⁷ The fact that you have lawsuits with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer the wrong? Why not rather allow yourselves to be cheated? ⁸ But you yourselves do wrong and you cheat, and you do this to your own brothers! ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to homosexual acts, nor men who perform homosexual acts, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ That is what some of you were like. But you have been cleansed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

¹² "Everything is lawful for me," but not everything is profitable. "Everything is lawful for me," but I will not be mastered by any of them. ¹³ "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," but God will do away with both of them. The body is not intended for sexual immorality. Instead, the body is for the Lord, and the Lord will provide for the body. ¹⁴ God both raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I then take the members of Christ and join them to a prostitute? May it not be! ¹⁶ Do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? As scripture says, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸ Run away from sexual immorality! Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives within you, whom you have from God? Do you not know that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God with your body and in your spirit, which belong to God.

1 Corinthians 6

6:1-11

Why was Paul concerned about Christians going to a “civil court before an unbelieving judge”?

[6:1]

Paul did not want Christians to go to a court with a non-Christian judge. Paul wanted Christians to be at peace with one another. If they disagreed about something, they should not go to a non-Christian to help them. He wanted Christians to judge something in the right way (see: John 7:24). A judge who was not a Christian probably did not know about the ways God wanted Christians to solve their problems with each other. A civil judge would only have been able to judge the Christians case based on the laws the government made.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#); [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

Advice to translators: In this context, having a “dispute”(πράγμα/g4229) was used when speaking about a lawsuits. A civil judge was someone the government paid to resolve a dispute between two people.

Who were the “saints”?

[6:1]

Paul used the word “saints”(ἅγιος/g0040) to write about the Christians in Corinth. Earlier in this letter to the Corinthians, Paul used the same word “saints” and said that the Corinthians were “sanctified” in

Christ. He also used this word (ἅγιος/g0040) in 1 Corinthians 1:2 to further explain that the Corinthian “saints” were called to be God’s holy people (see: 1 Corinthians 1:2).

See: [People of God](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [People of God](#)

How will “the saints judge the world”?

[6:2]

Jesus will finally judge the world. Scholars also think that Christians will also be asked to judge the world in some way (see: 4:1-5). Perhaps Paul was writing about the same judgment written about in Daniel 7:22.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Paul write that “we will judge the angels”?

[6:3]

Paul wrote that Christians “will judge angels.” He wanted the Christians in Corinth to know that they could settle their own disagreements.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why did Paul write “I say this to your shame”?

[6:5]

Paul did not write the Corinthians in order to shame them. He wrote so that they could avoid shaming themselves. When the Corinthian Christians went to non-Christians to settle their “disputes,” this shamed them (see: 1 Corinthians 4:14). Paul wrote how it was a shame for the Corinthian church to seek out for themselves the rulings of non-Christian judges. Instead, Paul wrote how the Corinthian Church should do things that Jesus wants them to do and to do things that honor God (see: 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:16; 6:5).

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

How was the presence of lawsuits among Christians a “defeat” for the Corinthian church?

[6:7]

Paul wrote that the Corinthians use of lawsuits was a moral “defeat” (ἥττημα/g2275). Instead of doing what God wanted them to do, the Corinthians wrongfully trusted in non-Christians to judge them. Paul wrote how it would be better for Christians to suffer wrongs done to them, than for them to seek out the decisions of a non-Christian judge.

See: [Ancient Trials \(Lawsuit\)](#)

How had the Christians “wronged and cheated” their own brothers?

[6:7]

Paul already spoke about Christians in Corinth who were sexually immoral, idolaters, and greedy. He wanted the Christians in Corinth to know that they “wronged and cheated” their own brothers.

See: [Family of God](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Family of God](#)

Who were the “unrighteous”?

[6:9]

The “unrighteous” (ἄδικος/g0094) were all people who did not believe in Jesus. They did what they wanted to do and did not do things that God wanted them to do. Paul wrote that those chose to live in the wrong way would not experience the benefits of the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

What were “male prostitutes”?

[6:9]

Some scholars believe that when Paul wrote about “male prostitutes”(μαλακός/g3120). That is, he wrote about men who received money for having sex. Other scholars think Paul was writing about men who had sex with other men. They were not paid to do this.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What did Paul mean when he used the words “those who practice homosexuality”?

[6:9]

Paul wrote about people who practice homosexuality. He was writing about men who had sex with other men. According to the Law of Moses, this is something God hates (see: Leviticus 18:22; 20:13). Paul said that God’s wrath would come upon those who practiced homosexuality (see: Romans 1:26-67)

See: [Wrath](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Wrath](#)

How were the Christians in Corinth “cleansed”?

[6:11]

Paul wrote about the Christians in Corinth being cleansed. Some scholars think Paul wrote about the blood of Jesus. This is a metaphor. Jesus’ blood “cleansed” Christians from all of their sin (see: 1 John 1:7-9). Because Jesus died, Christians are at peace with God. They are also made clean.

See: [Sin](#); [Blood](#); [Metaphor](#); [Sin](#)

How were the Christians in Corinth “sanctified”?

[6:11]

Paul wrote that through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, God “sanctified”(ἀγιάζω/g0037) the Corinthian Christians. That is, they were set apart for God’s purposes (see: 1 Corinthians 1:2). They do the things God wants them to do to serve him.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How were Christians “made right” with God?

[6:11]

When Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians were “made right”(δικαιόω/g1344), he wanted them to know that they were right with God. That is, they were at peace with God. Because they believed in Jesus, they were not “unrighteous” (see: Romans 5:18-21).

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

6:12-20**What did Paul mean by saying “everything is lawful for me”?**

[6:12]

Paul wrote that everything is lawful for him. Some scholars think that when Paul wrote “everything is lawful for me” he wanted people to know it was not wrong for him to eat or drink certain things. He did not need to celebrate a feast on a certain day. Paul did not need to obey the Law of Moses. However, Paul did not say that he could sin.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write “not everything is beneficial”?

[6:12]

Paul wrote “not everything is beneficial” because he wanted Christians to know that not everything someone does helps them or helps other people. He wanted them to do things that would help other Christians (see: 10:23-24). Paul wanted Christians to encourage them to love one another. Christians are free to do certain things, but it is sometimes wrong to do these things if they hurt other people in some way (see: Galatians 5:13).

Why did Paul write “I will not be mastered by anything”?

[6:12]

Paul wrote “I will not be mastered by anything. Paul wanted people to know that he was a servant of Jesus. He did not allow himself to be lead by anyone or anything other than Jesus. Paul also wrote that he often did not do what he wanted to do. This was because he did not want to stop anyone from believing in Jesus (see: 1 Corinthians 9:1-12).

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

What did the words, “food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy them both” mean?

[6:13]

Paul wrote “food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy them both.” He wanted people to know that a person’s choice to eat or not eat certain foods should always be for the purpose of honoring God. When people die, they will not have a stomach and will not eat.

How was the body for the Lord?

[6:13]

Paul wrote that just as food was for the stomach, a Christian’s body was meant to be used to serve Jesus. The Christian’s body was the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Christians’s body was meant to be used to honor God (see: 1 Corinthians 6:17, 19-20).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How were the bodies of Christians “members of Christ”?

[6:15]

Paul wrote that the bodies of Christians were members of Christ. Scholars think Paul wanted to write that the Christians’ body was joined to Jesus in some way. The Christian’s soul and spirit were also joined to Christ. Perhaps this is why Paul told Christians to offer their bodies to God as a living sacrifice (see: Romans 12:1). When Paul used the word “members” he was saying that each individual Christian was united with Jesus. This was possible because of the resurrection of Christ.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Soul](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did it mean that “he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him”?

[6:17]

After the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension back to heaven, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within Christians (see: John 14:16-18; 16:12-15; Acts 1:8). Just as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one, so Christians are one with Jesus.

See: [Trinity](#); [Ascend \(Ascension\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Trinity](#)

How were the Christians' bodies "the temple of the Holy Spirit"?

[6:19]

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about the things the Holy Spirit did. He said that not only did God the Holy Spirit live within the church, the Holy Spirit also lived within each Christian (see: Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16). At one time, God allowed Himself to be seen in a certain way in the temple in Jerusalem. However, God left the temple. God now lives in Christians through the Holy Spirit in some way. God can be seen in some way through the things Christians do. This is a metaphor.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Temple](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul say to the church, "you are not your own"?

[6:19]

God the Holy Spirit lives within all Christians. Christians belong to God in some way and a part of the body of Christ.

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Body of Christ](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote that the Christians were "bought with a price"?

[6:20]

When Paul wrote that Christians were "bought with a price," he reminded them that they were once slaves to sin but Jesus freed Christians from that slavery (see: Romans 6:17-18; 1 Corinthians 7:23). The price was the death of Jesus (see: Romans 6:3-12). This is a metaphor. Jesus redeemed Christians.

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Sin](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Free \(Freedom\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

What did Paul mean by saying, "glorify God with your body"?

[6:20]

Paul wrote that Christians are to glorify God with their bodies. Paul wanted Christians to do things that honor God. People should know about God because they have seen the way Christians live.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Chapter 7

¹ Now concerning the issues you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." ² But because of temptations for many immoral acts, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. ³ The husband should fulfill his duty to have sexual relations with his wife, and in the same way the wife to her husband. ⁴ It is not the wife who has authority over her own body, it is the husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. ⁵ Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement and for a specific period of time. Do this so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then you should come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

⁶ But I say these things to you as a concession and not as a command. ⁷ I wish that everyone were as I am. But each one has his own gift from God. One has this kind of gift, and another that kind. ⁸ To the unmarried and to widows I say that it is good for them if they remain unmarried, as I am. ⁹ But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better for them to marry than to burn with passion. ¹⁰ Now to the married I give this command—not I, but the Lord—the wife should not separate from her husband ¹¹ (but if she does separate from her husband, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. ¹² But to the rest I say—I, not the Lord—that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and if she is content to live with him, he should not divorce her. ¹³ If a woman has an unbelieving husband, and if he is content to live with her, she should not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is set apart because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is set apart because of the brother. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but actually they are set apart. ¹⁵ But if the unbeliever departs, let him go. In such cases, the brother or sister is not bound to their vows. God has called us to live in peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, woman, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, man, whether you will save your wife? ¹⁷ However, as the Lord has given each one his portion, let each one walk as God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches. ¹⁸ Was anyone circumcised when he was called to believe? He should not try to appear uncircumcised. Was anyone uncircumcised when he was called to faith? He should not be circumcised. ¹⁹ For it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that matters. What matters is obeying the commandments of God. ²⁰ Each one should remain in the calling he was in when God called him to believe. ²¹ Were you a slave when God called you? Do not be concerned about it. But if you can become free, take advantage of it. ²² For someone who is called by the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freeman. In the same way, the one who was free when he was called to believe is Christ's slave. ²³ You have been bought with a price, so do not become slaves of men. ²⁴ Brothers, in whatever situation he was in when he was called, let each one remain with God in that.

²⁵ Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord. But I give my opinion as one who, by the Lord's mercy, is trustworthy. ²⁶ Therefore, I think that because of the disaster that is coming, it is good for a man to remain as he is. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek a divorce. If you are free of a wife, do not seek a wife. ²⁸ But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who do will have many kinds of fleshly trouble, and I want to spare you from this. ²⁹ But this I say, brothers: The time is short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none. ³⁰ Those who weep should act as though they were not weeping, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they did not possess anything, ³¹ and those who use the world should not act as though they are using it to the full. For the world in its present form is coming to an end. ³² I would like you to be free from worries. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord, how to please him. ³³ But the married man is concerned about the things of the world, how to please his wife— ³⁴ he is divided. The unmarried woman or the virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, how to be set apart in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world, how to please her husband. ³⁵ I say this for your own benefit, and not to put any constraint on you. I say this for what is right, so that you may be devoted to the Lord without any distraction. ³⁶ But if anyone thinks that he is not treating his virgin with respect—if she is beyond the age of marriage and it must be so—he should do what he wants. He is not sinning. They should marry. ³⁷ But if he is standing firm in his heart, if he is not under pressure but can control his own will, and if he has decided in his own heart to do this, to keep his own a virgin, he will do well. ³⁸ So the one who marries his virgin does well, and the one who chooses not to marry will do even better. ³⁹ A woman is bound to

her husband while he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but only in the Lord. ⁴⁰ Yet in my judgment she would be happier if she lives as she is. And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 7

7:1-9

Why did Paul say it was “good for a man not to touch a woman”?

[7:1]

Paul said it was good for a man not to “touch” a woman. He wanted people to know that a man must not have sex with a woman if they are not married.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What were “temptations for many immoral acts”?

[7:2]

People thought the Corinthians did the wrong things and committed sexual immorality. The Christians in Corinth were tempted to commit sexual immorality. Paul did not want them to commit sexual immorality. God only wanted a husband and a wife to have sex (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 13:4).

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What was meant by Paul’s use of the word “authority”?

[7:4]

Some scholars think that Paul used the word “authority” (ἐξουσιάζω/g1850) because he wanted people to know that both the husband and wife give themselves to each other in some way when they get married. They think people thought the wrong things and Paul wanted them to think about things in the right way.

What did Paul say was a concession?

[7:6]

Paul said something was a concession (συγγνώμη/g4774). Some scholars think Paul was speaking about the husband and wife agreeing to stop having sex with each other, so that they spend time praying to God. They think Paul wanted them to know he was not commanding them to do this. Instead, he gave them permission to do this if they wanted.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did Paul write “I wish that everyone were as I am”?

[7:7]

Paul wrote, “I wish that everyone were as I am.” Some scholars think Paul wanted everyone to not commit sexual immorality. Paul did not want to commit sexual immorality. Others scholars think Paul did not want to have sex. These scholars say Paul wished everyone to live in the same way he lived. He thought that not wanting to have sex was a gift from God. However, it was also a gift from God to marry and for a husband and wife to have sex together.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What did the words “burn with passion” mean?

[7:9]

Some scholars think a person who burned with passion really wanted to have sex. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about the judgment that comes from God for the person who is sexually immoral (see: 6:9-10).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

7:10-16

Why did Paul write “not I, but the Lord”?

7:12]

When Paul wrote “not I, but the Lord,” scholars think he was reminding these Christians that Jesus spoke about divorce (see: Matthew 5:31-32; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18). Jesus gave permission to Paul to speak for him (see: 7:25; 7:40).

See: [Divorce](#)

Why did Paul write about Corinthian Christians married to unbelievers?

[7:12]

Paul wanted people to know that a Christian should not divorce their spouse if they were not a Christian. Jesus said a Christian can divorce their spouse if they committed adultery (see: Matthew 5:31-32). Paul also said that a Christian can divorce their spouse if their spouse is not a Christian and their spouse leaves them (see: 1 Corinthians 7:15-16). How were non-Christian spouses “set apart” by Christian spouses?

Paul wrote that non-Christians married to Christians were “set apart” (ἀγιάζω/g0026). Some scholars think Paul said that God helped non-Christian spouses to believe the gospel because they were married to a Christian. Other scholars think that the non-Christian spouse could believe in Jesus because they lived near people who lived in a way that honored God.

See: [Gospel](#)

How were the children “unclean” if their parents divorced?

[7:14]

Some scholars think that when Paul said children of divorce were “unclean” he wanted people to know that these children would not live with a Christian parent all of the time.

See: Divorce; [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did Paul write “the brother or sister is not bound to their vows”?

[7:15]

Paul wrote “the brother or sister is not bound to their vows.” Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that the Christian did not need to remain married if the non-Christian spouse wanted to divorce. The Christian did not need to do what Paul wrote before (see: 1 Corinthians 7:12-13). Other scholars think that the married Christian was free to remarry after the non-Christian spouse decided to divorce. In this way, the Christian did not need to be widowed to remarry (see 1 Corinthians 7:39).

See: [Divorce](#); [Divorce](#)

How had God called Christians to live in peace?

[7:15]

When a non-Christian spouse wanted a divorce, some scholars think Paul wanted Christians to be peaceful to their non-Christian spouse. Fewer scholars think Paul wanted people to know that they could get divorced for another reason. They could divorce if a Christian being married to a non-Christian caused them harm and they could not live at peace with one another.

Why did Paul ask if one person could save the other in a marriage?

[7:16]

Paul asked if one person could save the other in marriage. Some scholars think Paul was encouraging the Christian to remain married to the non-Christian. This was because the non-Christian might become a Christian because their Christian spouse lives in a way that honors God. Other scholars think Paul said that if a Christian allowed their non-Christian spouse to get a divorce, then the Christian should let the non-Christian go in peace. This was because there was no way to know if the non-Christian would become a Christian.

7:17-24**What things did God “assign” to the Christians?**

[7:17]

God “assigned” (μερίζω/g3307) things to Christians. Some scholars think that God controlled the things that happened in a Christian’s life. God wanted some people to live without getting married. God also wanted some people who became Christians to stay married to a non-Christian (see: 1 Corinthians 7:1-16). Other scholars think that Paul wrote about specific gifts God “assigned” Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 7:7). Perhaps Paul wanted the Christians to focus on the ways God equipped them to serve God. In what way did God “call” each person?

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#)

Why did Paul write “all the churches”?

[7:17]

Paul wrote, “all the churches.” Some scholars think that “all the churches” meant every church which Paul started or every church where Paul taught. Fewer scholars think that “all the churches” meant every church, even if Paul did not teach there himself.

See: [Church](#)

How could a person “not try to appear circumcised”?

[7:18]

Paul wrote that a person should “not try to appear circumcised.” Scholars think Paul used circumcision as a metaphor. The Jews who became Christians did not need to try to appear to be a non-Jew. In the same way, Gentiles who became Christians did not need to be circumcised, so that people would think they are Jews.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28

See: [Gentile;Metaphor](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul say “it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that matters”?

[7:19]

When Paul wrote “it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that matters,” he wanted people to know both Jews and Gentiles could be at peace with God. This was because a person did not need to be circumcised (see: Galatians 5:6).

See: [Gentile](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write that “what matters is obeying the commandments of God”?

[7:19]

Paul wrote that “what matters is obeying the commandments of God.” Scholars think Paul was writing about the “commandments of God” spoken by Jesus in the New Testament (see: Matthew 22:36-40). Paul also wrote about love as fulfilling God’s commandments (see: Galatians 5:14).

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

What did it mean to “remain in the calling”?

[7:20]

See: 1 Corinthians 7:17

Why did Paul write that Christians not be concerned if they were slaves when called?

[7:21]

Paul wrote that Christians not be concerned if they were slaves when called. That is, when they believed in Jesus. This is because a slave can be a Christian. Paul wanted Christians to realize that God valued every the same (see: Galatians 3:28).

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

How was a Christian slave the “Lord’s freeman”?

[7:22]

Paul wanted Christians to know that even if they were a slave to an earthly owner, Jesus had freed them from bondage to sin. He had completely forgiven them of their past sins. They were not freed to live in a different way, a way that honors God.

See: [Sinful Nature](#); [Free \(Freedom\)](#); [Sin](#); [Sinful Nature](#)

What did it mean to be “bought with a price”?

[7:23]

See: 1 Corinthians 6:20

7:25-40

Who were “those who never married”?

[7:25]

Some scholars think “those who never married” were both men and women who remained unmarried. Other scholars think “those who never married” were women who were not married and have never had sex.

See: [Virgin](#)

Why did Paul write “I have no commandment from the Lord”?

[7:25]

Some scholars think that Paul wrote, “I have no commandment from the Lord” because he was giving advice, not a command (see: 1 Corinthians 7:6). Other scholars think that Paul wanted people to know that Jesus did not talk about this. Therefore, Paul was expanding upon Jesus’ teaching. That is, he was teaching more than Jesus taught.

See: [Lord](#)

What did Paul mean by saying he was “trustworthy”?

[7:25]

Some scholars think when Paul said he was “trustworthy”(πιστός/g4103) he wanted people to know that he obeyed God. Other scholars think Paul said that he was “trustworthy” because God was merciful to him.

See: [Mercy](#)

What was the “disaster” that was coming?

[7:26]

Some scholars think the “disaster” about which Paul wrote was the persecution and difficult times that Christians were experiencing at that time. Other scholars think Paul was writing about the persecution and difficult times that Christians experience in any time and place. Other scholars think Paul was writing about the persecution and difficult times just before Jesus returns to the earth

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#) ; [Last Days](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What did Paul mean by “worldly trouble”?

[7:28]

Some scholars think “worldly troubles” were the responsibilities that came with being married to someone. Married people have to focus on helping each other. They could not focus only on serving God.

What was meant by the words, “the time is short”?

[7:29]

Paul wrote that the time is short. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that Jesus was going to return in a short time (see: 1 Corinthians 7:31). Because of this, people needed to focus on serving God before they die or before Jesus returns.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How were those who had wives supposed to live “as though they had none”?

7:29]

Paul wrote that wives were supposed to live as though they had nothing. Scholars think Paul was encouraging married Christians to live to serve God. He did not want them to work more serving God than in having a better life on the earth. Paul was not telling Christians to abandon their spouse.

How were those who weep not to weep and those who rejoice not to rejoice?

[7:30]

Paul wanted Christians to know that though they had to experience sorrows and joys on the earth, they had the promise to live together with God in heaven forever. Paul also wanted them to know that these things be replaced with a joy that lasts forever in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How were those who bought not to “possess”?

[7:30]

Paul did not forbid Christians from buying things. Some scholars think that to “possess”(κατέχω/g2722) something was to cling to it, or to hold it tightly. That is, he did not Christians to want something too much. Some scholars think Paul wanted Christians to understand that it was God provided the things they bought. What they bought was a gift from God.

How were Christians not to use the world “to the full”?

[7:31]

Christians were not to use the world “to the full.” Christians were not to become so involved in the things happening in the world that they care more about these things than they cared about Jesus. Some scholars think Paul meant that Christians must not live as if the world was all there was.

What did Paul mean when he wrote “the world in its present form is coming to an end”?

[7:31]

Paul wrote that “the world in its present form is coming to an end.” Some scholars think that Paul wanted people to know that creation was passing away (see: Romans 8:19-22). Fewer scholars think Paul meant that the world’s leaders were passing away (see: 1 Corinthians 2:6).

See: [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “not to put any constraint on you”?

[7:35]

Paul wrote “not to put any constraint on you.” Scholars think that Paul used the word “constraint” (βρόχος/g1029) as a metaphor. This word was also used when writing about a rope around an animal’s neck. A person would use a rope to guide an animal. Therefore, when Paul wrote these words, he wanted to help people, not command people to do something.

What did it mean for a man not to “treat his fiancée with respect”?

[7:36]

A man was to “treat his fiancée with respect.” Some scholars think Paul was speaking about a man who did not treat his fiancée with honor. He was referring to a man who did not honor his commitment to marry his fiancée. This would have brought great dishonor to the girl’s father. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about a man who had sex with his fiancée before they were married. This dishonored the woman and the woman’s father.

See: [Marriage](#)

What did it mean to be “beyond the age of marriage”?

[7:36]

Some scholars think that when Paul wrote about being “beyond the age” (υπεράκμος/g5230), he meant a person who was past the best age for marriage. In ancient times, a woman often got married at a certain age. Other scholars think Paul wanted people to get married if they could not control their desire to have sex.

See: [Marriage](#)

Why did Paul write “if he is not under pressure”?

[7:37]

Paul wrote “if he is not under pressure.” Some scholars think Paul was speaking about a man who had no marriage contract with the father of the girl. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about a man who had no pressure from the father of the girl. This pressure was from the girl’s strong desire to marry right away.

What did it mean for a man to “keep his own fiancée a virgin”?

[7:37]

When Paul wrote that a man should “keep his own fiancée a virgin,” he wanted the man to do everything he could to protect and honor the virginity of the woman he was to marry. Scholars think that when Paul wrote this, he meant that if a Christian decided not to marry this woman, he still needed to guard her honor. He was not to try to have sex with her.

See: [Virgin](#)

Why did Paul write that “the one who chooses not to marry will do even better”?

[7:38]

When Paul wrote that “the one who does not marry does better,” he wanted to encourage Christians were not married. God gave them the gift of not being married. Earlier in this chapter, Paul had said that marriage was the best option for those without the gift of not being married (see: 1 Corinthians 7:2). Indeed, it was “good” (see: 1 Corinthians 7:38). However, if one was gifted to not be married, it was better to not be married.

See: [Marriage](#)

Why did Paul write “and I think I also have the Spirit of God”?

[7:40]

Paul wrote, “and I think I also have the Spirit of God.” Scholars think that Paul was speaking to Christians who opposed him in some way when he wrote this.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 8

¹ Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² If anyone thinks he knows something, that person does not yet know as he should know. ³ But if anyone loves God, that person is known by him. ⁴ Therefore, concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol in this world is nothing and that there is no God but one. ⁵ For even if there were so-called gods, either in heaven or on earth (just as there are many "gods" and many "lords"), ⁶ yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things exist, and through whom we exist.

⁷ However, this knowledge is not in everyone. Instead, some previously practiced idol worship, and they eat this food as if it were something sacrificed to an idol. Their conscience is thereby defiled because it is weak. ⁸ But food will not present us to God. We are not worse if we do not eat, nor better if we do eat it. ⁹ But take care that your freedom does not become a reason for someone who is weak in faith to stumble.

¹⁰ For suppose that someone sees you, who have knowledge, eating a meal in an idol's temple. Is not his weak conscience emboldened to eat what is offered to idols? ¹¹ So because of your understanding about the true nature of idols, the weaker one, the brother for whom Christ died, is destroyed. ¹² Thus, when you sin against your brothers and wound their weak consciences, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause my brother to fall.

1 Corinthians 8

8:1-6

What did the words “now concerning” mean?

[8:1]

Paul used the words “now concerning” to tell people he was going to write about something different (see: 1 Corinthians 7:1). Some scholars think he was writing about this new idea because the Corinthians had previously written him previously about this idea (see: 1 Corinthians 7:1). Other scholars do not think that the Corinthian church mentioned this idea in their letter to Paul.

What was food offered to idols?

[8:1]

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How do all Christians “have knowledge”?

[8:1]

Jesus came to the earth and taught people many new things about God. These were truths about how God was going to save people. However, people did not know about what God would do to save people before Jesus came to the earth. Paul also said that knowledge alone “puffs” (φουσιόω/g5448). That is, it can make people feel proud of what they know.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How did Paul talk about “love”?

[8:1]

When Paul talked about “love” (ἀγάπη/g0026), he also talked about “edification.” Edification was a word used when talking about building a house. Paul wanted the expression of “love” to be something that helped Christians to do and feel good. He wanted love to “build” people. This is a metaphor. When people loved each other in this way, they did things that made others feel better in some way

See: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write, “If anyone thinks he knows something, that person does not yet know as he should”?

[8:2]

Paul wrote “If anyone thinks he knows something, that person does not yet know as he should.” He wrote about people who thought they knew how to live in the way God wants them to live. However, they did not do these things. That is, if they say they know something about what God wants them to do, but they do not love other people, then they really do not know what God wants them to do.

See: 1 Corinthians 13:12

How was someone known by God?

[8:3]

God truly knows every person because he created all people. Here Paul wrote about God knowing the Christian. By this he meant something very special. Some scholars think that when Paul wrote that God knew the Christian, he meant that God had a special relationship with the Christian. He told the Christian more about Himself. Other scholars think that when Paul wrote that God knew the Christian, he meant that God was at peace with the Christian. Of course, the Christian was also at peace with God.

How was an idol “nothing”?

[8:4]

Paul said that an idol was nothing. In other words, an idol is not real. Even though some people worshipped things that other people created, there was only one God. There were not many gods. This was why Paul said that these idols were “so-called gods.” They were not gods at all, even though some people believed in them. There is only one God.

Advice to translators: Something that was not real never existed or lived.

See: [False gods](#); [Worship](#); [False gods](#)

How do all things exist through Jesus?

[8:6]

Paul wrote that through Jesus, “all things exist and through whom we exist.” He wanted people to know that Jesus created everything. He also kept everything alive (see: John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17). If Jesus wanted everything to stop existing, everything would stop existing. That is, if Jesus did not want anything in the universe, then there would not be anything in the universe.

8:7-13

What knowledge was not in everyone?

[8:7]

Paul wrote about a certain knowledge that not every Christian had. When Paul wrote this, he wanted people to know that there were certain Christians in Corinth who did not know what to do about eating food which had previously been offered to idols. Perhaps these Christians had just recently believed in Jesus. Or, maybe these Christians had not been taught about these things.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How was someone’s conscience corrupted?

[8:7]

Paul wrote about someone's conscience being "corrupted" (μολύνω/g3435), or being made unclean. When certain Corinthian Christians ate food offered to idols, they did not do anything wrong. They knew the idols were not real. However, there were other Christians in Corinth who still believed idols were real. These Christians thought that eating this type of food was doing something wrong. Paul wanted people to be careful about what they eat. If they ate certain foods that made other Christians think they were doing something evil, then they should not eat these things

Advice to translators: Something that was not real never existed or lived.

See: [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Sin](#)

Who was the weaker brother?

[8:9, 8:10]

Paul wrote about a weaker brother. This was a metaphor. He was writing about a certain type of Christians. Certain Christians were strong because they obeyed God more than other Christians. They often would not sin when they were tempted. However, in Corinth there were other Christians who did not obey God as often as these stronger Christians. When these weaker Christians were tempted, they sinned more. Paul wanted the stronger Christians to help the weaker Christians to do things that honored God.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Sin](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

How was a Christian destroyed?

[8:11]

When certain Christians ate food offered to idols, it dishonored God. When this happened, they could no longer tell other people about Jesus in the same way. People could not learn how to live in a way that honors God and believe in Jesus because these Christians were sinning.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What did Paul teach the Corinthians about eating meat?

[8:12]

Paul wrote that he did not want other Christians to stumble. He did not want to do anything that caused other Christians to do something that dishonored God. Instead, he would rather not eat any meat than to possibly cause another Christian to sin.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Chapter 9

¹ Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. ³ This is my defense to those who examine me: ⁴ Do we not have the right to eat and drink? ⁵ Do we not have the right to take along a wife who is a believer, as do the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? ⁶ Or do only I and Barnabas not have the right to not work at a trade? ⁷ Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink milk from it? ⁸ Do I say these things based on human authority? Does not the law also say this? ⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, "Do not put a muzzle on an ox when it is threshing the grain." Is it really the oxen that God cares about? ¹⁰ Is he not speaking about us? It was written for us, because the one who plows should plow in hope, and the one who threshes should thresh in the hope of sharing in the harvest. ¹¹ If we sowed spiritual things among you, is it too much for us to reap physical things from you? ¹² If others exercised this right from you, do we not have even more? But we did not claim this right. Instead we endured everything rather than be a hindrance to the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Do you not know that those who perform sacred duties get their food from the temple? Do you not know that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living from the gospel. ¹⁵ But I have not claimed any of these rights. And I do not write this so something might be done for me. It would be better for me to die than—No one will make my boast empty! ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason for boasting, because I must do this. And woe be to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this willingly, I have a reward. But if not willingly, I still have a stewardship that was entrusted to me. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? That when I preach, I may offer the gospel without charge and so not take full use of my right in the gospel. ¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I became a servant to all, in order that I might win more. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became like one under the law in order to win those under the law. I did this even though I myself was not under the law. ^[1]²¹ To those outside the law, I became like one outside the law, although I was not outside the law of God myself, but under the law of Christ. I did this so that I may win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, so that I may win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some. ²³ I do all things for the gospel's sake, so that I may participate in its blessings. ²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run the race, but that only one receives the prize? So run to win the prize. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a wreath that is perishable, but we do it to receive one that is imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore this is how I run, as not without purpose; this is how I box, not as one beating the air. ²⁷ But I subdue my body and make it a slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself may not be disqualified.

Footnotes

9:20 ^[1]The ULB has:

1 Corinthians 9

9:1-27

How did Paul expect people to answer his questions?

[9:1]

Paul asked four questions in these verses. He expected the Corinthians to answer "yes" to all of these questions.

How was Paul free?

[9:1]

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians that he was free. As a Christian, he did not need to follow the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

When did Paul see Jesus?

[9:1]

Paul wrote that he had seen Jesus. When Paul was saying that he saw Jesus after Jesus was resurrected

See: Acts 9:1-6

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write about being an apostle?

[9:1]

Scholars think that someone told the Corinthian Christians that Paul was not an apostle. However, the Corinthian Christians knew that Paul was an apostle. This was because Paul had helped to start the church in Corinth. The church in Corinth proved that Paul was an apostle.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

How did Paul defend that he was an apostle?

[9:3]

In ancient times, people gave money to teachers who taught about God and the world. However, Paul worked and never asked for money for himself. He did this so that people would pay attention to the things he said. He did not want to preach the gospel and ask for money. Perhaps some people thought he was not an apostle or teacher because he did not ask for money. When Paul wrote about eating and drinking, he was writing about receiving money so that he might eat and drink. He had the same rights that every apostle had. God gave the apostles those rights

See: [Apostle](#); [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#)

When Paul wrote “we,” who was he talking about?

[9:4]

When Paul wrote “we,” he meant Barnabas and himself.

Why did Paul write about the Law of Moses?

[9:9]

According to the Law of Moses, God wanted people to care for the ox who served them. In the same way, God wanted people to care for those who preached and taught the Gospel to them. Paul also wrote about people plowing (see: 1 Corinthians 9:10). This is a metaphor. He was speaking about the ways people served God.

Paul wrote about planting spiritual things and harvesting material things. This was also a metaphor. He wanted to remind people that God did not think it was wrong for Paul to expect people to help him by giving him food, a place to live, or money.

See: Deuteronomy 25:4

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul not want help from the Corinthians?

[9:12]

Paul had the right for the Corinthians to give him money. This is because he earned this money by teaching them. However, Paul did not want anything from them. Paul only wanted people to think about the gospel and believe in Jesus. He did not want people to think he was teaching them just so that he could get money. The only reason he taught them was this. He taught them so they could believe the gospel and be at peace with God.

See: [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write about the people who served in the temple?

[9:13]

In ancient Israel, people provided for the priests who served them in the temple. God wanted this to happen. In the same way, Paul wrote that God wanted people to provide for those people who preached and taught the gospel to other people about Jesus (see: Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7). God wanted his preachers and teachers to be able to focus on serving Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Temple](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write about boasting?

[9:15, 9:16]

Paul did not want people to say that he told people about Jesus just so he could get money. Instead, he wanted people to know that he trusted in God to provide him everything he needed. Paul preached the gospel to obey God. This was the only reason he preached the Gospel. If he did not preach the gospel, then God would punish him (see: 1 Corinthians 9:16). However, if he chose to preach the gospel then he would have a "reward" (See: I Corinthians 9:16).

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Woe](#); [Reward](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What was the responsibility entrusted to Paul?

[9:17]

God entrusted Paul to help the Corinthian Christians to live in a way that honors God. Scholars also think God wanted Paul to help them to do this.

How was Paul someone who was both free and a servant?

[9:19]

Paul was free and a servant. Some scholars think Paul meant he was free from the Law of Moses. He did not need to try to obey the Law of Moses. However, he served other people. This honored God. Fewer scholars think Paul wanted people to know that he did not serve a certain group of Christians.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How did Paul win more?

[9:19]

Paul wrote about winning more people. This was a metaphor. He was writing about having more people come to believe in Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How did Paul become like a Jew to the Jews?

[9:20]

Paul wanted to tell the Jews about the gospel. He did not want to do anything that might prevent the Jews from believing in Jesus. When it was possible, he did the same things the Jews did when he was near the

Jews. Paul did not do these things to obey the Law of Moses. However, he did many things the Law of Moses said to do. This was so that he would not offend the Jews. He wanted Jews to hear about Jesus.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How did Paul become like one under the law?

[9:20]

When Paul wrote about becoming like one under the law, some scholars think he was writing about the Jews. They were under the Law of Moses. Other scholars think Paul wrote about those under the law of Moses, but were not born Jews.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What did Paul write in 9:20?

[9:20]

Scholars think Paul wrote the words in verse 20. Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the words "I did this even though I myself was not under the law." Fewer ancient manuscripts do not have these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Who were those outside of the law?

[9:21]

When Paul wrote about those outside of the law, he was writing about Gentiles. Gentiles did not follow the Law of Moses.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How did Paul become like one outside of the law?

[9:21]

Paul wrote that in order to present the gospel to the Gentiles, he refused to do anything that might prevent the Gentiles from believing in Jesus. He did not do the things written about in the Law of Moses because he did not want the Gentiles to think they needed to follow the Law of Moses to be at peace with God. He wanted Gentiles to hear about Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

What law did Paul follow?

[9:21]

Paul did not try to obey the Law of Moses. However, he did try to obey God. This he called the law of God and the law of Christ. The law of Christ referred to the command to love God with all one's heart and to love other people.

See: Mark 12:28-31; Galatians 6:2

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How did Paul win those outside of the law?

[9:21]

Paul wrote about winning those outside of the law. This was a metaphor. He was writing about having the Gentiles believe in Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Paul become weak to those who were weak?

[9:22]

Paul wrote that he became weak to those who are weak. Scholars do not know why these people were weak. They had a weak conscience. Paul did not want to do anything that got in the way of them believing in Jesus.

See: 1 Corinthians 8:9-12

See: [Conscience](#)

Why did Paul become all things to all people?

[9:22]

Paul wrote that he became all things to all people. Paul did not want to do anything that got in the way of anyone believing in Jesus. This did not mean that Paul would do things that dishonored God. However, there were many things Paul would do to serve people so they would not reject the gospel because of something Paul did.

See: [Gospel](#)

How did Paul participate in the blessings of the gospel?

[9:23]

Everything Paul did was so that people could believe the gospel. He also did not want them to be distracted by the things he did. He wanted them to hear the gospel. He wanted to share with them in the blessings of the gospel. That is, he wanted to share with them in salvation and the promise of eternal life. Paul wanted to participate in the blessings of the gospel along with all those who believed in Jesus.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Why did Paul write about an athlete?

[9:24, 9:25, 9:26]

Paul wrote about an athlete running a race. This was a metaphor. He was writing about himself. He obeyed God to receive a prize. An athlete did things to prepare for his race. He trained. In the same way, Paul did things to honor God so that when his life was over, he like an athlete would be rewarded. An athlete might win a prize that would fade and perish, Paul's reward would be different. He would one day receive a reward that would never fade away.

Paul said he did not train as if he had no plan. Like a good athlete, he too had a plan. He planned to do things that honored God. When he told other people about Jesus, they would know that he lived in a way that honored God. The people would know that he did the things he taught other people to do. Because of this, people would be more willing to listen to him preach the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Reward](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

How will Paul be disqualified?

[9:27]

Paul wrote about being disqualified. When an athlete ran a race in the wrong way, he was disqualified. He did not receive any prize. This was a metaphor. Paul wanted to be able to receive a prize. Some scholars think Paul was writing about getting to live with God in heaven forever. Other scholars think Paul was talking about some reward for living in a way that honored God.

See: [Reward](#); [Heaven](#); [Reward](#)

Chapter 10

¹ I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. ² All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food. ⁴ All drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵ But God was not well pleased with most of them, and their corpses were scattered about in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things were examples for us, so we would not be those who lust for evil things as they lusted. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were. This is as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." ⁸ Let us not commit sexual immorality, as many of them did. In one day, twenty-three thousand people died because of it. ⁹ Neither let us put Christ to the test, as many of them tested him and were destroyed by snakes. ¹⁰ Also do not grumble, as many of them did and were destroyed by an angel of death. ¹¹ Now these things happened to them as examples for us. They were written for our instruction—for us on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹² Therefore let anyone who thinks he stands be careful that he does not fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to all humanity. Instead, God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. With the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it.

¹⁴ Therefore, my beloved ones, run away from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak to you as people who have understanding, so you may judge what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one loaf of bread, we who are many are one body. We all take of one loaf of bread together. ¹⁸ Look at the Israel that is according to the flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? ¹⁹ What am I saying then? That an idol is anything? Or that food sacrificed to an idol is anything? ²⁰ But I say about the things they sacrifice, that they offer these things to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons! ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot participate at the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he is?

²³ "Everything is lawful," but not everything is profitable. "Everything is lawful," but not everything builds people up. ²⁴ No one should seek his own good. Instead, each one should seek the good of his neighbor. ²⁵ Eat everything sold in the market without asking questions of conscience. ²⁶ For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness of it." ²⁷ If an unbeliever invites you to eat a meal, and you wish to go, eat whatever is set before you without asking questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience—^[1]²⁹ the conscience of the other man, I mean, and not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience? ³⁰ If I partake of the meal with gratitude, why am I being insulted for that for which I gave thanks? ³¹ Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³² Be blameless both to Jews and to Greeks, and to the church of God. ³³ In the same way I try to please all people in all things. I do not seek my benefit, but that of the many. I do this so that they may be saved.

Footnotes

10:28 ^[1] Some ancient copies of the Greek text add,

1 Corinthians 10

10:1-13

How were their fathers under the cloud?

[10:1]

Paul wrote about the history of some of the Jewish Corinthian Christians. He wanted to remind them of the dangers of disobeying God. Their Jewish ancestors had escaped their Egyptian enemies. At that time, God went before them and helped them pass through the Red Sea on dry land. Then God continued to lead the Israelites through the wilderness by appearing as a cloud.

See: Exodus 13-14

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

See Map: Egypt; Red Sea

How were people baptized into Moses?

[10:2]

Paul wrote that the Israelites committed themselves to being led by Moses. Scholars think that because the Israelites passed through the sea with Moses, they were joined to Moses in some way.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

What food did people eat?

[10:3]

Paul wrote about people eating spiritual food. This is a metaphor. He was talking about the time when the ancient Jews wandered in the wilderness. This happened right after they had been led by God and Moses out of Egypt. God though a miracle gave them food from heaven to eat. Jesus also called himself “the bread from heaven (see: John 6:51).

See: [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#); [Miracle](#); [Heaven](#)

See Map: Egypt

What did people drink?

[10:4]

Paul wrote about the ancient Jews wandering in the wilderness after they left Egypt. The Jewish people became very thirsty as they walked through the wilderness (see: Exodus 17:6)). Paul wrote how it was Jesus who gave them water. According to Paul, Jesus did more than give water to these people. Jesus also gave the people spiritual water. This is a metaphor. The Corinthians need Jesus like the ancient Israelites needed water while walking in hot desert. He gave life to the Corinthian Christians.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

See Map: Egypt

Why were their corpses scattered in the wilderness?

[10:5]

Paul wrote about dead bodies being scattered in the wilderness. Some time after God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, some people chose not to trust God. They did not obey God and were punished and many people died. God did not allow them to enter into the Promised Land.

See: Exodus 32; Hebrews 3:7-19

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

See Map: Egypt

What lessons were the Jews to learn from the ancient Israelites?

[10:6]

The Israelites tested God. They complained to God even though God did great things for them. They rejected God. Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to learn from the things the Israelites did wrong. They should not sin in the same way the Israelites did. Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians should not worship idols and commit sexual immorality. In Corinth, the worship of idols and committing sexual immorality often happened together .

See: Numbers 21

See: [Worship](#); [Test](#); [Sin](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Worship](#)

Where was it written, “the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose to play”?

[10:7]

See: Exodus 32:6

How did 23000 people died in one day?

[10:8]

During the wilderness wanderings, many people worshipped idols and were sexually immoral. God punished 23000 people one day. God punished them and they died.

See: Numbers 25

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How were people destroyed by snakes?

[10:9]

See: Numbers 21:6

What was an angel of death?

[10:10]

Paul wrote about an angel of death. God sent an angel to punish the people and they died.

See: [Angel](#)

How had the end of the ages come?

[10:11]

Paul said that the end of the age had come. That is, God began doing something new. He began expecting different things from people. This end of the age came right at the time Jesus died and was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How does someone fall?

[10:12]

See: [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#); [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#)

What did Paul teach about temptation?

[10:13]

Paul said Christians were tempted, but this was not something new. When Christians were tempted, it was helpful for them to know that they were not alone. Other Christians were also tempted, too. God was able to keep all Christians from sinning when they were tempted. God would not allow Christians to be tempted in ways they could not overcome it. That is, a Christian is always able to not sin. God would not

allow Christians to be tempted too much. God would also give Christians many ways to overcome their temptation.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Advice to translators: When someone overcomes a temptation, they are tempted but they do not sin.

10:14-22

How does someone run away from idolatry?

[10:14]

Paul wrote that he wanted the Corinthian Christians to avoid worshipping idols. To make his point stronger, he wrote that the Corinthian Christians should run away from idolatry. This was a metaphor.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was the cup of blessing?

[10:16]

When Paul wrote about the cup of blessing, he wrote about the Corinthian Christians drank when they celebrated the Lord's supper.

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

What was the bread they broke?

[10:16]

When Paul wrote about the bread they broke, he was speaking about the bread the Corinthians ate when they celebrated the Lord's supper.

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

How did Christians share in the body of Christ?

[10:16]

Paul wrote that when Corinthian Christians celebrated the Lord's supper, they were joining together with other Christians who did the same thing. All Christians were called the body of Christ.

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Body of Christ](#)

Who was Israel according to the flesh?

[10:18]

When Paul wrote about Israel "according to the flesh," he was writing about people who were born Jews. He was not speaking about the Jews who became Christians.

See: Philippians 3:3

What did Paul teach about eating food offered to idols?

[10:19]

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What were the cup and the table of demons?

[10:21]

Paul wrote about the cup of the Lord and the table of demons. This was a metaphor. The cup and the table were part of the Lord's supper for Christians. Paul wrote that people cannot worship idols or demons and also worship God at the same time.

See: [Worship](#); [Lord's Supper](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Demon](#); [Worship](#)

10:22-33

How was everything lawful?

[10:23]

Paul wrote that everything was lawful. He wanted people to know that it was not evil to eat foods that were once forbidden by the Law of Moses. Christians could eat any type of food, as long as it was not eaten as part of worshipping an idol.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

Why was eating certain things not profitable?

[10:27, 10:28]

Paul wrote that Corinthian Christians could eat any kind of food they chose. However, Paul also wrote that there were times when it was wrong for the Corinthian Christians to eat certain foods. He did not want Christians to eat certain foods if it cause other Christians to think the wrong things about God. He did not want what they ate to hurt other Christians or cause them to sin.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What was a conscience?

[10:27, 10:28]

See: [Conscience](#)

Why were Christians not supposed to eat food offered to idols?

[10:28]

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What words did Paul write in verse 28?

[10:28]

Some of the ancient copies of the Greek New Testament contain the words, "For the earth and everything in it belongs to the Lord." More and older ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Paul wrote these words.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

Why should Christians think about other people's consciences?

[10:29]

Paul wrote that when the Corinthian Christians ate with other people, they needed to think about what other people felt was right or wrong about food. The Corinthian Christians were to think about those around them. Did those around them think it was right or wrong to eat certain foods? Would the non-eating Christian think that the Christian was doing something that dishonored God if they ate a certain food?

See: [Conscience](#)

What is the glory of God?

[10:31]

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How was someone blameless?

[10:32]

See: [Blameless](#)

How did Paul want people to be saved?

[10:33]

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 11

¹ Be imitators of me, just as I am an imitator of Christ.

² Now I praise you because you remember me in everything. I praise you because you hold firmly to the traditions just as I delivered them to you. ³ Now I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, that a man is the head of a woman, and that God is the head of Christ. ⁴ Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. ⁵ But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. For it is the same thing as if her head were shaved. ⁶ For if a woman will not cover her head, she should cut her hair short. If it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or for her to shave her head, let her cover her head. ⁷ For a man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man. ⁸ For man was not made from woman. Instead, woman was made from man. ⁹ For neither was man created for woman. Instead, woman was created for man. ¹⁰ This is why the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹ Nevertheless, in the Lord, the woman is not independent from the man, nor is the man independent from the woman. ¹² For as the woman comes from the man, so does the man come from the woman. And all things come from God. ¹³ Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor for him? ¹⁵ Does not nature teach you that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair has been given to her as a covering. ¹⁶ But if anyone wants to argue about this, we do not have any other practice, nor do the churches of God.

¹⁷ But in the following instructions, I do not praise you. For when you come together, it is not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For in the first place, I hear that when you come together in the church, there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. ²⁰ For when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat. ²¹ When you eat, each one eats his own food before the others have their meal. One is hungry, and another becomes drunk. ²² Do you not have houses to eat and to drink in? Do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I will not praise you for this! ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread. ²⁴ After he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this to remember me." ²⁵ In the same way he took the cup after supper, and he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, to remember me." ²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Let a person examine himself first, and in this way let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment to himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and ill, and some of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we examine ourselves, we will not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned along with the world. ³³ Therefore, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. And about the other things you wrote, I will give instructions when I come.

1 Corinthians 11

11:1-16

How could someone imitate Paul and Jesus?

[11:1]

Paul wrote that he wanted people to imitate him in the same way that he imitated Jesus. That is, he wanted people to do the same types of things he did. However, he only wanted people to do the same types of things he did if they were the same types of things Jesus did. He wanted people to do things that honored God.

Why did Paul praise the Corinthians?

[11:2]

When Paul wrote that he praised the Corinthian Christians, he meant that he was thankful for them. He thanked God for them.

The Corinthian Christian “held firmly to the traditions.” That is, the Corinthian Christians did the things Paul taught and the same type of things that he did.

See: [Praise](#)

Why did Paul write about the “head”?

[11:3]

Paul wrote about the head of someone. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think that the head was someone who led another person. God gave someone permission to lead another other person. Other scholars think the head was the source of something. The head brought life to the other person.

1. Some scholars think Paul taught that Jesus leads every man. Other scholars think Paul taught that Jesus gives a new type of life to people who believe in him.
2. Some scholars think Paul taught that in a Christian home, a man leads his wife and family. Other scholars think Paul taught that women came to life because of man. That is, Eve came from Adam (see: Genesis 1-2).
3. Some scholars think Paul taught that God the Father led Jesus while he was on the earth. Other scholars think Paul taught that God the Father gave life to Jesus after he died.

See: Colossians 1:18

See: [Roles of Men and Women](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Roles of Men and Women](#)

Why did Paul write about covering a person’s head?

[11:4, 11:5]

Paul wrote that a man who prayed or prophesied with their head “covered” dishonored his head. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. Paul wanted Christians to know that this man dishonored Jesus. Other scholars think this man dishonored himself. These scholars think Paul was writing about a cloth covering. In ancient times, a man covered his head when he prayed. However, Christians did not do this. Perhaps this was something the Jewish leaders taught. However, it was not part of the Law of Moses.

Some scholars think the covering over a woman’s head was some form of a cloth covering. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about a woman’s hair as her covering (see: 1 Corinthians 11:15). At that time, a woman with short hair did evil things. Therefore a woman who prayed or prophesied must look different from women who do evil things. Other scholars think this woman acted in the same way that men act and made people think she was a man. This dishonored Jesus or her husband.

See: Pray (Prayer); [Law of Moses](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul talk about women’s hair?

[11:6]

In ancient Israel, only men had short hair. Woman had long hair. People expected women to have long hair. Some scholars think it was not evil for a woman to have short hair. However, Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to know that the Christian women in Corinth should not have short hair. Perhaps this was because it made people think that a woman with short hair was a man. This dishonored God. Or perhaps this was because some women with short hair had sex with other women. Therefore, people thought women with short hair practiced sexual immorality.

Scholars also think that women had a hood or shawl on the clothes they wore at this time. This covered their head when they went away from their house.

Christian women had the freedom to do many different things. However, Paul did not want them to do things that made other people think they dishonored God or stopped them from believing in Jesus.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

How was man the image and the glory of God?

[11:7]

Paul wrote that man was the image and glory of God. He was thinking about Genesis 1:26-27 when he wrote this. Some scholars think that God gave Adam permission to lead Eve. Eve was honored to help Adam in the same way Adam was honored to serve God. Other scholars think that Adam and Eve were both the image and glory of God.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How was a woman made from a man?

[11:8]

Eve was a woman who God made from the rib of a man, Adam. This was what Paul was thinking about when he wrote these words.

See: Genesis 1-2

How was woman created for man?

[11:9]

When God created Eve. She was made to help Adam (see: Genesis 2:18).

See: [Roles of Men and Women](#)

Why did Paul write about angels?

[11:10]

Paul wrote that the woman was to have something on her head. This was a symbol showing she submitted to someone. He wrote that this was because of the angels. Some scholars think this was because the angels serve God by serving men in the same way women do. Other scholars think Paul wrote about how the angels see the things people do (see: 1 Corinthians 4:9). Some scholars think that because a woman dishonored God if she worshipped God with her head uncovered. This would even offend the angels.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

How was someone “in the lord”?

[11:11]

When Paul wrote, “in the lord,” he was talking about Christians. Christians are joined together in Jesus.

See: [In Christ](#)

How were men and women not independent from each other?

[11:11]

Paul wrote that men and women were not independent from one another. Men and women need each other. God made each to serve each other in different ways.

See: [Roles of Men and Women](#)

How did men come from a woman?

[11:12]

Paul wrote that a man comes from a woman. A woman gives birth to a man. Paul also said that woman came from man. He was thinking about Eve being made from Adam. All things come from God who makes everything.

How did someone judge for themselves?

[11:13]

Paul wrote "judge for yourself." He wanted people to think about what he said. He wanted them to make a decision according to what they knew to be right.

Should a woman pray to God with her head uncovered?

[11:13]

Paul asked if a woman should pray to God with her head uncovered. Some scholars think that when Paul lived, people thought it was wrong for a woman to pray in front of other people with her head uncovered. They thought it was wrong for her to do this because they thought she did something God only gave permission for men to do. They thought only men could speak to God by praying or prophesying when they gathered together to worship God.

See: [Worship](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Worship](#)

Why was it wrong for a man to have long hair?

[11:14]

When Paul lived, only women had long hair. Some scholars think that when a man had long hair, he looked like a woman. Therefore, it was wrong because it made him look like a woman. If they did this, it dishonored God. Other scholars think men who had sex with other men had long hair. Therefore, people thought men with long hair practiced sexual immorality. At this time, people would have thought the man with long hair was sexually immoral

Paul said this was "by nature." Some scholars think this was because people thought it was natural for men to have short hair. They were not born in a certain way that they needed to have short hair. However, almost every man had short hair at this time and place.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

11:17-34**What happened when the Corinthians Christians gathered together?**

[11:17]

Paul said when the Christians in Corinth gathered together, it was not for the better, but for the worse. That is, when they gathered together they did many things that did not honor God.

How were there divisions and factions among the Christians in Corinth?

[11:18, 11:19]

Paul heard that the Christians in Corinth were fighting with one another. They often did this. They formed groups. Paul said this happened so that, "those who are approved may be recognized among you." When these Christians were divided, it helped people to know who obeyed God and who did not obey God. One group obeyed God, but the other group did not.

What was the Lord's supper?

[11:20]

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

How did the Christians not eat the Lord's supper?

[11:20]

The Christians in Corinth ate the Lord's supper in a way that dishonored God. By doing this, Paul said they did not eat the Lord's supper because the Lord's supper honored God. The rich Corinthians ate a lot of food and drank a lot. But the poor Corinthians were hungry and thirsty. The things the rich did humiliated the poor.

Paul said that it would be better for these rich people to eat in their own homes than to eat the Lord's supper in the wrong way.

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

What is the new covenant?

[11:25]

See: [New Covenant](#)

Why did Paul want the Corinthians to examine themselves before they ate the Lord's supper?

[11:28]

Paul told the Corinthian Christians to examine themselves before they ate the Lord's supper. If they sinned, then they needed to be at peace with one another and confess their sins to God. If they do not do this, God will punish them in some way. God disciplines Christians. God punished some of these Christians, they were sick or died. However, Christians are not punished by being sent to hell to live forever. This is how non-Christians are punished.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Confess \(Confession\)](#); [Sin](#); [Discipline \(To Disciple\)](#); [Hell](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How did Paul want the Christians to eat the Lord's supper?

[11:33]

Paul wanted the Christians to wait for one another and to share with one another when they ate the Lord's supper.

See: [Lord's Supper](#)

Chapter 12

¹ About spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to idols who could not speak, in whatever ways you were led by them. ³ Therefore I want you to know that no one who speaks by the Spirit of God can say, "Jesus is accursed." No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different ministries, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are different kinds of work, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷ Now to each one is given the outward display of the Spirit for the benefit of all. ⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. ⁹ To another is given faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit. ¹⁰ To another is given miraculous works, and to another prophecy. To another is given the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, giving the gifts to each one individually, as he chooses.

¹² For as the body is one and has many members and all are members of the same body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free, and all were made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ For the body is not a single member, but many. ¹⁵ If the foot says, "Since I am not the hand, I am not part of the body," it is not any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not part of the body," it is not any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But God has appointed each member, each one of them, into the body as he has desired. ¹⁹ If they were all the same member, where would the body be? ²⁰ So now they are many members, but only one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." Nor does the head say to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² But the members of the body that appear to be weaker are essential, ²³ and the parts of the body that we think are less honorable, we give them greater honor, and our unpresentable members have more dignity. ²⁴ Now our presentable members have no such need. Rather, God has composed the body, giving greater honor to those members that lack it. ²⁵ He did this so there may be no division within the body, but that the members should care for one another with the same affection. ²⁶ So when one member suffers, all the members suffer together; or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice together. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then those who do miracles, then gifts of healing, those who provide helps, those who do the work of administration, and those who have various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all of them apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles? ³⁰ Do all of them have gifts of healing? Do all of them speak with tongues? Do all of them interpret tongues? ³¹ Zealously seek the greater gifts. And now I will show you a more excellent way.

1 Corinthians 12

12:1-11

What were spiritual gifts?

[12:1]

Paul wrote that he wanted the Corinthian Christians to know about the gifts from the Holy Spirit.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Who were Paul's brothers?

[12:1]

Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians were his brothers.

See: [Family of God](#)

What was a pagan?

[12:2]

See: [Pagan](#)

How did these Christians used to be led by idols?

[12:2]

Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians used to follow idols. Before the Corinthian Christians believed in Jesus, they were pagans. Pagans could not tell what came from God because they were under the control of Satan. When someone worshipped an idol, they worshipped Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Pagan](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How did someone speak by the Spirit of God?

[12:3]

When someone spoke by the Spirit of God, they said the things the Holy Spirit wanted them to say. Christians speaking by the Spirit of God could not curse Jesus because the Holy Spirit would never curse Jesus. The Holy Spirit, however, could help people to say that Jesus was their God.

See: [Curse](#); [Curse](#)

How were there different gifts, but the same Spirit?

[12:4]

The Holy Spirit gave the Corinthian Christians different spiritual gifts. However, all of those gifts came from the Holy Spirit.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What were ministries?

[12:5]

Ministries were different ways people served God.

See: [Minister \(Ministry\)](#)

How did God work all in all?

[12:6]

Paul wrote that God worked all in all. He wanted people to know that God used all Christians in different ways. Christians serve God in many different ways. God gives Christians spiritual gifts so they can serve him and other people in a certain way.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How was each Christian given an outward display of the Spirit for the benefit of all?

[12:7]

Paul wrote how the Holy Spirit gave each Corinthian Christian a spiritual gift. The Christian needed to use the gifts that the Holy Spirit gave to serve God and others. These gifts from the Holy Spirit were given so that the Corinthian Christians could help each other.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the word of wisdom?

[12:8]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the word of knowledge?

[12:8]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of faith?

[12:9]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of healing?

[12:9]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of miracles?

[12:10]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of prophecy?

[12:10]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) ;[Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of distinguishing between spirits?

[12:10]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of tongues?

[12:10]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of the interpretation of tongues?

[12:10]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

12:12-31

What was the body of Christ?

[12:12]

See: [Body of Christ](#)

How were Christians baptized?

[12:13]

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How did all Christians drink of the Spirit?

[12:13]

Paul wrote about drinking of the Holy Spirit. This was a metaphor. Paul was writing about when a person believed in Jesus.

See: John 4:14

Why did Paul speak about the body of Christ?

[12:14]

Paul wrote about the body of Christ to teach the Corinthian Christians to serve God and others in a certain way. This was a metaphor. The Corinthian Christians were just like a person's body. Each Corinthian Christian was like a member of a physical body. Each Corinthian Christian was able to help other Corinthian Christians. Each Christian was to serve in a certain way depending on how God made them. The Corinthian Christians needed each other.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul list these gifts?

[12:28] Paul said that certain gifts were above other gifts in some way. Scholars think that when Paul listed the apostles, prophets, and teachers first because they led the church (see: Ephesians 4:11-15). Perhaps the Corinthian Christians watched other Christians use their gifts. This made people be in great awe of them. However, Paul said that there were other gifts. Maybe some gifts were not as amazing as some to see. Yet, all these gifts were given by God. They were meant to be used to serve God and other people.

See: [Prophet](#); [Apostle](#); [Prophet](#)

What was the gift of apostle?

[12:28]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the gift of administration?

[12:28]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What were the greater gifts?

[12:31]

Paul wrote about a greater spiritual gift. Scholars think he was speaking about another gift. This was a gift that helped Christians to teach other people about Jesus.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was the better way Paul will show to the Corinthians?

[12:31]

Paul promised to show the Corinthians a better way to serve God. Scholars think he was writing about serving God by loving other people. This was not a spiritual gift that only certain Christians. Instead, Paul meant that all Christians had a gift helping them love other people.

See: 1 Corinthians 14:1

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 13

¹ Suppose that I speak with the tongues of men and of angels. But if I do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² Suppose that I have the gift of prophecy and understand all hidden truths and knowledge, and that I have all faith so as to remove mountains. But if I do not have love, I am nothing. ³ Suppose that I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and that I give my body to be burned. But if I do not have love, I gain nothing. ^[1]⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous and does not boast. It is not puffed up ⁵ or rude. It does not seek its own. It is not provoked, nor does it keep a count of wrongs. ⁶ It does not rejoice in unrighteousness. Instead, it rejoices in the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends. If there are prophecies, they will pass away. If there are tongues, they will cease. If there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰ But when the perfect comes, that which is incomplete will pass away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put away childish things. ¹² For now we see indirectly in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I have been fully known. ¹³ But now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Footnotes

13:3 ^[1]Most important and ancient Greek copies, and ancient translations read,

1 Corinthians 13

13:1-13

What were the tongues of men and angels?

[13:1]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Angel](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did someone have love?

[13:1]

In verses 13:1-4, Paul wrote about the ways the Corinthian Christians could love other people.

What was a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal?

[13:1]

A noisy gong or a clanging cymbal were musical instruments that made big noise. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think when Paul wanted to say that the way the Christians lived made people confused about who God is and how God wanted people to live. Paul wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God. If they do this, then people will know what God is like and how to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was the gift of prophecy?

[13:2]

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

How was Paul nothing?

[13:2] Paul wrote that if he did not love other people. Then everything he did was useless and did not honor God. If a Christian knows everything about God but does not love other people, then this does not help anyone. Why did Paul talk about gaining nothing?

Paul wrote about gaining nothing. He said that he could do many things to honor God, but if he did not do them because he loved God or other people, then the things he did would not honor God.

Paul wrote about gaining nothing. He said that he could do many things to honor God. Yet if he did not love other people, then the things he did would not honor God.

What did Paul write in verse 3?

[13:3]

Some ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the word "burn." Other ancient copies of the Greek New Testament have the word "boast." Because of this, some scholars think Paul wrote about giving his body to be burned. They think Paul wrote about dying for being a Christian. Other scholars, however, think Paul wrote about boasting. They say that Paul wrote here about suffering. They believe that Paul meant that if he did not love other people, then he should not be honored.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#))

Why did Paul write "love is"?

[13:4]

In this chapter, Paul wrote the words "love is" many times. Through these words he gave a description. Paul meant that "someone who loves is a certain way". He meant that someone who loved other people did certain things.

See: [Love](#)

How was love not "self-serving"?

[13:5]

Someone who loved other people was believed to be a person who was not "self-serving." That is, these people refused to serve themselves. They did not want to have everything turn out the way they wanted.. Instead, these Christians served other people.

What was unrighteousness?

[13:6]

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What did it mean that love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things"?

[13:7]

Paul wrote that when the Corinthian Christians loved, they were able to endure things. Corinthian Christians who loved people did not want revenge against other people. These Christians also believed all things. That is, they trusted people. These Christians hoped in all things. They knew good things would happen because they trusted God. These Christians also endured all things. They loved others even when bad things happened.

When will prophecies and tongues stop?

[13:9, 13:10]

Paul wrote that one day the Corinthian Christians will not need of the gifts of prophecy and speaking in tongues. Some scholars think this happened after the apostles died. Other scholars think Paul was writing about how these gifts were used for a short time. However, Paul, when people love other people, that love lasts forever. Other scholars think there is a time in the future when Christians will not need these spiritual gifts.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) ; [Speak in Tongues](#); [Apostle](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did Christians know and prophesy in part?

[13:9]

Paul wrote that Corinthian Christians did not know everything. They could only tell other people part of something. However, a time would come Christians would know more. This happens after Jesus returns to the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was the perfect?

[13:10]

When Paul wrote about the perfect, he was writing about a perfect world. When Jesus returns to the earth, it will be a perfect time which never ends. Everyone will know the truth about God. People will no longer have an imperfect knowledge of God.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did people talk about being a child and an adult?

[13:11]

Paul wrote that people know certain spiritual things in the same way a child or adult knows things. This is a metaphor. When the Corinthian Christians were children, they only knew some things. When the Corinthian Christian were adults, they were able to know much more. Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to know that they only knew some things about God. However, one day they would know more about God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How will people know about God?

[13:12]

Paul wrote how that the Corinthian Christians understood God as if they were looking in a mirror. Ancient mirrors were like modern ones. However, ancient mirrors were not as clear as modern mirrors. The image in the mirror was not complete or clear. In the same way, the Corinthian Christians had an incomplete understanding of God. However, in the future, the Corinthian Christians would know much more about God.

How has Paul been fully known?

[13:12]

Paul was fully known. Some scholars think that Paul meant that God knew Paul completely even before the world began. God who knew everything there was to know, also knew everything there was to know about Paul. Why did Paul write about faith, hope, and love?

Paul wrote about the greatest gifts. Paul wrote that these were faith, hope, and love. However, Paul wrote that love was the greatest gift because it lasts forever.

See: [Love](#); [Hope](#); [Love](#)

Chapter 14

¹ Pursue love and be zealous for spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. ² For the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. For no one understands him because he speaks mysteries in the Spirit. ³ But the one who prophesies speaks to people to build them up, to exhort them, and to comfort them. ⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. ⁵ Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues. But even more than that, I wish that you would prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues (unless someone interprets so that the church may receive edification). ⁶ But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you? I cannot, unless I speak to you with revelation, or knowledge, or prophecy, or teaching. ⁷ In the same way, when lifeless instruments are producing sounds—like the flute or the harp—if they do not produce different tones, how will anyone know what tune the flute or harp is playing? ⁸ For if the trumpet is played with an uncertain sound, how will anyone know when it is time to prepare for battle? ⁹ It is the same way for you with the tongue. If you utter speech that is not clear, how will what is said be understood? You will be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ There are doubtless many kinds of languages in the world, and none is without meaning. ¹¹ But if I do not know the meaning of a language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker will be a foreigner to me. ¹² So it is with you. Since you are eager for the manifestations of the Spirit, seek for the edification of the church so that you might abound. ¹³ So the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret. ¹⁴ For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. ¹⁵ What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing with my spirit, and I will also sing with my mind. ¹⁶ Otherwise, if you bless God with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" when you are giving thanks if he does not know what you are saying? ¹⁷ For you certainly give thanks well enough, but the other person is not built up. ¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. ¹⁹ But in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding so that I might instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

²⁰ Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Rather, in regard to evil, be like infants. But in your thinking be mature. ²¹ In the law it is written,

"By men of strange tongues
and by the lips of strangers
I will speak to this people.
Even then they will not hear me,"
says the Lord.

²² So then, tongues are a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers. But prophecy is for a sign, not for unbelievers, but for believers. ²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders and unbelievers come in, would they not say that you are insane? ²⁴ But if you all were prophesying and an unbeliever or an outsider came in, he would be convicted by all he hears. He would be judged by all that is said. ²⁵ The secrets of his heart would be revealed. As a result, he would fall on his face and worship God. He would declare that God is really among you.

²⁶ What is next then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Do everything so that you build up the church. ²⁷ If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at most three, and each one in turn, and then someone should interpret what is said. ²⁸ But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in the church. Let each one speak to himself alone and to God. ²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others listen with discernment to what is said. ³⁰ But if there is a revelation to one who is sitting, let the first be silent. ³¹ For each of you can prophesy one by one so that each one may learn and all may be exhorted. ³² For the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³ For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.

This is the rule in all the churches of God's holy people. ³⁴ The women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak. Instead, they should be in submission, as also the law says. ³⁵ If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. ³⁶ Did the word of God come from you? Are you the only ones it has reached?

³⁷ If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I write to you are a command of the Lord. ³⁸ But if anyone does not recognize this, let him not be recognized.

³⁹ So then, brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid anyone from speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But let all things be done properly and in order.

1 Corinthians 14

14:1-19

How were the Corinthian Christians to pursue love?

[14:1]

Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to pursue love. Paul wrote about spiritual gifts in the verses before this one. He insisted that spiritual gifts were to be used to love other people. Paul wanted Corinthian Christians to serve others because they loved them.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How were the Christians to be “zealous for spiritual gifts”?

[14:1]

When Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians should be “zealous” (ζηλόω/g2206) for spiritual gifts, Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to truly desire the Holy Spirit’s gifts to serve other Corinthian Christians. Scholars think that prophecy was greater in some way because it helped Christians to do things that honored God.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

How did someone who spoke in tongues speak to God?

[14:2]

Paul wrote that when Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues, they spoke to God. Some scholars think Paul was writing here about Corinthian Christians who spoke in a miraculous tongue. Paul wrote that when the Corinthian Christians did this, they were praying to God. This was a language only known to God. Other scholars think that when Paul wrote that Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues, he was describing how the Corinthian Christians spoke in languages other people in the world spoke. Other scholars say that when these Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues they did not have anyone to interpret what they said. Therefore, it did not help other Christians, as only God knew what the person said.

See: [Mystery](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Mystery](#)

Why does someone prophesy?

[14:3]

Paul wrote that when the Corinthian Christians prophesied, it encouraged and comforted them. When someone spoke to the Corinthian Christians about what God wanted them to say, it helped them. The person who prophesied to the Corinthian Christians made these Christians better.

See: [Church](#) ; [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Church](#)

How did someone who spoke in tongues build himself up?

[14:4]

Paul wrote that when Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues, they were doing something that helped their faith. Corinthian Christians who did this only helped themselves. They were not helping others if

there were no other Corinthian Christian there to interpret the tongues so others might understand. Paul said this did not happen when the Corinthian Christians prophesied.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did Paul want all the Christians in Corinth to speak in tongues?

[14:5]

Paul wrote that he wanted all Christians to speak in tongues. Some scholars think that Paul meant that Christians had the gift to speak in tongues. Other scholars think that Paul did not think all Christians had the gift to speak in tongues. Instead, this is why Paul wrote that he thought it would be better for Christians to prophesy than to speak in tongues.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How was the person who prophesied greater than the one who spoke in tongues?

[14:5]

When Paul wrote that the Corinthian Christians who prophesied were greater than the person who spoke in tongues, he was writing about those Corinthian Christians who spoke in tongues without an interpreter. These Corinthian Christians did not help other people. However, the Corinthian Christians who prophesied helped other people. This was why the person who prophesied was greater.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How did someone speak with revelation, knowledge, prophecy, teaching?

[14:6]

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul write about musical instruments?

[14:7]

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about the spiritual gift of tongues, he mentioned musical instruments. He was teaching people something. He wanted the Corinthian Christians to know that if they spoke in tongues and no one understood, it was like someone sounding an “uncertain” note on an instrument. That is, it would not help anyone because they could not understand it.

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Speak in Tongues](#)

What were the manifestations of the Spirit?

[14:12]

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about the “manifestations of the Spirit,” he was writing about the things the Holy Spirit did to reveal Himself to the Corinthian Christians. Here Paul called these things the Holy Spirit’s gifts.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What did Paul desire Christians to want from the Holy Spirit?

[14:12]

Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to want to have things from the Holy Spirit which helped other people.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul want the Christians who spoke in tongues to also interpret those tongues?

[14:13]

Paul wrote that when Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues, they needed to have someone interpret those tongues. If the Corinthian Christians spoke in tongues, but gave no interpretation, it did not honor God. This was because it did not cause the church to grow (See: 1 Corinthians 14:28). Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to pray that they could interpret the tongues they spoke.

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speak in Tongues](#)

How did someone pray in a tongue?

[14:13]

Paul wrote about praying in a tongue. Some scholars think that Paul was writing about when people prayed in front of other people. Fewer scholars think Paul was writing about when someone was alone and prayed to God.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speak in Tongues](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

How did someone's spirit pray?

[14:14]

Paul wrote about a Christian praying with his spirit. Some scholars think Paul was writing about the Holy Spirit using tongues when they prayed in front of other people who spoke different languages. They think Paul said that his own spirit prayed as the Holy Spirit gave him the ability to speak in prayer. Fewer scholars think the Holy Spirit gave people a special language when they prayed to God.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speak in Tongues](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

How did Paul want people to pray?

[14:15]

Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to pray and think much as they prayed for their needs and those of other people.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Why did Paul want people to say "amen"?

[14:16]

Paul wrote that the Corinthian Church needed to use the gift of tongues in ways people could understand them. In ancient Israel, Jews and Christians often said "amen" when someone else spoke about God. When people said "amen", they were asking God to make happen what that speaker said. If someone in the Corinthian church could not understand the meaning of what the speaker said, they could not say "amen" (ἀμήν/g0281).

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speak in Tongues](#)

Why did Paul thank God that he spoke in tongues more than any of the Christians in Corinth?

[14:18]

Paul thanked God that he spoke in tongues more than any of the Christians in Corinth. This was because he used tongues to help other people and to honor God. The Christians in the Corinthian did not use tongues in this way.

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Speak in Tongues](#)

See Map: Corinth

Why did Paul want to teach other people instead of to speak in tongues?

[14:19]

When Paul spoke in tongues, it only helped him to trust God more. However, when he spoke in a language that members of the Corinthian Church could understand, he helped the Corinthian Christians, and not just himself.

14:20-25

How were the Christians in Corinth like children?

[[14:20]

Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth and spoke to them as if they were children. This was a metaphor. They were not acting like adults were supposed to act. Adults often know the difference between right and wrong. Children do not always know what is right and wrong.

See: [Grow in Faith](#); [Grow in Faith](#)

Why did Paul write about the Law of Moses?

[14:21]

Paul wrote that a prophecy about the gift of speaking in other tongues was written about in the Old Testament (see: Isaiah 28:11-12). When Isaiah spoke these words, God warned Israel that he was going to use Gentiles to judge Israel. This prophecy began to be fulfilled. Paul wrote how God was using these gifts of tongues to share the gospel with Gentiles. The tongues were used as a sign to the Gentiles. It helped Gentiles to believe in Jesus.

However, if there was someone speaking in tongues and no one to interpret what was being said, then people would think that Christians were crazy.

See: [Gospel](#) ; [Law of Moses](#); [Speak in Tongues](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gentile](#); [Sign](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Gospel](#)

How was prophecy a sign to Christians?

[14:22]

Paul wrote that prophecy was a sign to the Corinthian Christians, but not for non-Christians. Prophecy helped Christians to obey God and to live in a way that honored God. Tongues were a sign for the unbelieving (see: I Corinthians 14:22) living among the Corinthianians. Tongues were used so that people could understand the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Sign](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gospel](#)

What were the “secrets of the heart”?

[14:25]

The “secrets of the heart” were wrong things a person in the Corinthian Church had done. Only the person guilty of those evil things knew about them.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

14:26-33

What was a psalm?

[14:26]

A psalm was a song that was sung to worship God. The Old Testament has many psalms. (See: Psalms)

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Worship](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was a revelation?

[14:26]

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church about how some Christians used prophecy to reveal something other people.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Church](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why did Paul not want many people to speak in tongues at the same time?

[14:27]

Paul wrote that it was wrong for many prophets to prophesy at the same time. This was because no one would understand them if more than one spoke the same time. They couldn't learn about God and how to obey God if more than one prophet was prophesying. No one could hear the messages clearly if many people were speaking. Paul wanted these spiritual gifts to be used in ways that honored God.

See: [Prophet](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophet](#)

How were the spirits of the prophets subject to the prophet?

[14:32]

Paul wrote that the spirit of the prophets was subject to the prophet. That is, the prophet could control when he or she spoke. God did not want the prophets to all speak at the same time. God did not want people to be confused. Instead, the prophets were to wait for other prophets to be done prophesying before they began to prophesy.

See: [Prophet](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Prophet](#)

14:34-40

Why did Paul tell women to be silent in churches?

[14:34]

Paul wanted women to be silent when Christians gathered together to worship God. Some scholars think that when the Corinthian Christians gathered together to worship God, it was often very chaotic. Many people prophesied. Many people spoke in tongues. Also, some women were also causing problems in Corinth. Some scholars think Paul wrote about some married women who were speaking loudly to their husbands who were sitting across the room. When Paul lived, women sat on one side of the room and men sat on the other side of the room. Paul wanted to encourage the Corinthian church to respect God and others when they gathered together to worship God. Therefore, Paul wanted these women to wait and ask their husbands questions when everyone was not gathered together. Other scholars think that Paul did not want anyone to speak in a way that interrupted other people when they gathered together to worship God. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote that women were not to speak during the worship services simply because they were women.

See: Genesis 3:6; 2 Timothy 2:11-15

See: [Worship](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Speak in Tongues](#); [Worship](#)

To whom were women to submit?

[14:34]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about women submitting to their husbands. Other scholars think Paul wrote this because the women were causing problems when the Corinthians gathered to worship God. Paul wrote this command for the women of that time and place. He wrote these words to correct a problem. By speaking out loudly and causing problems, they were not respecting other people or honoring God. They were not serving others or serving God.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

See: Genesis 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:11-15

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Speak in Tongues](#)

How was someone considered to be “spiritual”?

[14:37]

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Who should be recognized by the Christians in Corinth?

[14:38]

Paul wrote that Christians in Corinth should know that prophets always teach the same things Paul taught. They did not disagree with Paul because the things Paul taught were from God. If prophets did not do this, then these prophets were not speaking for God. The Christians in Corinth should reject these prophets and their prophecies.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What lesson did Paul want the Corinthians to learn about prophecy and tongues?

[14:39, 14:40] Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to learn that spiritual gifts must be used in the right way. Spiritual gifts should not create chaos when people are gathered together to worship God. This would dishonor God to use these gifts in this way.

See: [Speak in Tongues](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Speak in Tongues](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Now I want to make known to you, brothers, the gospel I proclaimed to you, which you received and on which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. ⁵ Christ appeared to Cephas, and then to the twelve; ⁶ then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once. Most of them are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, he appeared to me, as if to one born prematurely. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles. I am unworthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace in me was not in vain. Instead, I labored harder than all of them. Yet it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹ Therefore whether it is I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain. ¹⁵ Also, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we testified that God raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him, if indeed the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷ and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished. ¹⁹ If only in this life we hope in Christ, of all people we are most to be pitied.

²⁰ But now Christ has been raised from the dead as the firstfruits of those who sleep. ²¹ For since death came by a man, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ, who is the firstfruits, and then those who belong to Christ will be made alive at his coming. ²⁴ Then will be the end, when he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father, when he will abolish all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For "he has put everything under his feet." But when it says "he has put everything," it is clear that this does not include the one who put everything in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected under him, then the Son himself will be subjected under the one who put all things into subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

²⁹ Or else what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are they baptized for them? ³⁰ Why then are we in danger every hour? ³¹ I die every day! This is as sure as my boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² What do I gain, from a human point of view, if I fought with beasts at Ephesus, if the dead are not raised?

"Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die."

³³ Be not deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." ³⁴ Sober up! Live righteously! Do not keep sinning. For some of you have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

³⁵ But someone will say, "How are the dead raised, and with what kind of body will they come?" ³⁶ You fool! What you sow will not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ What you sow is not the body that will be, but a bare grain. It may become wheat or something else. ³⁸ But God will give it a body as he chooses, and to each seed its own body. ³⁹ Not all flesh is the same. Instead, there is one flesh for human beings, and another flesh for animals, and another flesh for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the glory of the heavenly body is one kind and the glory of the earthly is another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. For one star differs from another star in glory. ⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, and what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a

natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ So also it is written, "The first man Adam became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But the spiritual did not come first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man is of the earth, made of dust. The second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ Just as the one made from dust is, so also are those who are made of the dust, and as the man of heaven is, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Neither does what is perishable inherit what is imperishable. ⁵¹ Look! I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. ⁵² We will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on what is imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable body has put on what is imperishable, and when this mortal body has put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵ "Death, where is your victory?
Death, where is your sting?"

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! ⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers, be steadfast and immovable. Always abound in the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15

15:1-11

What was the gospel?

[15:1]

Paul wrote about the gospel. He used several metaphors when writing about the Christians in Corinth and the gospel. It was the gospel he told them. It was the gospel they believed. It was the gospel on which they stood. That is, it was the gospel that gave them confidence that they were at peace with God. It was the gospel that was saving them. That is, it was the gospel that was making them different than they were before. They then began doing things that honored God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did someone "hold firmly" to the word?

[15:2]

Paul told the Christians in Corinth to "hold firmly" to the word. Some scholars think he wanted to say that they needed to keep believing in Jesus. Other scholars think Paul wanted them to keep obeying the things he and the other apostles taught.

See: [Word of God](#); [Word of God](#)

What was preaching?

[15:2]

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

How did someone believe in vain?

[15:2]

Paul wrote about believing in vain. This was when someone believed in something, but they still did the same evil things.

What was the most important thing about which Paul wrote?

[15:3]

Paul wrote about something that was the most important thing. It was something that he was told by others and he told the Christians in Corinth. This was that Jesus died for people's sins. After this, Jesus was resurrected. After he was resurrected, he appeared to many people. That is, many people saw him and talked to him after he was raised from the dead.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Who were the twelve?

[15:5]

Paul wrote about the twelve. They were the twelve apostles.

See: [Apostle](#)

Who were the apostles?

[15:7]

Paul wrote about the apostles. Here, he also wrote about certain people other than the twelve apostles.

See: [Apostle](#)

How was Paul "unlike the other apostles"?

[15:8, 15:9]

Paul wrote that he was unlike the other apostles. That is, he was not born at the right time. This was a metaphor. He wanted people to know that, unlike the other apostles he was not with Jesus when Jesus was alive. Instead, he persecuted Christians at that time. Because of this, he did not think he was worthy of being called an apostle. He greatly dishonored God before he believed in Jesus. However, God still chose him to be an apostle.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How was God's grace to Paul not in vain?

[15:10]

Paul wrote that God's grace to him was not in vain. That is, God favored Paul. Therefore, Paul wanted to live in a way that honored God.

See: [Grace](#)

15:12-19

Who said there was no resurrection of the dead?

[15:12]

In Corinth, there were some Christians who did not think that people were made alive again after they died. They thought nothing happened after a person died. This confused Paul because they believed that Jesus was resurrected. If Jesus was not resurrected, then he could not have died for people's sins. If this were true, then everything Paul and the other Christians did was useless and believing the gospel could not help anyone.

See: [Gospel](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Gospel](#)

How was someone still in their sins?

[15:17]

When Jesus died, he forgave the sins of those who believed in him. However, if Jesus was not resurrected, then he could not have forgiven the sins of those who believed in him. Therefore, they would still be guilty of sinning against God and deserved to be punished.

Paul wrote that if people died believing in Jesus and Jesus was not resurrected, then they died and did not live together with God in heaven forever. However, Jesus was resurrected, so this was not true.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why should Christians not have hope only in this life?

[15:19]

Paul wrote that it was sad if people only believed that Jesus could help them while they were alive. This was because they did not understand who Jesus is. He did help people when they were alive on the earth. However, Jesus did much more. He promised that those who believe in him will live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#)

15:20-28**How was Jesus the firstfruits of those who are asleep?**

[15:20]

Paul wrote that Jesus was the firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep. This was a metaphor. Jesus was the first of many people who would be made alive again after they died. While Jesus was made alive again on the earth, other people will be made alive again and live in heaven with God.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How did death come through one man?

[15:21]

Paul wrote that death came through one man. This was Adam (see: Genesis 3). Adam sinned and because he sinned all people died.

See: Romans 5:12-17

See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Die \(Death\)](#)

How did resurrection come through one man?

[15:21]

Paul wrote that the resurrection came through one man. This was Jesus. Because of Jesus, Christians will be resurrected to live with God in heaven forever.

Christians will be resurrected when Jesus returns.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Heaven](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How is death the last enemy of God?

[15:26]

Paul wrote that death is the last enemy of God to be defeated. This is a metaphor. God did not want people and things to die. He wanted everything and everyone to live forever. Because Adam sinned,

everything dies (see: Genesis 3). However, Paul talked about a time when things would not die anymore. This is what he was thinking about when he said that God would defeat his last enemy, death.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Die \(Death\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Paul write about things being ruled by God?

[15:28]

Paul wrote that God the Father gave Jesus the power to rule everything, but he will not rule God the Father. Some scholars God the Father will always rule Jesus in some way. Other scholars think Paul was writing about Jesus ruling on the earth for 1000 years (see: Revelation 20:1-7). At the end of this time, Jesus will give his kingdom to God the Father.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

15:29-34

Why were people baptized for the dead?

[15:29]

Some scholars think people in Corinth tried to be baptized for people who died. This did not honor God. These people also taught that people were not resurrected when they died. Paul did not understand why they believed these things. They should not have done this if they thought that people were not resurrected when they died. Other scholars think the Christians in Corinth were baptized for people who were dying and could not be baptized. Paul wanted them to know what they believed was not true.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write about being in danger?

[15:30]

Paul wrote about being in danger because he told other people about Jesus. Paul explained to them that he was in danger so they would know that obeying God meant that their life on the earth may be in danger and they may have to die for Jesus. This is not what the Christians in Corinth taught.

Paul also wanted them to know that he served God to receive rewards in heaven, not rewards on earth.

See: [Heaven](#); [Reward](#); [Heaven](#)

How does bad company corrupts good morals?

[15:33]

Paul wrote that bad company corrupts good morals. He wanted these Christians to know that if they spend time with people who taught the wrong things, then they would also begin to believe wrong things and do wrong things, even if they were trying to do things that honor God. They must know how to honor God, and not just try to honor God by obeying these false teachers.

15:35-49

What did Paul teach about how people will look after they are resurrected?

[15:44]

Paul expected the Christians in Corinth to have questions about what they would look like after they were resurrected. However, he did not want people to think about this. It was not helpful and it was foolish. He told them that they will look different than they look now, but he did not tell them more than this. However, he did tell them their new body would be glorious. This is because it will last forever and it will be with God in heaven.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How was the first Adam a living soul?

[15:45]

The first man was named Adam. He was the first man to live. This is why Paul called him the first living soul. The people who came after Adam did the things that he did. That is, they sinned and did the things they wanted to do.

See: Genesis 2-3

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How was the second Adam a life-giving spirit?

[15:45]

Paul wrote about a second Adam. This was a metaphor. He was writing about Jesus who came from heaven. Jesus gave people a new type of life. The Christians who follow Jesus do the types of things Jesus did. That is, they honor God. They live in a way that they know they will see God in heaven.

See: Romans 5:12-17

See: [Heaven](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Heaven](#)

15:50-58

Why will flesh and blood not inherit the kingdom of God?

[15:50]

Paul wrote that flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God. That is, Christians will not inherit the kingdom of God as they were. They need a new body to do this. The body they had was one that will perish and die. However, they will get a new body which will not perish or die. Jesus will do this when he returns to the earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is a “secret truth” or mystery?

[15:51]

See: [Mystery](#)

What did Paul teach about death?

[15:54]

Paul wrote that dying was a type of enemy against God. God did not want things to die. Things died because of sin. Jesus will defeat dying. This is a metaphor. At some time, everything and everyone will stop dying. Because of this, no one should be afraid of dying.

See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Sin; Die \(Death\)](#)

How is the law the power of sin?

[15:56]

Paul wrote that the “power of sin is the law.” That is, the Law of Moses taught people that they sinned and disobeyed God. Because of this, they deserved to die.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How is the work in the Lord not in vain?

[15:58]

Paul wrote that Christians do not serve God in vain. That is, when Christians serve God, they will be rewarded.

See: [Reward](#)

Chapter 16

¹ Now concerning the collection for God's holy people: as I instructed the churches of Galatia, so you are to do. ² On the first day of the week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper. Do this so that there will be no collections when I come. ³ When I arrive, to whomever you approve, I will give letters of introduction to them and will send them with your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴ If it is appropriate for me to go also, they will go with me. ⁵ But I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia. For I will pass through Macedonia. ⁶ Perhaps I may stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my way, wherever I go. ⁷ For I do not wish to see you now for only a passing visit. For I hope to spend more time with you, if the Lord permits. ⁸ But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹ for a wide door has opened for me, and there are many adversaries.

¹⁰ Now when Timothy comes, see that he is with you unafraid, for he is laboring at the work of the Lord, as I am doing. ¹¹ Let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me. For I am expecting him to come along with the brothers. ¹² Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly encouraged him to visit you with the brothers. But it was not at all his will that he come now. However, he will come when the time is right.

¹³ Be watchful, stand fast in the faith, act like men, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done in love.

¹⁵ You know the household of Stephanas, that they were the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of God's holy people. Now I urge you, brothers, ¹⁶ to be in submission to such people and to everyone who helps in the work and labors with us. ¹⁷ I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. They have made up for your absence. ¹⁸ For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. So then, acknowledge people like them.

¹⁹ The churches of Asia send greetings to you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you in the Lord, with the church that is in their home. ²⁰ All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

²¹ I, Paul, write this with my own hand. ²² If anyone does not love the Lord, may he be accursed. Our Lord, come! ²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. ²⁴ My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. ^[1]

Footnotes

16:24 ^[1] A few important and ancient Greek copies and some ancient translations have

1 Corinthians 16

16:1-9

What is the collection for God's holy people?

[16:1]

Paul wrote about the "collection for God's holy people." When he wrote about this, he was writing about the Christians in Corinth collecting money to help other Christians who needed it.

See: [People of God](#); [Holy Ones](#); [People of God](#)

Where was Galatia?

[16:1]

See Map: Galatia

When was the first day of the week?

[16:2]

The first day of the week was Sunday.

How did Paul want the Christians to prepare to give to the Christians who needed it?

[16:2]

Paul wanted the Christians to prepare to give money to the Christians who needed money. He wanted them to plan to give to others and not to give randomly. If they did this, they would be happy to give to others.

What were the letters about which Paul spoke?

[16:3]

In ancient times, people sent other people with letters of introduction. These letters introduced this person to other people and told them why they were coming. This letter helped the people in Jerusalem know that Paul had sent these people to give them this money.

See Map: Jerusalem

Where was Macedonia?

[16:5]

See Map: Macedonia

Where was Ephesus?

[16:8]

See Map: Ephesus

What was Passover?

[16:8]

See: [Passover](#)

How has a wide door opened for Paul?

[16:9]

Paul wrote about a wide door. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that he was given the opportunity to teach other people about Jesus. However, there were many people who fought against him in some way.

See: [Door \(Metaphor\)](#)

16:10-24

Why did Paul not want Timothy to be afraid?

[16:10]

Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to help protect Timothy. The Christians were persecuted. This is why he did not want Timothy to be afraid. Some scholars think Timothy might be treated badly because he was so young and the leaders in Corinth might not treat him well.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Who were the brothers?

[16:11]

Paul wrote that Timothy was going to go to Corinth with the brothers. These were some other Christians.

See: [Family of God](#)

How were the Christians in Corinth to be watchful?

[16:13]

The Christians in Corinth were to be watchful. That is, they were to try to obey God. They were to see how they could do things that honored God. They were also to look out for false teachers and other things that could harm the Christians in Corinth.

See: [False Teacher](#)

How were the Christians in Corinth to stand fast in the faith?

[16:13]

Paul wrote that the Christians in Corinth were to stand fast in the faith. That is, Paul wanted them to keep trusting in God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

How were the Christians in Corinth to act like men?

[16:13]

Paul wrote that they Christians in Corinth were to act like men. That is, they should not act in the way children act. They were also to be strong. This was a metaphor. They were to do the things God wanted them to do, even if they were difficult.

What were the firstfruits, or first converts of Achaia?

[16:15]

Stephanas and his family were the firstfruits of Achaia. That is, they were the first people in Achaia to believe in Jesus.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

See Map: Achaia

Who are God's holy people?

[16:15]

God's holy people are Christians.

See: [People of God](#); [Holy Ones](#); [People of God](#)

What is submission?

[16:16]

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

How did people refresh Paul's spirit?

[16:18]

When certain people visited, it refreshed Paul's spirit. That is, it made Paul happy and helped him to keep serving God.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Where was Asia?

[16:19]

See Map: Asia

What was the church in the home of Aquila and Priscilla?

[16:19]

At this time, certain Christians met together to worship God in the home of Aquila and Priscilla.

See: [Worship](#)

How did Christians greet one another with a holy kiss?

[16:20]

In ancient times, people often greeted each other with a kiss of some sort. When people did this, they were at peace with one another. It meant that they were friends.

Why did Paul write with his own hand?

[16:21]

When Paul wrote, he often spoke and someone else wrote what he said. Here, Paul said that he wrote this himself. He wanted them to know that he really cared about them.

See: [Ancient Letters](#)

Why did Paul want certain people to be cursed?

[16:22]

There were some false teachers. He asked God to curse them. That is, he wanted God to judge them.

See: Galatians 1:6-10

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Curse](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Paul say "Our Lord come"?

[16:22]

When Paul lived, many Christians said "our Lord come." This is because they wanted Jesus to return to the earth as he promised.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Book: 2 Corinthians

Introduction to 2 Corinthians

Overview

Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth. These Christians had many problems. Paul wanted to help them. They were listening to false teachers. They did not want to help the poor Christians in Jerusalem even though they promised to do this. They also thought evil things about Paul. Paul wanted to help these Christians to live in a way that honored God.

See: [False Teacher](#)

See Map: Corinth; Jerusalem

Who wrote 2 Corinthians?

The apostle Paul wrote this letter (see: 1:1). Timothy was with Paul but he did not write this letter.

See: [Apostle](#)

To Whom did Paul write 2 Corinthians?

The letter was sent to the church of Corinth and also to other Christians near Corinth (see: 1:1, 9:2). Corinth was a large city. Many ships went in and out of Corinth. It was a Roman colony, meaning that many of the Corinthians were people who moved there from Rome. They did many of the same types of things the Romans did. While there were Jews in this church, there were more Gentiles. Paul founded the church of Corinth on his second journey (see: Acts 15:40-18:23).

See: [Church](#); [Gentile](#); [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

See Map: Rome

Why did Paul write 2 Corinthians?

Paul wrote many letters to the Christians in Corinth, including many letters (at least one from Corinth to Paul, 1 Corinthians 7:1; and between two and six from Paul to Corinth). Paul wrote this letter to help resolve the problems the Christians were having. He rebuked them for sinning. He wanted them to know he was an apostle. He also wanted them to give to Christians in Jerusalem as they promised to do.

See: [Sin](#); [Apostle](#)

Outline of 2 Corinthians

1. Paul greeted the church and gave thanks to God (1:1-11)
2. Paul defended his travel plans (1:12-2:13)
3. Paul defended the things he did (2:14-7:16)
4. The Corinthians needed to complete their donation for the believers in Jerusalem who were poor (8:1-9:15)
5. The false teachers were from Satan, but Paul was a true apostle (9:1-12:18)
6. Paul called on the Corinthians to reject evil (12:19-13:10)
7. Conclusion (13:11-14)

See: [False Teacher](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Apostle](#)

2 Corinthians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, and to all God's holy people in the entire region of Achaia.

² May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised. He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. ⁴ God comforts us in all our tribulation, so that we can comfort those who are in any tribulation. We comfort others with the same comfort that God used to comfort us. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ abound for our sake, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. ⁶ But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort. Your comfort is working effectively in your endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer. ⁷ Our hope concerning you is unshaken, for we know that as you share the sufferings, you also share our comfort. ⁸ For we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the tribulation we had in Asia. We were utterly burdened beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹ Indeed, we had the sentence of death on us. But that was to make us not put our trust in ourselves, but instead in God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He rescued us from such a deadly peril, and he will rescue us. On him we have set our hope that he will rescue us. ¹¹ He will do this as you also help us by your prayer. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the favor given to us through the prayers of many.

¹² Our boast is this: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world with integrity and godly sincerity, not relying on fleshly wisdom but on the grace of God. ¹³ We write to you nothing that you cannot read and understand, and I hope that you will fully understand ¹⁴ as you have understood us in part, that you can boast of us on the day of our Lord Jesus, just as we will boast of you.

¹⁵ Because I was confident about this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might receive a second favor. ¹⁶ I was planning to visit you on my way to Macedonia. Then I wanted to visit you again on my trip from Macedonia, and then for you to send me on my way to Judea. ¹⁷ When I was thinking this way, was I hesitating? Do I plan things according to the flesh, so that I say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? ¹⁸ But just as God is faithful, our word to you is not "Yes" and "No." ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom Silvanus, Timothy and I proclaimed among you, is not "Yes" and "No." Instead, he is always "Yes." ²⁰ For all the promises of God are "Yes" in him. So also through him we say "Amen" to the glory of God. ²¹ Now it is God who confirms us with you in Christ, and he anointed us, ²² he set his seal on us and he gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee of what is to come.

²³ But I call God as witness to my soul that the reason I did not come to Corinth was so that I might spare you. ²⁴ This is not because we want to be lords over your faith. Instead, we are fellow laborers with you for your joy, as you stand firm in your faith.

2 Corinthians 1 Commentary

1:1-7

Why did Paul write about the "Father of mercies" and "God of all comfort"?

[1:3]

Christians showed mercy and gave comfort to others. These titles showed that all the "mercy" (οἰκτιρμός/g3628) and "comfort" (παράκλησις/g3874) they gave ultimately came from God himself.

See: [Mercy](#)

See: Exodus 34:6; Psalm 25:6; Isaiah 40:1; 1 Peter 1:3

What was the “affliction”?

[1:4]

As an apostle, Paul experienced many “afflictions”(θλίψεις/g2347). That is, Paul was persecuted for teaching people about Jesus.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See: John 16:33; Romans 8:18

How did “the sufferings of Christ abound for our sake”?

[1:5]

Paul wrote about Jesus’ sufferings helping Christians. Some scholars think was writing about how Jesus suffered and died for sinners. Others think was writing about how Christians suffered for others, just as Christ did. They think Paul’s suffering helped to give the Corinthians’ “comfort and salvation” (1:6).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

See: Colossians 1:24-25; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11, 17

1:8-11

Where was “Asia”?

[1:8]

See Map: Asia

Why did Paul write, “beyond our strength”?

[1:8]

Paul wrote, “beyond our strength.” Scholars think Paul and those with him suffered more than they were physically capable of in their own human strength. That is, God provided them the strength to endure their suffering.

What was “despaired of life” and the “sentence of death”?

[1:8]

Some scholars think that to despair of life meant that Paul thought he was going to die. Whatever happened in Asia, Paul thought he was going to die. Some scholars think Paul was writing about being put into prison waiting to be killed as a punishment. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about a serious illness he had and that he was going to die.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

See: 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

How does someone set their hope on God?

[1:10]

Paul wrote about setting hope on God. Scholars think Paul was confident that they would not die at this time, but that God would rescue them. That is, Paul had a confident expectation that God would rescue him and those with him.

See: Psalm 34:19; 1 Timothy 4:10

1:12-24

Why did Paul write, “We are proud of this”?

[1:12]

Paul was “proud” of how God’s favor helped these Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Boast](#)

See: Psalm 44:8; Jeremiah 9:23-24

What is “conscience”?

[1:12]

See: [Conscience](#)

What was “fleshly wisdom”?

[1:12]

Scholars think that “fleshly wisdom” was the same as earthly wisdom, or the wisdom of this world. Paul wanted Christians should make decisions by the wisdom that came from the Holy Spirit.

See: 1 Corinthians 2:13

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What was the “day of our Lord Jesus”?

[1:14]

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

Why did Paul write, “that you might receive the benefit of two visits”?

[1:15]

Scholars think the words “that you might receive the benefit of two visits” meant that the church in Corinth would have the chance to visit with Paul and hear him teach a second time.

See: [Church](#)

What did “yes,yes” and “no, no” mean?

[1:18]

Jesus told people not to take oaths, but to simply do what they promised (see: Matthew 5:37). Scholars think Paul meant that the answers of “yes” or “no” must be clear. They think Paul wanted the church in Corinth to know that he was not changing his mind about visiting them.

See: James 5:12

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

What did it mean that God “annointed” us?

[1:21]

When Paul said that God “annointed”(χρίω/g5548) us, he meant that God chose Paul, and those with him, for a special purpose. That is, God wanted Paul to tell people about Jesus (see: Galatians 1:15-16).

See: Romans 1:1-2; Jeremiah 1:4-5

How was the Spirit a “seal” and a “guarantee of what is to come”?

[1:22]

A “seal” was a mark which meant that something was owned by somebody. God owned Christians in some way. The Spirit was a “guarantee”(ἄρραβών/g0728), for the Christian. The Holy Spirit was a symbol that God would fulfill the things he promised. Christians would be resurrected and inherit the kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Symbol](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

See: 2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30

Why did Paul write, “I call God to bear witness for me”?

[1:23]

Some scholars think when Paul said, “I call God to bear witness for me,” he was asking God to show the people that what Paul was about to say was true. Other scholars think that when Paul called on “God to bear witness,” it meant that if Paul didn’t lie, God would witness against Paul and punish Paul.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2: 10

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What did Paul mean when he said, “that I might spare you”?

[1:23]

If the Corinthians repented, then Paul would not have to discipline and correct them for their sins .

See: 1 Corinthians 4:21; 2 Corinthians 13:2

See: [Sin](#); [Discipline \(To Disciple\)](#); [Sin](#)

Chapter 2

¹ So I decided for my own part that I would not again come to you in sorrow. ² If I caused you sorrow, who could make me glad but the very one who was made sorrowful by me? ³ I wrote as I did in order that when I came to you I might not be hurt by those who should have made me rejoice. I have confidence about all of you that my joy is the same joy you all have. ⁴ For I wrote to you from great tribulation, with anguish of heart, and with many tears. I did not write you so that you would be made sorrowful. Instead, I wanted you to know the depth of the love that I have for you.

⁵ If anyone has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not only to me, but in some measure—not to burden you—to all of you. ⁶ This punishment of that person by the majority is enough. ⁷ So now rather than punish him, you should forgive and comfort him. Do this so that he is not overwhelmed by too much sorrow. ⁸ So I exhort you to confirm your love for him. ⁹ This was the reason I wrote, so that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. ¹⁰ If you forgive anyone, I forgive that person as well. What I have forgiven—if I have forgiven anything—it is forgiven for your sake in the presence of Christ. ¹¹ This is so that Satan will not trick us. For we are not ignorant of his schemes.

¹² A door was opened to me by the Lord when I came to the city of Troas to preach the gospel of Christ there. ¹³ I had no relief in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I left them and went on to Macedonia.

¹⁴ But may thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph. Through us he reveals the sweet aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are to God the sweet aroma of Christ, both among those who are saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the people who are perishing, it is an aroma from death to death. To the ones being saved, it is an aroma from life to life. Who is worthy of these things? ¹⁷ For we are not like so many people who sell the word of God for profit. Instead, with purity of motives, we speak in Christ, as we are sent from God, in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 2

2:1-4

Why did Paul not want to go to Corinth in “painful circumstances”?

[2:1, 2:4]

During a previous visit, Paul had to discipline some Christians who were sinning. Some scholars think the Christians in Corinth were saddened because they should have disciplined the sinning Christians.

See: 2 Corinthians 7:8-9

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

2:5-11

How did someone’s sin cause pain to both Paul and the Christians in Corinth?

[2:5]

The sins of certain Christians caused pain for Paul and the other Christians in Corinth. Scholars think that the sinning Christians caused great damage to the whole church.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write that the punishment “by the majority is enough”?

[2:6]

Scholars think that when Paul said the punishment “by the majority is enough,” he was talking about a decision that most of the Christians in Corinth made. That is, the punishment was just. Scholars think the discipline and punishment was to encourage the sinful Christians to repent.

See: Matthew 18:15-17

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “overwhelmed by too much sorrow”?

[2:7]

Scholars think that to be “overwhelmed”(καταπίνω/g2666) by too much sorrow meant to experience so much sadness that a person might stop obeying Jesus.

Why did Paul write “that I might test you”?

[2:9]

Paul encouraged the church in Corinth to publicly forgive the sinful man. This was the test about which Paul spoke. Paul wanted to know if the church would obey Paul.

See: Philippians 2: 22; Philemon 21

See: [Test](#); [Sin](#); [Test](#)

What was “the presence of Christ”?

[2:10]

Paul wrote about the presence of Christ. Scholars think Paul acted as if he were standing next to Jesus.
See: 1 Corinthians 5:3-5

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What were Satan’s “plans”?

[2:11]

Scholars think Paul and the Christians knew that Satan always tries to make people follow Satan. Satan has evil plans to cause people to live in the wrong way.

See: 1 Peter 5:8

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

2:12-13

Why did Paul write, “a door was opened to me by the Lord”?

[2:12]

When Paul said “a door was opened to me by the Lord,” this was a metaphor. Some scholars think the door that was opened referred to God making a way for Paul to preach the gospel in Troas. Other scholars think the door that was opened referred to the hearts of the people in Troas. These people were ready to hear and believe the gospel.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

See Map: Troas

How did Paul have no relief in his spirit?

[2:13]

Scholars think Paul was hoping to see Titus in order to hear good news about Corinth. Paul loved the Christians in Corinth and worried about them.

See: 2 Corinthians 7:5-6

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Who was Titus?

[2:13]

Titus was a Christian leader who helped Paul. Paul sent him to encourage the Christians in Corinth.

See: 2 Corinthians Introduction; Titus

See: [Gospel](#)

2:14-17

Why did Paul write “leads us in triumph”?

[2:14]

A “triumph” (θριαμβεύω/g2358) was a huge parade through the city of Rome that the government arranged to reward a successful general. Some scholars think that Paul was like the victorious general who rode in the chariot, because God gave him success in his preaching. Other scholars think that the general is God and that Paul was like one of the soldiers, since he obeyed God in all things.

See: Colossians 2:15

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

What was the “sweet aroma”?

[2:14, 2:15]

When Paul spoke about the “sweet aroma,” he used a metaphor. After a Roman victory in war, there was a parade with special smells. They burned sweet spices and people loved the smell. In the same way, when Paul preached the gospel, those who accepted it experienced delight and peace in a way that was pleasing. However, to those who rejected the gospel did not have peace and they were hopelessness.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:18; Ephesians 5:2

See: [Gospel](#); [Metaphor](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul ask, “who is worthy of these things”?

[2:16]

Paul asked, “who is worthy of these things.” Some scholars think Paul was asking, “is anyone worthy to do the work God gives.” No one is worthy to serve God. However, scholars think that Paul wanted people to know is that God was the one who gave him the power to serve God

(see: 3:5; 1 Corinthians 15:9-10).

How did people “sell the word of God for profit”?

[2:17]

In ancient times, teachers charged money to their students. In the same way, the false teachers in Corinth also demanded money from the people when they taught about the wrong things about God.

See: Acts 20:33-35; 1 Corinthians 9:3-18

See: [False Teacher](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Are we beginning to praise ourselves again? We do not need letters of recommendation to you or from you, like some people, do we? ² You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, known and read by all people. ³ You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry. It was written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God. It was not written on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. ⁴ And this is the confidence that we have through Christ before God. ⁵ We are not competent in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us. Rather, our competence is from God. ⁶ It is God who made us able to be servants of a new covenant. This is a covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁷ Now the ministry of death—engraved in letters on stones—came in such glory that the sons of Israel could not look directly at Moses' face. This is because of the glory of his face, a glory that was fading. ⁸ How much more glorious will the ministry of the Spirit be? ⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory! ¹⁰ For indeed, that which was once made glorious is no longer glorious in this respect, because of the glory that exceeds it. ¹¹ For if that which was passing away had glory, how much more will what is permanent have glory!

¹² Since we have such a hope, we are very bold. ¹³ We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel were not able to look directly at the ending of a glory that was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ But even today, whenever Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But when a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ Now all of us, with unveiled faces, see the glory of the Lord. We are being transformed into the same glorious likeness from one degree of glory into another, just as from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3

3:1-6

What was a letter or recommendation?

[3:1]

In ancient times, people wrote short letters in order to introduce someone and say nice things about the person who carried the letter.

Why did Paul say, “written on our hearts” mean

[3:2]

When Paul wrote the words, “written on our hearts,” this was a metaphor. Paul wanted to say that he loved the Christians in Corinth and was friends with them. Paul especially loved the Christians in Corinth because he saw how believing in Jesus change them.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How did the Spirit write on “tablets of human hearts”?

[3:3]

The Law that God gave to Moses was written on tablets of stone. However, God promised that a day was coming when he would write his laws on the hearts of people (see: Jeremiah 31:33). This was a metaphor. The tablet of the human heart was the place from where people think, feel, and make choices.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “our competence is from God”?

[3:5]

When Paul said “our competence is from God,” he meant that God caused him and those with him to have power from God. He also wanted to say that God gave them permission to serve God by doing the things they were doing.

What is the new covenant?

[3:6]

See: [New Covenant](#)

How did the letter kill and the Spirit give life?

[3:6]

Paul wrote that the letter killed and the Spirit gave life. The letter Paul wrote about the Law of Moses. People needed to perfectly obey the Law of Moses. However, no one did except Jesus. Because of this, everyone was punished for disobeying the Law of Moses. The punishment for not following the Law of Moses was death. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit gave a new type of life and changed people so they can follow Jesus.

See: John 6:63; Romans 7:6, 8:2

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

3:7-11

Why was it difficult for people to look directly at Moses’ face?

[3:7]

When Moses returned from seeing God, Moses’ face glowed (see: Exodus 33:18-23). Scholars think Moses’ face shone so brightly that it hurt the eyes of the people who tried to look directly at his face.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What did “glory” mean?

[3:7, 3:8, 3:9, 3:10, 3:11]

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

3:12-18

Why did Moses put a veil over his face?

[3:13]

Moses covered his face with a veil because the people could not bear to look at him. That is, the brightness of God’s glory on his face was too much for the people to see. Paul also knew that the glory on Moses’ face eventually faded. Paul said that the glory of the gospel was far more glorious and lasted forever.

See: Exodus 34:33-35

See: [Gospel](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Gospel](#)

How were the Israelites’ minds closed?

[3:14]

Paul wrote that the minds of the Israelites were closed. Some scholars think that Satan made the minds of the people of Israel unable to hear the truth about God or that it was God who did great things (see: 2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Other scholars think that God closed the minds of the people of Israel (see: Romans 9:14). Other scholars think that the people themselves closed their minds to the truth about the Messiah.

See: John 12:40

See: [Mind](#)

How did a veil covers their hearts?

[3:15]

When Paul spoke about the veil that “covers their hearts,” he used a metaphor. Paul said the people were unable to believe the gospel because their hearts and minds were blind to understanding the truth about the Messiah.

See: John 5:39-40

See: [Mind](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Mind](#)

How is the Lord the Spirit”?

[3:17]

Most scholars think the Spirit about which Paul spoke was God. That is, God revealed himself through the Holy Spirit.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

How were Christians “being transformed”?

[3:18]

Paul wrote that Christians were being changed. Scholars think that God, through the Holy Spirit, was changing the Christians to be made into the “likeness”(εἰκὼν/g1504) of Jesus (see: Romans 8:29). That is, Christians started thinking, saying, and doing the same way Jesus did.

See: [Image of God](#)

What did “one degree of glory into another” mean?

[3:18]

Scholars think various things about the meaning of “one degree of glory into another”.

1. Some scholars think the words referred to how Christians change to be more like Jesus. As Christians learned more and more about Jesus, they saw more of his glory (see: 4:16)
2. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about the resurrection of Christians at Christ’s return. Christians experience some glory in this life, but will completely experience when Jesus returns (see: 4:17; Romans 8:18; Philippians 3:21)
3. Some scholars think Paul was comparing covenants. The Old Covenant was glorious, but when someone believed in Jesus, they experienced the greater glory of the New Covenant.

See: [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [New Covenant](#); [Covenant](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Therefore, because we have this ministry, and just as we have received mercy, we do not become discouraged. ² Instead, we have rejected secret and shameful ways. We do not walk in craftiness, and we do not mishandle the word of God, but by presenting the truth, we recommend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³ But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case, the god of this world has blinded their unbelieving minds. As a result, they are not able to see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God is the one who said, "Light will shine out of darkness." He has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the presence of Jesus Christ.

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, so that it is clear that the exceedingly great power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not overwhelmed. We are perplexed but not filled with despair. ⁹ We are persecuted but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. ¹³ But we have the same spirit of faith according to that which was written: "I believed, and so I spoke." We also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For everything is for your sake, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.

¹⁶ So we do not become discouraged. Even though outwardly we are wasting away, inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal burden of glory that exceeds all measurement. ¹⁸ For we are not watching for things that are seen, but for things that are unseen. The things that we can see are temporary, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4

4:1-2

How did people live in secret and shameful ways?

[4:2]

Paul did not want Christians to live in secret and shameful ways. He did not want them to lie or to try to hide things from people.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6

How does someone mishandle the Word of God?

[4:2]

Paul did not want Christians to mishandle the Word of God. Some scholars think Paul did not want Christians to speak the wrong things about the Bible. Other scholars think Paul wanted Christians to teach people about the Bible so they can understand it.

See: [Word of God](#)

What is a conscience?

[4:2]

See: [Conscience](#)

4:3-6**How was the gospel veiled?**

[4:3]

Paul wrote about the gospel being veiled. This is a metaphor. Scholars think Paul was writing about people who rejected the gospel. If they understood it, then they would believe it. However, their sin caused them not to be able to understand true things about God. Satan does not want people to know true things about God.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 3:14

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Sin](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Who is the “god of this world”?

[4:4]

Scholars think Satan is the “god of this world.” While Satan is not God, God gives Satan permission to rule the world in some way.

See: Acts 26:18; Ephesians 2:2

See: [World](#); [World](#)

How was Christ the “image of God”?

[4:4]

Jesus had divine glory, just as God had when Moses saw him. When people came to Jesus, they realized that he was the “image”(εἰκὼν/g1504) of God. That is, Jesus showed people what God is like.

See: John 1:14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:3

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Image of God](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

4:7-15**What were the jars of clay about which Paul spoke?**

[4:7]

When Paul spoke about jars of clay, he used a metaphor. In ancient times, people often had clay jars in different sizes. They used them for many different purposes. Sometimes, people hid valuable things in them. However, they were inexpensive and easily broken. Paul wanted people to know that God would use people to tell other people about the gospel even though people were flawed.

See: Job 10:9; 2 Timothy 2:20-21

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write, “we always carry in our body the death of Jesus”?

[4:10]

Paul wrote that Christians always carry the death of Jesus in their body. This is a metaphor. Scholars think Paul wanted Christians to know they suffer in the same ways Jesus suffered. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about being persecuted for teaching people about Jesus.

See: Galatians 6:17; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 1:24-25

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How will Jesus bring people into his presence?

[4:14]

Paul wrote about Jesus bringing people into his presence. He wanted to say that people will live together with Jesus in heaven forever.

See: Romans 8:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17

See: [Heaven](#)

4:16-18

How are people outwardly wasting away?

[4:16]

Paul wrote that people are outwardly wasting away. He wanted people to know that their bodies were slowly dying as they got older.

Why did Paul think his problems were momentary and light?

[4:17]

Paul wrote that the things that caused him problems were momentary and light. This is a metaphor. That is, he thought serving God was greater than any problem. He also thought the promise to live together with God in heaven forever helped him when he was persecuted.

See: Romans 8:18; 1 Peter 1:6-9, 5:10

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What is the eternal weight of glory?

[4:17]

Paul wrote about the eternal weight of glory. This is a metaphor. Scholars think Paul was willing to suffer because he knew he would be with God in heaven one day.

See: Romans 8:18; James 1:12

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What were the things unseen?

[4:18]

Paul wrote about things that people could not see. Scholars think he was writing about things that happened in the spiritual world or in heaven. This is a place where angels and demons can be seen.

See: [Demon](#); [Heaven](#); [Angel](#); [Demon](#)

Chapter 5

¹ We know that if our earthly house—the tent—is destroyed, we have a building from God. It is a house not made by human hands, but an eternal house, in heaven. ² For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly residence. ³ We long for this because by putting it on we will not be found to be naked. ⁴ For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened. We do not want to be unclothed. Instead, we want to be clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ The one who prepared us for this very thing is God, who gave us the Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come. ⁶ Therefore always be confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ So we have confidence. We would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So we make it our goal, whether we are at home or away, to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for the things done in the body, whether for good or for bad.

¹¹ Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade people. What we are is clearly seen by God, and I hope that it is also clear to your conscience. ¹² We are not commending ourselves to you again, but we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you may have an answer for those who boast about appearances but not about what is in the heart. ¹³ For if we are out of our minds, it is for God; and if we are in our right minds, it is for your sake. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: That one person died for all, and that therefore all have died. ¹⁵ He died for all, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. ¹⁶ For this reason, from now on we do not regard anyone according to the flesh, even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh. But now we no longer regard him that way. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. See, they have become new. ¹⁸ All these things are from God. He reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. ¹⁹ That is, in Christ God is reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them. He is entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰ So we are appointed as representatives of Christ, as though God were making his appeal through us. We plead with you, for the sake of Christ: "Be reconciled to God!" ²¹ He made him who knew no sin to become sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

2 Corinthians 5

5:1-10

What is the earthly dwelling?

[5:1]

When Paul spoke about the “earthly dwelling” (οἰκία/g3614), he used a metaphor. He was speaking about a person’s body. It is a temporary place where a person lives. This body is destroyed when a person dies.

See: Job 19:25-27

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was the “building from God” or “house” or “heavenly dwelling”?

[5:1]

Paul wrote about a “building from God, house, and heavenly dwelling.” This was a metaphor. Paul was writing about a person’s new body after they are resurrected. This will never be destroyed.

See: John 14:2; 1 Corinthians 15:53-54

See: [Metaphor](#) ; [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#)

How was someone naked?

[5:3]

Paul wrote about being naked or unclothed. Scholars think he was using a metaphor. He was speaking about a person who did not have a body. Paul wanted to be resurrected and have his new resurrected body.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write about something being swallowed up by life?

[5:4]

Paul wrote about something being swallowed up by life. He was writing about someone's body being replaced with a new resurrected body.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:54; Isaiah 25:8

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How was the Holy Spirit a "guarantee"?

[5:5]

See: 2 Corinthians 1:22

See: [Seal](#); [Seal](#)

How is someone at home with the Lord?

[5:8]

When the Christian died, they are separated from their body. Then, they go to be with God in heaven. This is the true home of Christians.

See: Philippians 1:21-23

See: [Citizen](#); [Citizen](#)

What is the "judgment seat of Christ"?

[5:10]

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

5:11-17

How did someone boast about appearances?

[5:12]

Paul wrote about someone boasting about appearances. He was speaking about boasting about doing certain things that other people saw. This caused other people to think good things about them.

See: 2 Corinthians 1:12-14; Galatians 6:12-14

See: [Boast](#)

How was someone out of the mind?

[5:13]

People thought Paul was out of his mind. That is, they thought he was insane or not thinking in the right way. Scholars think people insulted Paul because he had a vision of heaven, because he spoke in tongues, or because of the way Paul spoke.

See: 1 Samuel 21:10-15; Mark 3:21; Acts 26:24-25

See: [Speaking in Tongues](#); [Vision](#); [Heaven](#); [Speaking in Tongues](#)

Why did Paul write, “all have died”?

[5:14]

Paul wrote, “all have died.” When people believe in Jesus, he changed them in some way. He gave them a new life. When Paul wrote that all have died, he wanted Christians to know that they were not slaves to sin anymore.

See: Romans 6:1-14; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:3

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

What is a new creation?

[5:17] See: [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#); [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#)

What is reconciliation?

[5:18]

Two people fighting against one another are reconciled when they are at peace with one another. Non-Christians were enemies of God and fought against God. However, Christians are at peace with God because Jesus reconciled people to God by dying.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What are trespasses?

[5:19]

In the Bible, when someone sins, it is spoken about as if it were a trespass against God. This is a metaphor. When someone sins, they sin against God. They will be condemned because of their sins and punished. However, for Christians, Jesus was punished for the sins of Christians. Christians do not need to be condemned and punished.

See: Isaiah 44:22; Romans 3:23-26, 5:8-10,18-19; 1 John 2:1-2

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Metaphor](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

How did Jesus become the sacrifice for sin?

[5:21]

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Chapter 6

¹ Working together with him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For he says,

"In a favorable time I paid attention to you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you."

Look, now is the favorable time. Look, now is the day of salvation. ³ We do not place a stumbling block in front of anyone, for we do not wish our ministry to be discredited. ⁴ Instead, in every way we commend ourselves as God's servants in much endurance, in affliction, in distress, in hardship, ⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in hard labor, in sleepless nights, in hunger, ⁶ in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love, ⁷ in the word of truth, in the power of God; with the armor of righteousness for the right hand and the left. ⁸ We are God's servants in glory and dishonor, in slander and praise; regarded as deceivers and yet truthful; ⁹ as unknown, yet well known; as dying, yet, look, we live; as being disciplined, yet not killed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, yet rejoicing; as poor, yet many are enriched; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

¹¹ We have spoken the whole truth to you, Corinthians, and our heart is wide open. ¹² You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own hearts. ¹³ Now in fair exchange—I speak as to children—open yourselves wide also. ¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what association does righteousness have with lawlessness? For what fellowship does light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What agreement can Christ have with Belial? Or what share does a believer have together with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said:

"I will dwell among them
and walk among them.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people."

¹⁷ Therefore,

"Come out from among them,
and be set apart," says the Lord.
"Touch no unclean thing,
and I will welcome you."

¹⁸ I will be a Father to you,
and you will be my sons and daughters,"
says the Lord Almighty.

2 Corinthians 6

6:1-10

How could people receive the grace of God in vain?

[6:1]

Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to do things that honored God. If they did nothing to honor God, he said that they received the grace of God in vain. That is, God was gracious to them and it did not cause them to do good things.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:10

What are the favorable time and the day of salvation?

[6:2]

Paul wrote about a favorable time and the day of salvation. He was writing about the same time. At this time, God will save his people. Some scholars think Paul was writing about the time from when Jesus was born until the time when Jesus returns to the earth. Other scholars this Paul was writing about the time when Jesus returns.

See: Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:19

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is a stumbling block?

[6:3]

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

What is the armor of righteousness?

[6:7]

The armor of righteousness is a metaphor. The weapons and protection that a soldier used in battle were his armor. Paul was writing about God helping Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: Isaiah 59:17; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Ephesians 6:11-17

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How did someone possess all things?

[6:10]

Paul write about possessing all things. Some scholars think Paul was writing about the blessings God gave to him. God promised certain things to people who believe in Jesus. However, these were not things that made Christians rich.

6:11-12

How was Paul's heart wide open?

[6:11]

Paul wrote that the heart of Christians is open. This is a metaphor. He was writing about the Christians who were with him. These people loved the Christians in Corinth.

See: Philippians 1:7-8

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did the Christians in Corinth restrain their own hearts?

[6:12]

Paul wrote that the Christians in Corinth were "restrained" (στενοχωρέω/g4729). He wanted to say that they did not love Paul. Perhaps some Christians in Corinth rejected Paul.

See: 2 Corinthians 7:2

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

6:14-18

How were Christians tied together with non-Christians?

[6:14]

Paul spoke about being “tied together with unbelievers.” This was a metaphor. In ancient times, a person would tie two animals together using a yoke, a wooden frame. They were tied together to pull a plow or perhaps a heavy load. The Law of Moses prohibited plowing with two kinds of animals together (see: Leviticus 19:19). Paul did not want Christians and non-Christians to be joined together in some way.

See: 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 15:33; James 4:4

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is fellowship?

[6:14]

See: [Fellowship](#)

Why did Paul write about light and darkness? What was meant by the words, “light” and “darkness”?

[6:14]

Paul spoke about light and darkness. These were metaphors. Paul was speaking about two different kingdoms. The kingdom of God is described as light. The kingdom of Satan is described as dark.

See: Isaiah 42:6-7, 16; Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Peter 2:9

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Who was Belial?

[6:15]

In ancient Israel, some Jews called Satan Belial.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How are Christians the “temple of the living God”?

[6:16]

Christians are the temple of God because the Holy Spirit lives within them. When Paul wrote about the living God, he was speaking about God. False gods do not exist, and they are spoken about as if they are dead (see: Jeremiah 10:10; Acts 14:15; 1 Thessalonians 1:9).

See: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; Ephesians 2:19-22

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How are Christians set apart?

[6:17]

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

How are Christians to not touch something that is unclean?

[6:17]

In ancient Israel, people worshipped idols. Sometimes this was spoken about as if it were touching something that is unclean. This is a metaphor. Paul did not want Christians to worship idols.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Chapter 7

¹ Beloved, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit. Let us perfect holiness in the fear of God.

² Make room for us! We have not wronged anyone. We have not corrupted anyone or taken advantage of anyone. ³ It is not to condemn you that I say this. For I have already said that you are in our hearts, for us to die together and to live together. ⁴ I have great confidence in you, and great is my boast about you. I am filled with comfort. I overflow with joy even in all our tribulation.

⁵ When we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest. Instead, we were troubled in every way by conflicts on the outside and fears on the inside. ⁶ But God, who comforts the lowly, comforted us by the arrival of Titus. ⁷ It was not only by his arrival that God comforted us. It was also by the comfort that Titus had received from you. He told us of your great affection, your sorrow, and your zeal for me. So I rejoiced even more. ⁸ Even though my letter made you sorrowful, I do not regret it. But I did regret it when I saw that my letter made you sorrowful, though only for a little while. ⁹ Now I rejoice, not because you were sorrowful, but because your sorrow brought you to repentance. You experienced a godly sorrow, so you suffered no loss because of us. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow brings about repentance that accomplishes salvation without regret. Worldly sorrow, however, brings about death. ¹¹ See what great diligence this godly sorrow produced in you. How great was the determination in you to prove you were innocent. How great was your indignation, your fear, your longing, your zeal, and your desire to see that justice should be done! In everything you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. ¹² Although I wrote to you, I did not write for the sake of the wrongdoer, nor for the one who suffered the wrong, but so that your earnestness toward us should be made known to you in the sight of God. ¹³ It is by this that we are encouraged.

In addition to our own comfort, we also rejoiced even more because of Titus' joy, because his spirit was refreshed by all of you. ¹⁴ For if I boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame. On the contrary, just as everything we said to you was true, our boasting about you to Titus proved to be true. ¹⁵ His affection for you is even greater as he remembers the obedience of all of you, how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I rejoice because I have complete confidence in you.

2 Corinthians 7

7:1

What makes a person unclean in their body and spirit?

[7:1]

Paul wrote about things that make a person unclean in body and spirit. Scholars think Paul was writing about any sin. Every sin makes a person unclean in body and spirit. That is, it makes them completely unclean.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 2:11

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

How are Christians to pursue holiness in the fear of God?

[7:1]

Paul wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God. He wanted them to try to be holy because they feared God.

See: Proverbs 1:7, 8:13, 16:6; Matthew 10:28;

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

7:2-4

How did Paul want these Christians to make room for him?

[7:2]

See: 2 Corinthians 6:13

How did someone take advantage of another person?

[7:2]

When someone took advantage of another person, they cheated this person in some way. Often, they took money from someone (see: 2 Corinthians 12:17-18).

See: Acts 20:33-35; 1 Thessalonians 4:6

How did someone boast about people?

[7:4]

See: 2 Corinthians 1:12

7:5-13

Why was Paul in Macedonia?

[7:5]

See: Introduction to 2 Corinthians

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

See Map: Macedonia

Why did Paul say, “our bodies had no rest”?

[7:5]

Paul said, “our bodies had no rest.” Some scholars think Paul was speaking about their whole person, that is, body, soul, and spirit, when he said “our bodies had no rest.” When he spoke about rest, he was speaking about people being free from troubles and conflicts.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What was the letter that made them “sorrowful”?

[7:8]

See: 2 Corinthians 2:1-4

What were “godly sorrow” and “worldly sorrow”?

[7:9, 7:10]

There were two kinds of sorrow. “Godly” sorrow meant that people felt badly about their sins and later repented before God. “Worldly” sorrow meant that people tried to hide their sins by blaming others or making excuses. They did not truly repent.

See: Luke 18:9-13; 2 Timothy 2:22-26

See: [World](#); [Sin](#); [World](#)

How was salvation without regret?

[7:10]

Paul wrote about salvation with regret. “Without regret”(ἄμεταμέλητος/g0278) meant that once the Corinthians repented of their sin and were at peace with God, they could be at peace. That is, it was a salvation that freed them from the judgment of God.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How were the Corinthians innocent?

[7:11]

Paul wrote that the Corinthians were innocent. Scholars think that though the Corinthians did not immediately to correct someone who sinned. However, they did not sin in this way. Therefore, they were innocent of sinning in this way.

Who was the “wrongdoer”?

[7:12]

See: 2 Corinthians 2:5

7:14-16**How was Titus’ spirit “refreshed”?**

[7:13]

Titus went to Corinth in order to tell them to change their ways. The repentance of the Christians encouraged Titus. In this way Titus’ spirit was “refreshed”(ἀναπαύω/g0373).

See: 2 Timothy 1:16; Philemon 20

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What was “fear and trembling”?

[7:15]

Paul wrote about “fear and trembling.” He wanted people to honor, respect, and submit to Titus. Scholars think Paul was speaking about how the Christians in Corinth welcomed Titus with much honor and respect. That is, they knew Paul sent Titus to them. Because of this, God gave permission to Titus lead the Corinthians.

See: Mark 5:24-34; 1 Corinthians 2:2-5; Philippians 2:12

See: [Fear of God](#)

Chapter 8

¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. ² During a great test of tribulation, the abundance of their joy and the extremity of their poverty have produced great riches of generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond what they were able, and of their own free will ⁴ they begged us with much earnestness for the privilege of sharing in this service to God's holy people. ⁵ This did not happen as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and then to us by the will of God. ⁶ So we urged Titus, who had already begun this task, to complete among you this act of grace. ⁷ But you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us. So also make sure that you excel in this act of grace. ¹⁸ I say this not as a command but to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it to the eagerness of other people. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich. ¹⁰ In this matter I will give you advice that will help you. One year ago, you not only started to do something, but you desired to do it. ¹¹ Now finish it. Just as there was an eagerness and desire to do it then, may you also bring it to completion, as much as you can. ¹² For if you are eager to do this deed, it is a good and acceptable thing. It must be based on what a person has, not on what he does not have. ¹³ For this is not to cause relief for others and tribulation for you, but for fairness. ¹⁴ Your abundance at the present time will supply what they need. This is also so that their abundance may supply your need, and so that there may be fairness. ¹⁵ It is as it is written:

"The one with much did not have anything left over,
and the one who had little did not have any lack."

¹⁶ But thanks be to God, who put into Titus' heart the same earnest care that I have for you. ¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but he was also very earnest about it. He came to you of his own free will. ¹⁸ We have sent with him the brother who is praised among all of the churches for his work in proclaiming the gospel. ¹⁹ Not only this, but he also was chosen by the churches to be our traveling companion with this act of grace, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord himself and our good will. ²⁰ We are avoiding the possibility that anyone should complain about this act of generosity that we are carrying out. ²¹ We take care to do what is good, not only before the Lord, but also before people. ²² We are also sending another brother with them. We have tested him in many ways and found him diligent for many tasks. He is even more eager now because of the great confidence he has in you. ²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for you. As for our brothers, they are messengers from the churches. They are a glory to Christ. ²⁴ So show them the proof of your love, and show to the churches the reason for our boasting about you.

Footnotes

8:7 ^[1] There is evidence that corrections were made to verse 7 by later copyists who were referring to other ancient texts. Most modern translations follow those corrections, and they now read,

2 Corinthians 8

8:1-8

How did the Macedonian church give beyond what they were able?

[8:2]

Paul commended the Christians in Macedonia because they not only gave as much as they were able, but many gave even more. That is, they even gave money they needed. Scholars think the Macedonian Christians gave this way and then trusted that God would take care of them.

See: Romans 15:26-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

See Map: Macedonia

How did people give of their own free will?

[8:3]

People gave of their own free will. The Macedonian Christians decided to help the Christians in Jerusalem. The Macedonian chose to do this and were happy to do it.

See: Exodus 35:29; Acts 11:27-30

How did these Christians first give themselves to the Lord?

[8:5]

When Paul said that the Christians “first gave themselves to the Lord,” he meant that the Christians were completely devoted to God. That is, they were committed to serve God in all ways. Scholars think these Christians, because of their desire to follow God, prepared themselves to give generously to the Christians in Jerusalem.

See: Psalm 116:12-14

See: [Lord](#)

What was the act of grace?

[8:6]

Paul wrote about an act of grace. He was writing about the money the Christians sent. They did this graciously.

See: [Grace](#)

What was Titus doing in Corinth?

[8:6]

Titus was in Corinth helping the Christians to finish collecting money that were to be sent to the Christians in Jerusalem.

See: Introduction to 2 Corinthians; Titus

How did Christians abound in everything?

[8:7]

Paul wrote about Christians abounding in everything. Some scholars think Christians had more than other people and more than they expected to have. God blessed them greatly. However, God did not make them rich. Since God blessed the Corinthian Christians, Paul wanted these Christians to give money to other Christians.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:4-7, 15:58; Colossians 2:6-7

8:9-15

What happened one year ago?

[8:10]

Paul wrote about something that happened one year ago. At this time, the Christians in Corinth promised that they would begin collecting money to give to the Christians in Jerusalem. See: 1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Why did Paul want these Christians to give in fairness?

[8:13]

Paul wanted these Christians to give in fairness. Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to give money to the poor Christians in Jerusalem. However, he did want them to give so much that the poor Christians in Corinth suffered.

Why did Paul write the same thing Moses wrote?

[8:15]

Paul wrote the same thing Moses wrote (see: Exodus 16). Some scholars think Moses wrote about how the people gathered manna. Some people gathered much manna and other people did not gather much manna. Then, they shared the manna (see: Exodus 16:14-18). Scholars think Paul wanted Christians to remember how God provides for everyone. He wanted Christians to share with people who needed help.

See: [Manna](#)

8:16-24

How did Titus go of his own free will?

[8:17]

Titus went to Corinth of his own free will. That is, he wanted to go to Corinth.

How was someone honorable before people?

[8:21]

Paul wrote about someone being honorable before people. Scholars think Paul was speaking about doing things that honored God and honored other people.

See: Romans 12:16-17; 1 Peter 2:12

Chapter 9

¹ Concerning the service for God's holy people, it is not necessary for me to write to you. ² I know about your desire, which I boasted about to the people of Macedonia. I told them that Achaia has been getting ready since last year. Your eagerness has motivated most of them to action. ³ Now I have sent the brothers so that our boasting about you may not be futile, and so that you would be ready, as I said you would be. ⁴ Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we would be ashamed—I say nothing about you—for being so confident in you. ⁵ So I thought it was necessary to urge the brothers to come to you and to make arrangements in advance for the gift you have promised. This is so that it might be ready as a blessing, and not as something extorted.

⁶ The point is this: The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows for the purpose of a blessing will also reap a blessing. ⁷ Let each one give as he has planned in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace overflow for you, so that, always, in all things, you may have all you need. This will be so that you may multiply every good deed. ⁹ It is as it is written:

"He has distributed his riches and given them to the poor.
His righteousness lasts forever."

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the farmer who sows and bread for food will also supply and multiply your seed for sowing. He will increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so you can be generous. This will bring about thanksgiving to God through us. ¹² For carrying out this service not only meets the needs of God's holy people, but it also is overflowing into many acts of thanksgiving to God. ¹³ Because of your being tested and proved by this service, you will also glorify God by obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ. You will also glorify God by the generosity of your contribution to them and to everyone. ¹⁴ They long for you, and they are praying for you. They do this because of the very great grace of God that is on you. ¹⁵ May thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

2 Corinthians 9

9:1-5

What was the “ministry for the believers”?

[9:1]

Paul wrote about the “ministry”(διακονία/g1248) for the believers. He was writing about helping poor Christians in Jerusalem.

See: 2 Corinthians 8:1; Acts 11:29

How had Achaia been getting ready?

[9:2]

Paul wrote that the Christians in Achaia had been getting ready to help. The churches in the region of Achaia also planned to help to collect money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem.

See Map: Achaia

How was something futile?

[9:3]

Something was futile if someone tried to do something, but the thing they tried to do did not happen. Paul spoke well of the church in Corinth collecting money to give to the Christians in Jerusalem. But if they did not collect much money, this would not help these Christians. It would be a waste of time.

How is someone exhorted?

[9:5]

Paul exhorted the Christians in Corinth. That is, he did not make them give money to the Christians in Jerusalem. Instead, he wanted them to give money to these Christians.

See: 2 Corinthians 7:2

9:6-15

Why did Paul write about sowing and reaping?

[9:6]

When Paul used the words “sow” and “reap” he was using metaphors. To “sow”(σπείρω/g4687) seed was plant seeds in the ground. Just as a farmer cast out seed, so Paul wanted the church in Corinth to give generously to those who were poor. If a farmer sowed much seed he could expect to “reap”(θερίζω/g2325) a large harvest. In the same way, if the Christians in Corinth gave generously, they could expect the Christians in Jerusalem to be greatly blessed.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did someone reap sparingly?

[9:6]

When Paul wrote about someone who reaped sparingly, this was a metaphor. A farmer who scattered very little seed could only expect to reap a small harvest. Scholars think Paul was speaking about Christians who gave only a little money to help out those who were poor. They think those Christians will only experience a small portion of God’s blessings (see: Galatians 6:7-10).

See: Proverbs 11:24-25; Luke 6:38; 1 John 3:17

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “let each one give as he has planned in his heart”?

[9:7]

Paul wrote, “let each one give as he has planned in his heart.” Paul meant that each person think about what he wanted to give and to give that much.

See: 2 Corinthians 8:3; 1 Chronicles 29:9; Acts 11:27-30; Philemon 1:14

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How was someone a cheerful giver?

[9:7]

Paul wanted Christians to give cheerfully. He wanted Christians to give with joy, and to not hesitate when asked to help people (see: Romans 12:8).

See: Acts 20:35

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “he has distributed his riches”?

[9:9]

Paul wrote the same thing that was written in Psalm 112:9. This psalm was about the righteous man who gives money to the poor. Some scholars think that Paul was writing about Christians who gave generously to poor people. Other scholars think that Paul was speaking about God giving blessings to Christians.

See: Proverbs 11:24-25; 19:17; 22:9; Luke 6:38

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

What was “seed for sowing”?

[9:10]

When Paul wrote about “seed for sowing,” this was a metaphor. God makes plants grow well so that they produced seed for the following year’s crop. Therefore, God supplied the “seed for sowing”. In the same way, God allows Christians to sow “seed.” That is, Christians do good things for other Christians.

See: Isaiah 55:10-11; Hosea 10:12

See: [Sow \(Plant\)](#); [Sow \(Plant\)](#)

What did Paul write about “the harvest of your righteousness”?

[9:10]

When Paul wrote about the “harvest,” this was a metaphor. The harvest was when the farmer gathered in all fruit from which he had planted. In the same way there was also a harvest of righteousness. That is, when the Christians helped the poor Christians, this was good. When someone helped provide the needs of poor people, they obeyed God.

See: Philippians 4:14-19

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How were the Christians tested and proved?

[9:13]

Paul wrote that these Christians were tested and approved. Some scholars think Paul was saying the God approved of the things the Christians in Corinth did. That is, God wanted them to give to the Christians in Corinth. Other scholars think that Christians in Corinth will honor God because the Christian and Corinth honored God.

See: [Test](#)

What was the “confession of the gospel”?

[9:13]

Paul wrote about the confession of the gospel. He was writing about the Christians completely believing the teachings about Jesus, the messiah. Because they completely believed the gospel, they obeyed the things Jesus taught.

See: Hebrews 10:23

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 10

¹ I, Paul, myself urge you, by the humility and gentleness of Christ. I am meek when I am in your presence, but I am bold toward you when I am away. ² I beg of you that, when I am present with you, I will not need to be bold with the confidence that I think I will need to be bold when I oppose those who think that we are walking according to the flesh. ³ For even though we walk in the flesh, we do not make war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons we fight with are not fleshly. Rather, they have divine power to destroy strongholds. They bring misleading arguments to nothing. ⁵ We also destroy every high thing that rises up against the knowledge of God. We take every thought captive into obedience to Christ. ⁶ And we are getting ready to punish every act of disobedience, as soon as your obedience is complete. ⁷ Look at what is clearly in front of you. If anyone is convinced that he is Christ's, let him remind himself that just as he is Christ's, so also are we. ⁸ For even if I boast a little too much about our authority, which the Lord gave for us to build you up and not to destroy you, I will not be ashamed. ⁹ I do not want it to appear that I am terrifying you by my letters. ¹⁰ For some people say, "His letters are serious and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak. His words are not worth listening to." ¹¹ Let such people be aware that what we are in the words of our letters when we are absent is what we will be in our actions when we are there. ¹² We are not so bold as to group ourselves or compare ourselves with those who praise themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with each other, they have no insight. ¹³ We, however, will not boast beyond limits. Instead, we will do so only within the limits of what God has assigned to us, limits that reach even as far as you. ¹⁴ For we are not overextending ourselves as though we did not reach you. We were the first to reach as far as you with the gospel of Christ. ¹⁵ We have not boasted beyond limits about the labors of others. Rather, our hope is that as your faith continues to grow, our work among you will greatly expand, ¹⁶ so that we may preach the gospel even in regions beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area.

¹⁷ "But let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

¹⁸ For it is not the one who recommends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord recommends.

2 Corinthians 10

10:1-8

How did someone live according to the flesh?

[10:3]

Paul wrote about people living according to the flesh. Some scholars think Paul was writing about people doing the kinds of things that people who do not believe in God do. Other scholars think Paul was saying that even though he still has a body made of flesh, he did not have to do the sinful things he wanted to do. He did not live in the same way non-Christians live.

See: Romans 8:13

See: [Flesh](#)

How did someone wage war against the flesh?

[10:3]

When Paul used the words, "wage war according to the flesh," this was a metaphor. Paul wanted Christians to obey God. He wanted Christians to fight against Satan and his demons, who tried to get Christians to sin.

See: Ephesians 6:11-17

See: [Spiritual Warfare](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon](#); [Sin](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#)

What was a stronghold?

[10:4]

When Paul spoke about a “stronghold,” this was a metaphor. A stronghold was a place with high walls to protect against attack (see: Proverbs 21:22). In the same way, in spiritual warfare there were people and demons who opposed Christians as they tried to teach people about Jesus. These people and demons were stopped by believing in Jesus.

See: Hebrews 11:30

See: [Demon](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#); [Demon](#)

What was a high thing?

[10:5]

Scholars think that when Paul spoke about a “high thing” he was speaking about people who argued that people shouldn’t believe in Jesus. However, their arguments were not based on truth. Instead, their arguments were meant to deceive people into believing false teachings.

How does someone take every thought captive?

[10:5]

When Paul spoke about taking “every thought captive” he continued his use of the metaphor for warfare. Some scholars think that just like an army captured enemies, so Paul spoke the truth of God to those who were speaking lies. That is, he spoke truth to the crowds listening to the false teachers. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about making sure he thought the right things about the gospel.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:18-19; 3:19

See: [Gospel](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#); [Gospel](#)

How was someone built up?

[10:8]

When Paul used the words, “build you up,” this was a metaphor. Paul was encouraging the Christians to know more about God, to love God more, and to obey God more. Paul wanted Christians to trust God more.

See: Romans 15:1-4; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

10:9-11**Why did people say that Paul was weak?**

[10:10]

Some people thought that Paul was weak. Some scholars think Paul was weak because he was often sick (see: Galatians 4:13-15). Others scholars think the people did not think Paul was a strong leader, and that he was not a powerful speaker (see: 2 Corinthians 11:6; Exodus 4:10).

10:12-18**Why did Paul write that he and those with him “will not boast beyond limits”?**

[10:13]

God gave Paul permission to serve God in places where Paul was the first apostle to tell people about Jesus and begin churches. Since Paul told the Corinthians about Jesus, he lead them. Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that he would not boast about something another apostle did. That is, he would only boast about the things that God used him to do.

See: Romans 15:20

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

What were the regions beyond?

[10:16]

Corinth was the farthest west that Paul went to tell people about Jesus. He also wanted to go further west to Rome and Spain.

See: Acts 19:21; Romans 15:23-29

See Map: Rome; Spain

What was “another’s area”?

[10:16]

Paul wrote about another’s area. He did not want to go to place someone else had already told people the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#)

How did someone “boast in the Lord”?

[10:17]

See: 2 Corinthians 1:12

Why did Paul write, “one who recommends himself”?

[10:18]

Paul wrote, “one who recommends himself.” He was writing about a person who praised himself for selfish reasons. That is, they told other people how great they were.

See: Proverbs 21:2; 27:2; John 12:42-43

Chapter 11

¹ I wish that you could put up with me in some foolishness. But you are indeed putting up with me! ² For I am jealous about you. I have a godly jealousy for you, since I promised you in marriage to one husband. I promised to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³ But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts might be led astray away from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ⁴ For suppose that someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we preached. Or suppose that you receive a different spirit than what you received. Or suppose that you receive a different gospel than the one you received. You put up with these things well enough! ⁵ For I think that I am not in the least inferior to those so-called super-apostles. ⁶ But even if I am untrained in speech, I am not untrained in knowledge. In every way and in all things we have made this known to you. ⁷ Did I sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted? For I freely preached the gospel of God to you. ⁸ I robbed other churches by accepting support from them so that I could serve you. ⁹ When I was with you and I was in need, I did not burden anyone. For my needs were met by the brothers who came from Macedonia. In everything I have kept myself from being a burden to you, and I will continue to do that. ¹⁰ As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the parts of Achaia. ¹¹ Why? Because I do not love you? God knows. ¹² And what I do I will keep doing, so that I may cut off the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be found to be like us in the things they boast about. ¹³ For such people are false apostles and deceitful workers. They disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And this is no surprise, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is no great surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their fate will be what their deeds deserve.

¹⁶ I say again: Let no one think I am a fool. But if you do, receive me as a fool so I may boast a little. ¹⁷ What I am saying with this boastful confidence—I am not talking the way the Lord would—I am saying as a fool. ¹⁸ Since many people boast according to the flesh, I will also boast. ¹⁹ For you gladly put up with fools. You are wise yourselves! ²⁰ For you put up with someone if he enslaves you, if he devours you, if he takes advantage of you, if he exalts himself, or if he slaps you in the face. ²¹ I will say to our shame that we were too weak to do that. Yet if anyone is bold—I am speaking like a fool—I too will be bold. ²² Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. ²³ Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as though I were insane.) I am more: in harder labor, in more prisons, in beatings beyond measure, in facing many deadly dangers. ²⁴ From Jews I received five times the "forty lashes minus one." ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day on the open sea. ²⁶ I have been on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own people, in danger from the Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger at sea, in danger from false brothers. ²⁷ I have served in labor and toil, in many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often in fasting, in cold and nakedness. ²⁸ Apart from everything else, there is the daily pressure of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn? ³⁰ If I must boast, I will boast about what shows my weaknesses. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, the one who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying!

³² At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus to arrest me. ³³ But I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall, and I escaped from his hands.

2 Corinthians 11

11:1-15

How did Paul want people to put up with him?

[11:1]

The words, "put up with me" meant that Paul was asking the Christians to be patient with him as he spoke. That is, that they would tolerate what he was about to say.

What was foolishness?

[11:1]

Paul wrote about foolishness. Scholars think that Paul thought it necessary to speak in a silly and lighthearted way about his jealousy toward the Christians in Corinth.

What was “godly jealousy”?

[11:2]

Paul said he had a “godly jealousy” for the Christians in Corinth. Some scholars think he was feeling that same kind of feelings that God has for his children. Other scholars think Paul was expressing his great desire to guard the honor of the Christians in Corinth.

See: [Jealous \(Jealousy\)](#); [Zeal \(Zealous, Zealot\)](#); [Jealous \(Jealousy\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “I promised you in marriage to one husband”?

[11:2]

When Paul wrote about “marriage to one husband,” he used a metaphor. In ancient Israel, parents often promised their daughter to be married to a man. She might wait a year or more to get married. In the Law of Moses, it was the duty of the father to ensure that his daughter was still a virgin when she got married (see: Deuteronomy 22:13-21). In the same way, Paul was needed to protect the church. He helped the church to do the right things and think the right things about God. He wanted the Christians in Corinth to live in the right way when Jesus returns to the earth.

See: Ephesians 5:25-33

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Metaphor](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Virgin](#); [Church](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How could the Corinthians’ thoughts be “led astray”?

[11:3]

Paul wrote about the Christians in Corinth being led astray. Scholars think Paul that false teachers got some people to turn away from hearing the truth. That is, they began to believe the wrong things and separated themselves from being with other Christians.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9

See: [False Teacher](#)

How did someone proclaim another Jesus?

[11:4]

Paul wrote about people proclaiming another Jesus. Scholars do not think Paul was speaking about another person named Jesus. These people were talking about Jesus but they said he taught different things than Jesus taught.

How did someone receive a different spirit?

[11:4]

Paul wrote about people receiving a different spirit. The word “spirit” (πνεῦμα/g4151) could refer to the Holy Spirit or another type of spirit. Some scholars think Paul was speaking about people receiving a “spirit” that was not from God. Other scholars think the “different spirit” was simply a way of living that was different from what Paul taught.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:3

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Who were the “super-apostles”?

[11:5]

Paul wrote about super apostles. Scholars do not think there were super apostles. Paul was using irony. They think Paul was talking about false teachers, those who thought they were better than the apostles. These false teachers thought they were far better than Paul.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Paul write that he was “untrained in giving speeches”?

[11:6]

Paul wrote that he was “untrained in giving speeches.”

1. Some scholars think Paul was not trained to speak to large groups of people.
2. Some scholars think Paul was a good speaker, but he spoke in a simple way so that people could understand him (see: 1 Corinthians 2:4-5).
3. Some scholars think Paul was not a good speaker and perhaps he could not speak clearly.

Why did Paul write, “I robbed other churches”?

[11:8]

Paul wrote, “I robbed other churches.” Some scholars think this is a metaphor. Paul wanted to say that he took money from other church so that he could serve the Christians in Corinth without being paid. Other scholars think that Paul accepted money from other churches that the Corinthian church should have given to him.

See: Philippians 4:15-16

How did Paul keep himself from being a burden to the Christians in Corinth?

[11:9]

Paul kept himself from being a burden to the Christians in Corinth. Paul meant that he did not want to cause problems by taking money from the Corinthians. He wanted to make sure the Corinthians had enough money for their own needs.

See: Acts 20:33-34; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

How will Paul’s boasting of mine not be silenced?

[11:10]

Paul wrote that his boasting will not be silenced. Some scholars think Paul meant that just as he had received the message of the gospel at no cost, so he would preach the gospel at no charge to others. Other scholars think that Paul could not be stopped from telling others that God faithfully provided for all of his needs in the preaching of the gospel.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:15-18

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

How did Satan disguise himself as an angel of light?

[11:14]

Satan disguised himself as an angel of light. Scholars think Paul was not writing about what Satan looks like. Rather, the things Satan taught through the false apostles were made to look and sound like the truth.

See: 1 Kings 22:19-23; Galatians 1:8

See: [Apostle](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Apostle](#)

What was the “fate” of the false teachers?

[11:15]

God will judge the false teachers. He will condemn them and send them to hell to be punished.

See: Psalm 62:12; Romans 2:6-11; Philippians 3:18-19

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Hell](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

11:16-31

What did it mean to “boast according to the flesh”?

[11:18]

To “boast according to the flesh” meant to boast according to human standards. That is, someone wanted to be honored because of the things he said or did. Scholars think Paul spoke in this way because this is the way these people would understand Paul.

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

Why did Paul write, “you put up with someone if he enslaves you”?

[11:20]

When Paul said, “you put up with someone if he enslaves you”, he used a metaphor. Slaves needed to do everything their masters commanded them to do. Paul was speaking about false teachers who were forcing the Corinthians to obey the things they taught and wanted money. However, Paul chose to be a servant to the church and not its master (see: 2 Corinthians 1:24; 4:5). Paul did not want to be served, he served others.

See: Galatians 2:4-5; 5:1

See: [Church](#); [Serve](#); [Church](#)

What were slaps in the face?

[11:20]

A slap in the face is when someone hits a person on the side of their face as an insult. However, a slap in the face was also a metaphor. It meant to openly insult another person. Masters were known to slap their slaves. Some scholars think that false teachers literally hit their disciples in Corinth. Other scholars think that they insulted their disciples but they did not physically hit their disciples.

See: [Disciple](#)

What was meant by the words, “forty lashes minus one”?

[11:24]

This was a punishment of hitting someone across the back 39 times with a leather whip. It was considered to be the worst punishment the Jewish leaders used, other than death. This was a very severe punishment.

See: Deuteronomy 25:1-3

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

How was someone “beaten with rods”?

[11:25]

The Roman government punished people by hitting people with rods. A rod was a straight stick about 60 centimeters long.

See: Acts 16:22-23

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

What did it mean to be “stoned”?

[11:25]

This was a type of execution. They killed the guilty person by throwing stones at him. In ancient Israel, only the worst criminals were punished in this way. Paul was thinking about what happened in Lystra during his first missionary journey (see: Acts 14:19).

Advice to translators: An execution is when the government kills someone to punish them for breaking the law.

See: Leviticus 20:2; Deuteronomy 13:10-11; 17:2-7; Acts 7:58-59

See: Paul's Missionary Journeys

See Map: Lystra

What was the “open sea”?

[11:25]

It is not known when this shipwreck happened. Paul wanted people to know that his ship sank out of sight of land and he survived by floating for a day and a night before being rescued. At a later time, Paul's ship sank within sight of land (see: Acts 27:41-44).

What was meant by the word “nakedness”?

[11:27]

Someone was naked when they did not have enough clothing to keep warm and covered in the cold weather.

See: 1 Corinthians 4:11

What did “stumble” mean?

[11:29]

See: Matthew 18:6-7; Revelation 2:14

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#); [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

What did it mean to “burn”?

[11:29]

When someone burned in this way, they felt a very strong emotion. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Paul was very angry because false teachers caused his disciples to sin. Other scholars think Paul really wanted to help the Christians in Corinth, because of his loved them.

See: Nehemiah 5:6-13

See: [Sin](#); [Disciple](#); [Sin](#)

Chapter 12

¹ I must boast, even if it is unprofitable. But I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago who—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—was caught up into the third heaven. ³ And I know that this man—whether in the body, or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—⁴ was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible words that people are not permitted to speak. ⁵ On behalf of such a person I will boast. But on behalf of myself I will not boast, except about my weaknesses. ⁶ If I should choose to boast, I will not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I will keep from boasting, so that no one will think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me. ⁷ To keep me from exalting myself because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger from Satan to afflict me—so I would not exalt myself. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, for him to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is enough for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So I would much rather boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ might reside on me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am content for Christ's sake in weaknesses, in insults, in troubles, in persecutions and distressing situations. For whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

¹¹ I have become a fool! You forced me to this, for I should have been praised by you. For I was not at all inferior to the so-called super-apostles, even though I am nothing. ¹² The true signs of an apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, signs and wonders and miracles. ¹³ For how were you less important than the rest of the churches, except that I was not a burden to you? Forgive me for this wrong!

¹⁴ Look! I am ready to come to you a third time. I will not be a burden to you, for I do not seek what is yours. I want you. For children should not save up for the parents. Instead, the parents should save up for the children. ¹⁵ I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? ¹⁶ But as it is, I did not burden you. But since I am so crafty, I am the one who caught you by deceit. ¹⁷ Did I take advantage of you by anyone I sent to you? ¹⁸ I urged Titus to go to you, and I sent the other brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?

¹⁹ Do you think all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we speak in Christ, and all for your strengthening, beloved. ²⁰ For I fear that when I come I may not find you as I wish. I fear that you might not find me as you wish. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder. ²¹ I fear that when I come back, my God might humble me before you. I fear that I might be grieved by many of those who have sinned before now and who did not repent of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and lustful indulgence that they practiced.

2 Corinthians 12

12:1-10

Why did Paul write that he must boast, "but nothing is gained by it"?

[12:1]

Scholars think that when Paul said, "but nothing is gained by it," he meant that boasting about the things he did would not help other Christians.

Why did Paul say, "I know a man"?

[12:2]

Scholars think when Paul wrote, "I know a man" he was speaking about himself. He did this so as not to take any credit for the visions and the things God reveal to him.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

He was someone in the body or out of the body?

[12:2]

When the Jews had visions of heaven, they often said that their bodies travelled to heaven. Paul did not know if his body went to heaven or whether his spirit left his body.

See: Revelation 4:1-2

See: [Heaven](#); [Vision](#); [Heaven](#)

How was Paul “caught up”?

[12:2]

When Paul was “caught up”(ἁρπάζω/g0726), he was suddenly picked up and moved.

See: Acts 8:39; 1 Thessalonians 4:17

What was the “third heaven”?

[12:2]

See: [Heaven](#)

What was “paradise”?

[12:4]

Some scholars think “paradise”(παράδεισος/g3857) originally meant a garden, and the word was applied by the Jews to the Garden of Eden (see: Genesis 2). Other scholars think that “paradise” is heaven.

See: Luke 23:43; Revelation 2:7

See: [Heaven](#)

What were “things too sacred for anyone to say”?

[12:4]

Some scholars think the “things too sacred for anyone to say” were holy things in heaven that were not permitted to be spoken about on earth. Other scholars think the “things too sacred for anyone to say” were things that could not be explained using human language.

See: Revelation 14:3

See: [Heaven](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Heaven](#)

What was the “thorn in the flesh”?

[12:7]

When Paul used the words “thorn in the flesh,” he used a metaphor. A “thorn”(σκόλοψ/g4647) was a small piece of plant or a wooden splinter. Scholars think Paul had an ongoing physical problem or illness (see: Galatians 4:13).

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was the “messenger from Satan”?

[12:7]

Paul wrote about a “messenger”(ἄγγελος/g0032) from Satan. Some scholars think that it was a demon. Other scholars think it was a person who opposed Paul and served Satan (see: 2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

See: Job 2:7; Luke 13:16

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

12:11-13

Who were the “super-apostles”?

[12:11]

Paul wrote about “super-apostles.” These were false teachers who said they were greater than Paul (see: 2 Corinthians - Introduction; 11:5). Fewer scholars think Paul was speaking about the greatest apostles, that is, Peter, James, and John.

See: [Apostle](#)

What were the “true signs of an apostle”?

[12:12]

Scholars think there were a variety of “signs”(σημείον/g4592) that showed a person to be an apostle. They think a true apostle was one who taught the truth about Jesus and the things they taught helped people to live in a way that honors God (see: Acts 2:36-41). These signs also included healings and various miracles (see: Romans 15:17-19).

See: 1 Corinthians 2:4; 4:19-20

See: [Miracle](#); [Sign](#); [Miracle](#)

12:14-18

What was the “third time”?

[12:14]

Paul planned to visit Corinth a third time (see: 2 Corinthians - Introduction).

Why did Paul mean by saying he “will not be a burden”?

[12:14]

Paul wrote that he “will not be a burden” to the Christians in Corinth. That is, he would not ask them for money.

How was someone “crafty” and a man of “deceit”?

[12:16]

Scholars think Paul refuted people who opposed him. These people lied about Paul. They said he was “crafty” and a man of “deceit.” They said Paul lied and tried to trick people. This is irony.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:3-5

See: [Irony](#)

What was Titus doing?

[12:18]

See 2 Corinthians - Introduction.

Who was the “other brother”?

[12:18]

Paul did not name this man. This man was a Christian, but not someone who often helped Paul.

How did someone “take advantage” of another person?

[12:18]

When someone took advantage of another person, they cheated people and took their money.

See: 2 Corinthians 7:2; Colossians 2:8

12:19-21

What was “in the sight of God”?

[12:19]

Scholars think that “in the sight of God” meant that Paul lived his life as if God was watching him. God knew everything Paul said, thought, and how Paul lived his life.

See: Romans 1:9; Galatians 1:20; 1 Thessalonians 2:5, 10

What was “lustful indulgence”?

[12:21]

“Lustful indulgence”(ἀσέλγεια/g0766) was when someone did every sin they wanted to do. They did much sexual immorality. Scholars think that “lustful indulgence” also described a person who was totally selfish and did not care about God or other people.

See: Galatians 5:19; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

Chapter 13

¹ This is the third time that I am coming to you. "Every matter must be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses." ² I have already said to those who sinned before and to all the rest when I was there the second time, and I say it again: When I come again, I will not spare them. ³ I tell you this because you are looking for proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak toward you. Rather, he is powerful in you. ⁴ For he was crucified in weakness, but he is alive by God's power. For we also are weak in him, but we will live with him by the power of God among you. ⁵ Examine yourselves, to see if you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless, of course, you have failed the test. ⁶ And I hope that you will recognize that we have not failed the test. ⁷ Now we pray to God that you may not do any wrong. I do not pray this so that we may appear to have passed the test. Rather, I pray that you may do what is proper, although we may seem to have failed the test. ⁸ For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹ For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. We also pray that you may be made complete. ¹⁰ I write these things while I am away from you so that when I am with you I do not have to deal harshly with you in the use of my authority—which the Lord gave to me so that I may build you up, and not tear you down.

¹¹ Finally, brothers, rejoice! Work for restoration, be encouraged, think alike, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² Greet each other with a holy kiss. All God's holy people greet you. ^[1]

¹³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. ^[2]

Footnotes

13:12 ^[1]Some copies number this sentence as verse 13.

13:13 ^[2]Some translations number this sentence as verse 14.

2 Corinthians 13

13:1-10

What was the “third time”?

[13:1]

Paul planned to visit Corinth a third time (see: 2 Corinthians - Introduction).

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

Why did Paul speak about “two or three witnesses”?

[13:1]

Paul wrote the same thing Moses wrote (see: Deuteronomy 19:15). This was a part of the Law of Moses. Someone could only be judged if more than one person saw them do something wrong. They needed two or more witnesses.

1. Some scholars think Paul's third visit was like a third witness.
2. Some scholars think Paul's visits and epistles were like witnesses. This is a metaphor.
3. Some scholars think Paul would have other people be witnesses to the sins of the Christians in Corinth.
4. Some scholars think Paul, God, and Jesus were witnesses (see: 2 Corinthians 1:23; John 8:17-18).

See: Hebrews 10:28; Matthew 18:16; 1 Timothy 5:19

See: [Metaphor](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was the “second time”?

[13:2]

When Paul visited the Corinthians a second time, this was the “painful visit” (see: 2 Corinthians - Introduction; 2 Corinthians 2:1-4).

What did it mean to be “alive by God’s power”?

[13:4]

Scholars think to be “alive by God’s power” not only indicated that Jesus was resurrected, but that he continues to live and rules everything because he is God. They think Paul lived by the power of God in his life and that he would go to the church in Corinth in the power of God. That is, God gave Paul permission to lead the Christians in Corinth.

See: Ephesians 1:19-23

See: [Church](#) ; [Jesus is God](#); [Church](#)

What was meant by the words, “examine” and “test”?

[13:5]

Paul wanted the Corinthians to examine the things they did and to test the genuineness of their faith. That is, Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to live according to what they said they believed.

See: Psalm 26:2; Lamentations 3:40; 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31; Galatians 6:3-4

See: [Test](#); [Test](#)

Why did Paul say, “we are not able to do anything against the truth”?

[13:8]

Paul said, “we are not able to do anything against the truth.” Some scholars think that the apostles were actually unable to act against the truth. This is something God did. Other scholars think that even if the apostles spoke in a wrong way, it would not change the truth of the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was build up or tear down?

[13:10]

To build up meant to encourage the Christians to live in a way that honored Jesus. To tear down was to discourage Christians from living in a way that honored Jesus. Paul always served to “build up”(οἰκοδομή/ g3619) the Corinthians. (see: 2 Corinthians 10:8).

13:11-14

What was “restoration”?

[13:11]

Paul encouraged the Christians to work for “restoration”(καταρτίζω/g2675). The Corinthians must allow God’s ways to work in them, that is, to help them to live in a way that honors God. Perhaps Paul’s greatest concern was to see the Christians in Corinth joined together and working together to serve God.

See: Galatians 6:1

What did it mean to “agree with one another”?

[13:11]

When Paul said he wanted the believers to “agree with one another,” he wanted them to be united in what they thought, did and taught about Jesus.

See: Romans 12:16; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Peter 3:8

See: [Mind](#)

What was a “holy kiss”?

[13:12]

In ancient Israel, people usually only kissed their family members. By kissing one another, the Christians signaled that they were members of the family of God. The “holy kiss” was probably a kiss on the cheek.

See: Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

What was the “fellowship of the Holy Spirit”?

[13:14]

Paul wrote about experiencing the “fellowship”(κοινωνία/g2842) of the Holy Spirit. This is doing the things the Holy Spirit wants them to do and to be joined with the Holy Spirit in some way. He wanted Christians to want to do things that honored God, just as the Holy Spirit honors God the Father (see: Philippians 2:1-4).

See: [God the Father](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [God the Father](#)

Book: Galatians

Introduction to Galatians

Overview

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to Christians in Galatia. Galatia was in the area of Asia Minor, now called Turkey. Paul started several churches in Galatia. Scholars do not know exactly when Paul wrote this letter. Some scholars think this was the first letter Paul wrote.

See: [Apostle](#); [Church](#) See Map: Galatians 6

Who wrote this letter?

Paul wrote this letter (see 1:1; 5:2).

Who did Paul write to?

Paul wrote this letter to Christians in Galatia. These people became Christians because Paul told them about the gospel and showed them how to live in the same way Jesus lived (see 1:11 and 4:13). He became their friend and a leader.

See: [Gospel](#)

What did Paul write about in this letter?

In this letter, Paul told Christians what they needed to do to honor God. That is, they needed to obey Jesus' command and do the right things. Paul explained to the Christians in Galatians how God saved them from their sins. He also did this in the Book of Romans did. God saved Christians because he loved them (see: John 3:16). God saves people from their sins when they believe in Jesus (see 4:4-7).

Paul wanted Christians to know that God loves all Christians in the same way. He loves them because they believe in Jesus. God does not have more love for Jewish Christians than he does for Gentile Christians. He does not have more love for men than he does for women. He does not have more love for rich people than he does for poor people. He loves Christians because they are his children (see: 3:28).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\);Children of God](#)

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote Galatians to correct wrong thoughts about the gospel. In this way, Galatians is like Second Corinthians. Paul wanted the Galatians to know the truth of the gospel (see 2:5, 2:14). Paul heard that the Christians in Galatia were confused about what a person had to do to be a Christian. They were confused because a group of teachers called Judaizers had come to their churches. These people taught wrong things about God. They taught things that were not the same as what Paul taught when he lived in Galatia. They taught that to be Christians, people who were not Jewish needed to be circumcised and follow other Jewish laws. Their false teachings also confused the Christians in Galatia about other things such as slavery and what women could do in the church.

Paul wrote this letter to Christians in Galatia to get rid of their confusion. Advice to translators: A Judaizer was a person who taught that a person was not saved unless they became a Jew. That is, they said that they had to be circumcised and follow the Jewish Law.

See: [Gospel](#); [Judaizer](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Outline of Galatians

1. Paul greeted his readers (1:1-9)
2. What Paul taught (1:10-2:21)
3. What Paul wanted the Galatians to know (3:1-5:12)
4. How the Galatians needed to live in the Holy Spirit (5:13-6:10)

5. Final warning (6:11-18)

Galatians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle—not an apostle from men nor by human agency, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— ² and all the brothers with me, to the churches of Galatia:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins so that he might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

⁶ I am amazed that you are turning away so quickly from him who called you by the grace of Christ. I am amazed that you are turning to a different gospel, ⁷ not that there is another gospel, but there are some men who cause you trouble and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel other than the one we proclaimed to you, let him be cursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, "If someone proclaims to you a gospel other than the one you received, let him be cursed." ¹⁰ For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? Am I seeking to please men? If I am still trying to please men, I am not a servant of Christ.

¹¹ For I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I proclaimed is not man's gospel. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it. Instead, it was by revelation of Jesus Christ to me. ¹³ You have heard about my former life in Judaism, how I was persecuting the church of God beyond measure and that I was trying to destroy it. ¹⁴ I advanced in Judaism beyond many of those who were my own age, from out of my own people. That is how extremely zealous I was for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ But when God, who had set me apart from my mother's womb, and who called me through his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me, so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. ¹⁷ I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. Instead, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas and I stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ In what I write to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying. ²¹ Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was still not known by face to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ They only heard it being said, "The man who once persecuted us is now proclaiming as good news the faith he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ So they glorified God because of me.

Galatians 1 Commentary

1:1-5

How did Paul write this letter differently than his other letters?

[1:1]

In Galatians, Paul did not write in the same way he wrote at the beginning of his other letters. While he began this letter with a greeting he did not say that he was thankful for them.

When Paul lived, most letters were written in a specific order. Usually, the writer wrote his name. Then he wrote about the people to whom he wrote. Then he greeted those people. He normally finished the greeting by writing that he was thankful for him. Then he wrote the rest of the letter. Paul followed this pattern for all of his letters, but not Galatians.

How did Paul become an "apostle"?

[1:1]

Paul was an "apostle" because Jesus made him one. Paul lived at the same time as the other apostles. Paul once persecuted the church, but Jesus changed him. He went to Damascus to persecute Christians there. He saw a vision of Jesus risen from the dead. Jesus spoke to him and changed him. Then he told Paul what to do (see Acts 9). He believed in Jesus and became a Christian. Later, he began preaching and teaching as an apostle.

Advice to translators: "Risen from the dead" means that Jesus died and came back to life.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Vision](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

See Map: Damascus

1:4

Why did Paul say the present time was evil?

[1:4]

Some scholars think Paul wrote that the present time is evil because the Jews thought the world was divided into two time periods. The time they lived in was the first period. This thought this was an evil period. The second period was a time to come. That is, the time when the Messiah returned. The Messiah makes everything right and good when he returns because he will remove evil from the world.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

1:6-10

Why did Paul say there was a "different gospel"?

[1:6]

Some Jews called Judaizers taught a "different gospel." This is because they taught that Gentiles had to be circumcised and follow the Jewish Laws. Only then could they live together with God forever in heaven. These Jews said that Gentiles must live as if they were Jews. Paul taught that only believing in Jesus saved someone from their sins. Nothing else a person does can help people to live with God forever in heaven. Paul was angry because he heard that the Galatians began to believe in this "different gospel."

Paul preached the gospel to the Galatians and started churches in Galatia. Paul taught that someone only has to believe in Jesus in order to be a Christian. Paul told the Galatians that no one earned the ability to live together with God in heaven because of the things they did. This included following the Law of Moses.

See: [Judaizer](#); [Gospel](#); [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Judaizer](#)

Why did Paul write that false teachers needed to be "cursed"?

[1:8]

When Paul wrote that the false teachers needed to be "cursed," he wanted to say that God was going to condemn and punish them. He wrote this to say that what the false teachers said was harmful to the true gospel. These things caused Christians to not understand how they were saved from their sins. Paul wanted Christians to know that these things were so bad that the people who taught them needed to go to hell.

Paul also used the word "cursed" in Romans 9:3, 1 Corinthians 12:3, and 1 Corinthians 16:22. Paul wanted his readers to understand that he spoke for God, and God was angry with those who did not follow what Paul told them to do.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Hell](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

1:11-17

Why did Paul write these verses?

[1:11]

Paul wrote 1:11-17 so that the Galatians knew that nothing they did made God save them from their sins. Paul used himself as an example. Paul kept all of the Jewish laws. In fact, he followed the Law of Moses very well. He did that because he thought the things he did or did not do pleased God. He was so good that he thought God forgave his sins and accepted him because of what he did.

Paul wanted the Galatians to know keeping the law in this way did not earn him God's favor. God saved Paul from his sins only because he believed in Jesus. God favored Paul because of Jesus, not because of what Paul had done. Paul wanted the Galatians to know that this was the only way for God to favor them.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul tell his readers he did not "consult flesh and blood" or the apostles?

[1:16]

Paul said that he did not get his commands from "flesh and blood" because he wanted Christians to know his commands were directly from God. They were not from another person. He wanted them to know God told him to give these commands. Although he spoke with other Christians, such as Ananias, he did not study Christian beliefs with anyone. He did not even talk with any of the first apostles about them. He only spoke with God.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Paul say he was going "up" to Jerusalem?

[1:17]

Jerusalem was a higher place on the earth than where Paul was. So when he traveled to Jerusalem, he was going "up" to get there.

1:18-24

Why did Paul write these verses?

Paul wrote these verses again so the Christians in Galatia knew that God gave him everything he taught. He did not go anywhere or talk to anybody to get his thoughts from other people. A few years after he saw Jesus and began to preach the gospel, he spoke with Peter and James. But they did not teach him the things he taught. He did not know anyone from the churches in Judea. God gave him everything he said and wrote.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What did Paul do for "three years"?

[1:18]

The Bible does not say exactly what Paul did for those three years. Some scholars think Paul lived in the desert of Arabia while Jesus taught him.

Some scholars think Paul wrote about "three years" because he wanted his readers to think about the three years the disciples spent with Jesus while He was on earth. So Paul wanted to say that he had the same kind of training that the other apostles had.

See: [Apostle](#)

See Map: Arabia

Who is Cephas?

[1:18]

"Cephas" was one of Jesus' disciples and an apostle. The Bible normally calls him "Peter." Peter is his name in the Greek language. In Aramaic his name was Cephas. Both of the names mean "rock."

Who is James?

[1:19]

James was the half-brother of Jesus (see: Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). This is not the disciple who was the brother of John. At first, James, the half-brother of Jesus, did not believe in Jesus (see: John 7:5). But later, he believed in Jesus and became a leader of the church.

Chapter 2

¹ Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. ² I went up because of a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I spoke privately to those who seemed to be important, in order to make sure that I was not running—or had not run—in vain. ³ But not even Titus, who was with me and who was a Greek, was forced to be circumcised. ⁴ The false brothers came in secretly to spy on the liberty we have in Christ Jesus. They desired to enslave us, ⁵ but we did not yield in submission to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. ⁶ But those who seemed to be important (whatever they were does not matter to me, God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed important added nothing to me. ⁷ On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to those who are uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to those who are circumcised. ⁸ For God, who worked in Peter for the apostleship to those who are circumcised, also worked in me to the Gentiles. ⁹ When James, Cephas, and John, who had a reputation as pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles and they should go to the circumcised. ¹⁰ They requested only that we remember the poor, the very thing that I was eager to do.

¹¹ But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. ¹² Before certain men came from James, Cephas was eating with the Gentiles. But when these men came, he stopped and kept away from the Gentiles. He was afraid of those who were demanding circumcision. ¹³ Also the rest of the Jews joined in this hypocrisy. Even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that their behavior was not following the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of all of them, "If you are a Jew but are living like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" ¹⁵ We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶ yet we know that no person is justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus. So we also have believed in Christ Jesus so that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law. For by the works of the law no flesh will be justified. ¹⁷ But if, while we seek to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸ For if I rebuild those things I once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ. ²⁰ It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, then Christ died for nothing!

Footnotes

2:19 ^[1]Some translations include this sentence with verse 20.

Galatians 2

2:1-5

Why did Paul go to Jerusalem after 14 years?

[21:1]

Paul traveled to Jerusalem because that is where James, Peter, and John lived. They were apostles and church leaders. Paul wanted them to know that he preached and taught the truth about Jesus.

Some scholars think this was 14 years was after Paul believed in Jesus (see: Acts 9). Other scholars think it was after his first trip to Jerusalem (see: Acts 11.27-30). Other scholars think this time in Jerusalem when the church leaders met (see: Acts 15.2).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Who was Barnabas?

[2:1]

Barnabas, also called Joseph, was an apostle (see Acts 14:14) who traveled with Paul on several missionary trips. Barnabas was one of the first people to believe Paul was a Christian (see Acts 9:27). Sometime before he met Paul, Barnabas became a Christian. Some of the first Christians thought Barnabas was a prophet (see Acts 13:1).

His name means "son of comfort." Barnabas was born in the city of Salamis on the island of Cyprus (see Acts 4:36). Scholars are not sure when he was born. Most scholars believe some non-Christians killed Barnabas because he was a Christian.

See: Acts 4:36 See: [Prophet](#)

Who was Titus?

[2:1]

Titus went with Paul on several missionary journeys. He helped Paul in many ways. He carried letters and messages for Paul to some churches. Many scholars think Titus became the leader of the church in Crete. Paul wrote a letter to Titus. This is one of the books in the New Testament.

Titus was born in Antioch at the beginning of the first century. His father was a Greek, and his mother was Jewish. People were not sure if he was Jewish or Gentile. Because of this, Christians asked if he needed to be circumcised in the same way Jewish men were circumcised. Some scholars think that 2:4 indicates Paul made Titus get circumcised. Other scholars say Titus was never circumcised.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

See Map: Crete

What did Barnabas and Titus do for Paul?

[2:1]

Barnabas and Titus went to Jerusalem with Paul because God told him to go there. Paul told the church leaders there about how he preached and taught the Gentiles. Some scholars believe that Barnabas and Titus also spoke in Jerusalem when the church leaders talked about Gentiles becoming Christians (see: Acts 15).

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul worry about the Galatians?

[2:2]

Paul worried that the Galatians no longer followed the gospel he preached to them. He worried that the Galatians followed false teachers who were also called "Judaizers." They did not think that believing in Jesus was enough to make a person a Christian. They thought people also needed to follow the Law of Moses to become a Christian. Paul taught they did not need to follow the Law of Moses. He taught that once they believed in Jesus, they had freedom because of Jesus. That is, they no longer needed to follow the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did they want Titus circumcised?

[2:3]

Some scholars think that some of the Jewish Christians wanted Paul to have Titus circumcised. They were not going to accept Titus as a church leader until he was circumcised. Titus had a Greek father and was not Jewish. Titus was a Christian. However, some Jewish Christian did not accept Titus. They wanted him to be circumcised and follow other Law of Moses before they accepted him.

Paul told the Jewish Christians that Gentile Christians did not need to be circumcised to be Christians or church leaders. Peter, who was the most important church leader, also knew this (see: Acts 10). Paul got the other church leaders to agree that Titus did not have to be circumcised.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

2:4-5

What did Paul mean about "slaves" and "submission"?

[2:4, 2:5]

Paul used language about "slaves" and "submission" because he knew that if a person believes in Jesus, that is enough for God to save them from their sins. This makes them a Christian. That is, they are no longer slaves to the Law of Moses because they are free in Christ. So, after he believed in Jesus, he knew that only Jesus saved him from his sins and following the Law of Moses did not. Paul wanted other Christians to understand that the gospel is true. He wanted them to know that being circumcised did not make them Christians. Only believing in Jesus made them Christians. Paul wanted his readers not to listen to anyone who said they were not Christian because they were not Jewish.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Gospel](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

2:6-10

Does God want both Jews and Gentiles to be saved?

[2:7]

Paul wanted his readers to know that God wanted both Jews and Gentiles to become Christians. He knew that someone needed to preach the gospel to the Gentiles in the same way as they preached it to the Jews. Paul wrote that God "entrusted" him to be an apostle to the Gentiles in the same way God entrusted Peter to be an apostle to the Jews. God chose both of them to serve in this special way.

When Paul wrote about the "uncircumcised", he spoke about the Gentiles. When Paul wrote "circumcised", he spoke about the Jews.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Gentile](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Who were James, Cephas, and John?

[2:9]

James, Cephas (that is the apostle Peter), and John were apostles and leaders of the first Christians (see: Acts 15). Paul used a metaphor of pillars holding up a building to tell others that in the same way a building is held up by pillars, so these men were important in holding up the church during the time of the apostles. That is, they served the church greatly. Paul wanted people to know that these leaders helped him to preach the gospel in the right way.

Scholars do not know which man named James Paul wrote about. Some think he was the half-brother of Jesus (they had the same mother but not the same father). Other scholars think this was James, the son of Zebedee. He was one of the 12 original apostles of Jesus. Whoever he was, the James Paul talked about was the leader of the first Christians in Jerusalem. He may have written the book of James in the New Testament.

Jesus called Peter to become Jesus' disciple (see Matthew 4:18-22). Peter was also called Cephas. Cephas was with Jesus while Jesus taught people on earth. After Jesus was killed and rose from the dead, Peter preached and taught both Jewish and Gentile people to believe in Jesus. He wrote two books that are in the New Testament (1 Peter and 2 Peter).

John was the disciple whom Jesus called away from working as a fisherman along with his older brother, James (see Matthew 4:21-22). He was called the "beloved disciple" (see: John 13:23). He wrote five books in the New Testament (the Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Revelation). He was one of the leaders of the first Christians.

See: [Disciple](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Apostle](#); [Disciple](#)

What was the “right hand of fellowship.”

[2:9]

When Paul was alive, men shook hands or grabbed arms to welcome each other. They did this to show that they honored each other and agreed about important things. Paul used this as a metaphor for friendship. He wanted to say that the leaders of the Christians in Jerusalem thought of him and Barnabas to be friends.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why was Paul to help poor people?

[2:10]

The leaders wanted Paul to help the poor people in order to show that he was following God correctly. Christians have always helped poor people because this honors God. The Bible tells people who believe in God to take care of poor people (see: Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11; Psalm 41:1; Matthew 19:21; Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 8; James 2:2-4). In the Middle East, sometimes the crops were bad, or the rains did not come. Sometimes, men were not able to provide food for their families. Because of these difficult times, there were many poor people.

2:11-21

Why did Paul confront Peter?

[2:11]

In these verses, Paul wrote that he had to confront Cephas, who was also called Peter, about not eating with the Gentiles. After the meeting in Jerusalem, Paul returned to Antioch in Syria. Later, Peter also came to Antioch. While he was in Antioch, Peter stopped eating and being friends with Gentile Christians. He also started following the Law of Moses again. He did this because he was afraid of what the Jewish Christians thought about him.

Paul knew that this was wrong, so he confronted Peter about it. Paul wanted Peter and other Christians to know that they did not need to follow the Law of Moses anymore. Christians needed to know that following rules, regulations, or rituals did not save them from their sins. Paul also knew that Jesus did not think Jewish Christians were better than Gentile Christians. So he talked to Peter about this.

Paul also confronted Peter because Peter was not doing the things that he preached. When someone does not do what they say other people are to do, this is called "hypocrisy" (see 2:13). Paul told Peter that Peter was being a hypocrite. He wanted readers to know that they are not to be hypocrites.

Paul also wanted readers to know that he was equal to the other Christian leaders. He did this by describing how he was able to tell other leaders what they were to do.

See: [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#)

See Map: Antioch and Syria

How are Christians justified?

[2:16]

Paul wrote mainly to the Jewish Christians to tell them that they are “justified” by believing in Jesus. That is, they now are friends with God and can live together with God in heaven forever. This is because God considers them to have done the right things, even though they have done the wrong things. This is called being “justified.” Nothing else can justify them. Following the Law of Moses did not justify them. He wanted Jewish Christians and also other Christians to understand that believing in Jesus is the most important thing for them to do.

Paul wrote more about justification in chapters 3-6.

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

What did Paul ask about what Jesus taught?

[2:17]

Paul asked the Jewish Christians in Galatia about what Jesus taught and what he wanted his followers to do and not do (see 5:19-22). This is because some of them believed it was a sin to eat or be friends with Gentiles. That is, they believed that Jews were not to eat or be friends with Gentiles. To them, if the Gentiles were not circumcised, they were not friends with God. And they were not to be friends with them. Paul wanted to say that having Jews and Gentiles eat together or be friends was not a sin because Jesus made them same as Christians. They did not become friends of God by obeying the Law of Moses. Paul also wanted to say that Jewish Christians were not to go back to thinking the law was going to save them.

When Paul asked the Galatian Christians what Jesus taught, he wanted them to think about how Jesus did not want them to sin. Paul did not teach that Jesus wanted people to sin. He knew his readers knew this. So he asked this question to force his readers to think about what they knew Jesus taught. He asked them about what Jesus taught and what he wanted his followers to do and not do (see 5:19-22). He knew his readers would answer his question by rejecting the idea that Jesus told people to sin. He wanted them to know it was not a sin for Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians to be friends. It also meant that Gentile Christians were not to think that they had to follow the Law of Moses.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul compare following the law to death?

[2:20, 2:21]

Paul used the metaphor of life and death to say that trying to keep the Law of Moses, in order to get to heaven and live together with God, only ended in death and going to hell. Paul wrote that when he tried to keep the Law of Moses, it was like he was killing himself. He did not please God and God did not forgive his sins.

Paul wrote that nobody is saved from their sins because they follow rules or laws. Paul said that no one, not even Paul himself, was able to keep the whole Law of Moses. People cannot be saved from their sins by following rules.

When Paul believed in Jesus, Jesus gave him a new life. Out of love, God forgave Paul's sins. This was because Jesus died and rose from the dead.

Paul wrote that there is no other way to be friends with God. If there was, then Jesus did not have to die for God to forgive people's sins.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Hell](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Foolish Galatians! Who has put a spell on you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly displayed as crucified. ² This is the only thing I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now going to be perfected by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things for nothing—if indeed it was for nothing? ⁵ Does he who gives the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? ⁶ Just as Abraham "believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness," ⁷ in the same way, understand, then, that those of faith are the children of Abraham. ⁸ The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you all the nations will be blessed." ⁹ So then, those of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. ¹⁰ All who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; and so it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law, and do them." ¹¹ Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because "the righteous will live by faith." ¹² But the law is not of faith, rather, "The person who does the works of the law must live by them." ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"— ¹⁴ so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

¹⁵ Brothers, let me speak in human terms. Once a man-made contract is established by law, no one can set it aside or add to it. ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his descendant. It does not say, "to descendants," referring to many, but instead to only one, "and to your descendant," who is Christ. ¹⁷ Now what I am saying is this: The law, which came 430 years afterward, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God, to nullify the promise. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance comes by the law, then it no longer comes by promise. But God freely gave it to Abraham by a promise. ¹⁹ What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the descendant of Abraham would come to whom the promise had been made. The law was ordained through angels by the hand of an intermediary. ²⁰ Now an intermediary implies more than one person. But God is one. ²¹ So is the law against the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²² But the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until faith should be revealed. ²⁴ So then the law became our guardian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ Then if you are Christ's, you are Abraham's descendants, and heirs according to promise.

Galatians 3

3:1-14

Why was Paul upset with the Galatians?

[3:1, 3:2]

Paul was upset with the Galatians because they forgot how God saved them from their sins. He told them that they became Christians by believing in Jesus. This is how the Holy Spirit came to live in them. They did not have to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses for God to save them from their sins.

Paul wanted to know that the Galatians knew that they did not depend on keeping the law for God to save them. He wanted them to know that if they try to keep the Jewish Law, they will fail (see: Deuteronomy 27:26). They needed to believe in Jesus and trusting God to be saved from their sins.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write about Abraham?

[3:6]

Paul wrote about Abraham because wanted his readers to think about how Abraham completely trusted in God (see: Genesis 15:6). In the same way Abraham completely trusted in God, the Galatian Christians needed to completely trust in God. The Galatians knew the story of Abraham. They knew that Abraham's circumcision came after he believed in God's promises. Paul told the Galatians that Abraham believed in God before God did anything he promised to give Abraham. Also, Abraham lived before God gave the law to the Jewish people. God did not give promises to Abraham or care for Abraham because Abraham followed the law. In the same way, following the law did not cause God to care for the Galatians either.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul say that anyone hung on a tree was cursed?

[3:13]

In 3:13, Paul quoted Deuteronomy 21:23 because wanted them to know that Jesus was crucified on a tree so that he could be cursed for people's sins. People sometimes called the cross a "tree" because of it was made from a cut down tree.

Paul wanted his readers to know that Jesus did all that is needed for God to forgive their sins if they believe in him (see: Isaiah 52:13-53:12). When people sin, they deserve a curse. But when Jesus died on the cross, he took that curse for all people. Anyone who believes in Jesus will have this curse taken from them.

See: [Cross](#); [Curse](#); [Cross](#)

3:15-24

Who are the "descendants" of Abraham?

[3:16]

Paul wanted the Galatians to know that if they believed in Jesus, they were descendants of Abraham. That is, they did the same types of things Abraham did. In Genesis 18:16-18, God told Abraham that he was going to give him a son, a "descendant." God fulfilled this promise by giving Abraham Isaac as a son. God gave Isaac to Abraham and Sarah because they trusted God. God also promised that the Messiah, that is Jesus, was going to be a descendant of Abraham. In the same way Isaac was a physical descendant of Abraham, Jesus is a physical descendant of Abraham. Paul also called Jesus a spiritual descendant of Abraham. That is, anyone who believes and trust in Jesus will also be a spiritual descendant of Abraham. That is, they do the same things Abraham did in the same way a son should do the same good things his father does. Both Abraham and Jesus showed people why they need to believe and trust God.

How are Christians to believe in God the same way Abraham did?

[3:18]

In the same way Abraham completely believed and trusted in God, so are Christians to believe and trust in God. In 3:26 Paul said that God saves people from their sins only because they believe in Jesus. Abraham also trusted in God to save him from his sins. So, Paul used the metaphor of saying that Christians are Abraham's descendants because they trust God the in the same way Abraham trusted God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What was the purpose of the law?

[3:19]

Paul wrote that the Law of Moses had two purposes. He used metaphors to talk about these two purposes.

Paul said that the law told the Jews how they were not honoring God. That is, it showed them they were sinners. The law told Jews how they were to honor God. But obeying the law perfectly was not possible. That is why Paul said the law showed them they were prisoners. In 3:19-22, Paul wrote that people were prisoners to the law. He does not mean prisoners of other people or of a government. That is, because they tried to keep the law to honor God, but were unable to, they will never be freed from the punishment that comes from not following the law perfectly. In 3:23-25, Paul wrote that the law was a tutor or guardian. That is, in the same way someone teaches and cares for children, so did the law for the Jewish people. Paul wanted readers to think about how children need to be taken care of and taught until they are adults. He wanted to say that God gave the law to people to teach them that they needed to trust in God completely. But, when God sent Jesus to earth, people did not need the law anymore to make them righteous. They only need to believe in Jesus for God to say that they are righteous and to give them peace. When this happens, God adopts them into his family (see: 3:25; Romans 9:4).

See: [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#)

3:25-29

How did Paul want the Galatians to think about themselves?

[3:28]

In 3:28, Paul told Christians to think of each other as equal to each other. Paul wanted all Christians to know that they are equal because they believe in Christ. It did not matter whether the Galatians were Gentile or Jewish. If they believed in Jesus, God thought of them equally.

Why did Paul call Christians "heirs according to promise"?

[3:29]

Paul called the Galatians "heirs according to promise" in 3:29, because, just like children inherit their parents' things when they die, Christians will inherit the kingdom of God because of Jesus' death and resurrection. Romans gave and received an inheritance from family members. It was a gift. In 3:25-29, Paul wrote about some of the many gifts they received from God. These gifts were inherited because they were now part of God's family. Paul talks about several of these gifts: They no longer needed the law as a "guardian" the way Paul had written about in 3:23-24. God adopted them into his family because they believed in Jesus. They were "baptized into Christ." Paul wanted Christians to know that Jesus joined Christians to himself. Christians are also joined to each other because they all believe in Jesus. Paul used words about a person putting on clothing as a metaphor for this.

Advice to translators: an inheritance is when a parent or other family member dies and leaves their possessions to another person, usually their children.

See: [Metaphor](#), [Kingdom of God](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 4

¹ I am saying that the heir, for whatever time he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is owner of the entire estate. ² But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were enslaved to the elemental principles of the world. ⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law ⁵ so that he might redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who cries out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then you are also an heir through God.

⁸ But at that time, when you did not know God, you were made to be slaves to those who are, by their natural powers, not gods at all. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather that you are known by God, how is it that you are turning back to the weak and worthless elemental principles? Do you want to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and new moons and seasons and years! ¹¹ I am afraid for you that somehow my labor with you may have been for nothing.

¹² I beg you, brothers, become like me, for I also have become like you. You did me no wrong. ¹³ But you know that it was because of a disease of the flesh that I proclaimed the gospel to you the first time, ¹⁴ and though my physical condition put you to the test, you did not despise or reject me. Instead you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself. ¹⁵ Where then is your blessing now? For I testify to you that, if it were possible, you would have torn out your own eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ So then, have I become your enemy because I am telling you the truth? ¹⁷ They are zealous to win you over, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out so you may be zealous for them. ¹⁸ It is always good to be zealous for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹ My little children, again I am suffering the pains of childbirth for you until Christ is formed in you. ²⁰ I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you.

²¹ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and one by the free woman. ²³ One was born by the slave girl according to the flesh, but the other was born by the free woman through promise. ²⁴ These things may be interpreted as an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One of them is from Mount Sinai and she bears children into slavery. This is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia; and she represents the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written,

"Rejoice, you barren one who does not give birth;
cry out and shout for joy,
you who are not suffering the pains of childbirth;
because the children of the desolate woman are more numerous
than those of the woman who has a husband."

²⁸ But you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ At that time the one who was born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the Spirit. It is the same now. ³⁰ But what does the scripture say? "Send away the slave girl and her son. For the son of the slave girl will not share in the inheritance with the son of the free woman." ³¹ Therefore, brothers, we are not children of a slave girl, but of the free woman.

Galatians 4

4:1-7

What did Jesus do for Christians when he died on the cross?

[4:5, 4:7]

Paul used three words to tell people what Jesus did for Christians when he died on the cross.

Adoption: Jesus is the Son of God. He was always God's son. No one else is part of God's family in this way. However, when Jesus died on the cross, he made it possible for people to be adopted and become part of God's family. That is, if they believe in Jesus, God adopts them and they are his children in a different way. Heir: The person adopting a child gives rights to their child to inherit certain things and rights. Paul wanted Christians to know that God adopts them into his family when they believe in Jesus. This is better than being a servant or slave. In the same way Jesus has an inheritance from God, Christians receive a part of this inheritance when they go to heaven. Redeem: Paul wrote about Jesus redeeming people. When Paul was alive, people often became slaves to other people because they owed those people a lot of money. They continued to be slaves until they or someone else paid the money they owed. This was called "redemption". The redeemed person belongs to the redeemer (see: 1 Peter 1:17-18, and Matthew 20:28).

So Paul used redemption as a metaphor. He wanted to say that people start their lives in a form of slavery because they disobey God. But Jesus paid the price to redeem them when he died on the cross. This means they are not slaves to sin anymore. Instead, God has adopted them into his family.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

4:8-11

What did Paul mean when he wrote about people or things who are “not gods at all”?

[4:8]

Paul wrote about those who are "not gods at all." He did this to warn Christians about false ideas taught by people who worshiped false gods. These people worshipped carved idols or other things that are not God. People thought and said they were gods, but they were not gods. There is only one God. Some Roman emperors did this. Some scholars think Paul wanted to warn about Jewish ideas along with these other common false teachings.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What are the "weak and worthless elemental principles"?

[4:9]

When he wrote about "weak and worthless elemental principles," Paul wanted to talk about false ideas the Gentiles had.

They followed false gods, astrology, and rituals for different seasons. These ideas are "weak and worthless" because they are not the truth about God. They could not help people in any way.

See: [Ritual](#); [Ritual](#)

What does "days and new moons and seasons and years" mean?

[4:10]

Paul wrote about "days and new moons and seasons and years." This is because both many people followed the calendar to know how to please God. They did different things on different days in the hopes of pleasing the god or gods they worshipped. Paul wanted to say that no matter how well someone follows the calendar, this will never save people from their sins. God only saves those who believe in Jesus.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why was Paul afraid for the Galatians?

[4:11]

In 4:11, Paul said, "I am afraid for you" because the Galatians no longer followed the gospel.

When Paul was in Galatia, he taught them the gospel. That is, God saved them from their sins when they believed in Jesus. But after Paul left, other teachers taught them they needed to be circumcised and follow the Jewish laws. Unless they did this, God did not save them from their sins. This false teaching

was not the gospel, but a false gospel. Paul wanted them to see that this was wrong. He wanted them to know they were in danger if they followed this wrong idea.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

4:12-20

Why did Paul tell the Galatians to "become like me"?

[4:12]

Paul told the Galatians to "become like" him because he wanted them to follow his example. In the past, Paul followed all the things the Jewish leaders taught because he thought he could please God that way. But when he believed in Jesus, he found out that he did not need to do these things in order to be saved from his sins. He wanted the Galatians to know that following the Law of Moses or the teachings of the Jewish leaders did not save them either.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What "physical illness" did Paul have?

[4:13]

Scholars do not agree about what physical illness. Paul wrote about in 4:12-14. Some scholars think Paul had problems seeing things. Others think he suffered from another disease that always gave him problems. Paul also wrote about a "thorn in the flesh" (see: 2 Corinthians 12:7). This may or may not be the same illness. No scholar is certain on this issue. Paul wrote in 4:13 that this illness caused him to preach to the Galatians when he traveled through that region. That is, God used this illness to get his gospel to the Galatians. Also, the Galatians treated him kindly and took care of him while he was there.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul say he had "pains of childbirth" again?

[4:19]

Paul said he was "in the pains of childbirth" because he wanted the Galatians to know his great love for them. That is, he loved them in the same way a mother loves her children. When a mother gives birth, there are strong pains. But the after the pain, there is joy because the baby is born. When Paul used this metaphor, he wanted to say that he felt pain because the Galatians followed wrong ideas about God. Paul often spoke about those who he served as if they were his children. He wanted the Galatians to know they were children in some way and they were born in love and pain.

See: [Metaphor](#)

4:21-31

Why did Paul write about Sarah and Hagar?

[4:22, 4:23]

Paul talked about how God saved Sarah and Hagar. He did this so that people would know that when God saves someone, it is a free gift. Hagar was a slave woman (see: Genesis 16:1-16), but Sarah was a free woman (see: Genesis 21:8-21). Paul wrote about Hagar and her son Ishmael to make readers think about people who try to please God by following laws. He also wrote about Sarah and her son Isaac to make readers think about how God saves people because of his great love. Paul used the word "promise" to talk about God's great love.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write that Hagar "gives birth to children who are slaves"?

[4:24]

Paul wrote that Hagar "gives birth to children who are slaves," because the child of a slave woman was also a slave. The child was unable to free himself from slavery. So, Paul wanted to say that people who follow the law to please God couldn't teach other people about God's great love. They are unable to do this because they do not understand God's great love. They can only teach people to follow the law. But this is a form of slavery (see: 4:8-11).

Why did Paul write that Hagar was "from Mount Sinai" and "represents Mount Sinai"?

[4:25]

Paul wrote that Hagar was "from Mount Sinai" because he wanted Christians to think of her in the same way as the Law of Moses. When Paul wrote about "Mount Sinai," he wanted to talk about people who follow rules or laws to try to please God. He did not want to say that Hagar actually came from Mount Sinai. He wanted to say that Mount Sinai was the place where God gave the Law to Moses. This was long after Hagar lived. But Paul wanted readers to think about her slavery and their own slavery to the law.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul write about the "present Jerusalem" and "the Jerusalem that is above"?

[4:25, 4:26]

Paul wrote about the "present Jerusalem" to make readers think about following the Law of Moses. He wanted to say that Jerusalem was the city where the Jewish Temple was located. The Temple was the center of Jewish worship. This worship followed the Law of Moses. So, like Hagar, Jerusalem represented wrong ideas about how to please God.

Paul wrote about the "Jerusalem that is above" to make readers think about God and his great power and his great love. In the Bible, this is also called the heavenly Jerusalem (See: Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 21:2; Philippians 3:20). When he said, "she is our mother," he wanted to say that people who believe in Jesus are freed from slavery to the Law of Moses. So, Paul used the Jerusalem to mean right ideas about God and his great love.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why did Paul write about Isaac?

[4:28]

When Paul wrote about Isaac, he wanted readers to think about how they are saved from their sins by God's great love. Paul wanted them to remember that Isaac was born because God gave a promise to Abraham and Sarah. This was long after they were able to have children normally. So it was clear that Isaac was born because God made it happen. God fulfilled his promise. Paul wanted the Galatians to know they are like Isaac. That is, they were saved from their sins because God made this happen. God fulfilled his promise to save people through Jesus.

See: Genesis 15 See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not again be subject to a yoke of slavery.

² Look, I, Paul, say to you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will not benefit you in any way.

³ I testify again to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You are cut off from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you no longer experience grace. ⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has value, but only faith working through love. ⁷ You were running well. Who prevented you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion does not come from him who calls you! ⁹ A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. ¹⁰ I have confidence in the Lord that you will think nothing different. The one who is troubling you will suffer the judgment, whoever he is. ¹¹ Brothers, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the stumbling block of the cross has been removed. ¹² As for those who are disturbing you, I wish they would cut themselves off!

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers. But do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these oppose each other, so that you cannot do the things you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalry, dissension, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, ²³ gentleness, and self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become boastful, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5

5:1-12

Why did Paul tell the Galatians not to go back to slavery to the Law of Moses?

[5:1]

Paul told the Galatians that becoming circumcised and trying to follow the Law of Moses made Jesus's life, death, and resurrection useless to them. Also, Paul told them that Jesus had set them free from all of the Jewish laws. He continued to write about the freedom Christians have because of Jesus. Paul again wrote that they should not get circumcised.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

How did Paul talk about the law and "grace"?

[5:4]

Paul reminded Christians in Galatia that if they chose to be circumcised then they "no longer experience grace." Some scholars think Paul said that circumcised Christians lost what God did for them when he saved them. Other scholars think Paul said that Christians no longer experience God's power working in them and through them. What is clear is that Paul told the Galatians not to be circumcised because they lost something important.

Also, Paul wanted his readers to know that circumcision was the same as being a slave to the Law of Moses. He used words that talk about a hard choice between the law and God's great love, or "grace." Christians can choose to follow rules and laws to please God. Or they can choose to believe in Jesus and live by this belief. But they do not please God by doing both of these things. So he told them they must not be circumcised and become a slave to the law. He called this a "yoke of slavery" (see: 5:1).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Grace](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What does the Holy Spirit do for Christians?

[5:5]

In 5:5 (see also: Romans 8), Paul told Christians that the Holy Spirit gives them faith to "wait for the hope of righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη/g1343). That is, while they are alive, they need to believe in Jesus and do the same types of things that Jesus did while he was on earth. They were to know with confidence that God was going to do these things. The Holy Spirit reminds Christians they are going to heaven. In heaven, God makes them completely righteous.

Why did Paul use the metaphor about yeast and dough?

[5:9]

When Paul wrote about yeast and dough, he used a metaphor to tell the Galatians that even a little false teaching is very bad for the church. He was telling them to completely resist false teachers.

Paul wrote in 5:8 that the false teachers taught ideas that Jesus did not teach. Paul and the other apostles taught people what Jesus taught. The false teachers taught people ideas not from God.

So, in 5:9 Paul quoted a proverb that most people understood (see also: 1 Corinthians 5:6). Bakers use leaven or yeast to make bread rise for baking. It does not take much leaven or yeast to make bread rise. In the same way, it does not take much false teaching to make the Galatians think wrong things about God. Jesus also spoke this proverb (see Mark 8:15).

See: [Yeast \(Leaven\)](#); [Church](#); [Apostle](#); [Proverb](#); [Yeast \(Leaven\)](#)

Why did Paul write that certain people needed to "castrate themselves"?

[5:12]

Scholars do not know why Paul wrote that certain people needed to "castrate themselves." He wrote this about the false teachers. Paul did not want them to actually do this. Instead, he did not want the Galatians not even to talk with these false teachers. These scholars think Paul wanted false teachers to be removed from the church, so they no longer mislead the Galatians with their false teaching.

Some scholars do not think Paul was angry. They think he was passionate that the Christians in Galatia continued to know and follow the truth he taught them. It is clear that Paul did not want the Galatian Christians to follow the false teachers in any way.

Advice to translators: When a man castrated himself, he cut off his penis.

5:13-26

How were Christians to live their lives?

[5:13, 5:14, 5:15]

Paul told Christians how to live their lives.

First, Paul wrote that Christians needed to love each other (see 5:13-14). Jesus taught this and so did the Old Testament. Paul also told readers to not attack each other with words. This caused everyone to be hurt.

Second, Paul wrote that people are able to do things in two ways. All people are able to follow the "sinful nature." This makes them do bad things. Christians choose to do things in the way the Holy Spirit guides them. This will make them do good things. Paul said there was a "conflict" between the sinful nature and

the Holy Spirit in a Christian. He wrote this to say how important it is for each Christian to choose to do things in the way the Holy Spirit says to do it. He wanted to say that doing some good things and doing some bad things would not please God.

See: [Sinful Nature](#)

What are the "works of the sinful nature"?

[5:19, 5:20, 5:21]

Paul warned Christians not to "practice" or do the "works of the sinful nature." These are things that displease God greatly. Paul listed some things people do that are "works of the sinful nature." Then he wrote "and things like these." That is, he wanted to say that he did not list all the "works of the sinful nature." But he listed enough for readers to think of other things like them.

Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that these are things people do because they do not believe in Jesus. Other scholars think Paul warned Christians that they would not receive rewards if they disobeyed God. When a person believes in Jesus, God gives that person the Holy Spirit to guide them in not doing these things. However, the person still must choose not to do them. So Paul warned Christians about doing the "works of the sinful nature."

See: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:5; and Revelation 22:15

See: [Sinful Nature](#)

What did Paul mean by "fruit"?

[5:22]

Paul wrote a metaphor concerning fruit to say that Christians need to be guided by the Holy Spirit. People can see fruit growing on trees. In the same way, people can see what Christians do when the Holy Spirit guides them to do things that are good. (See: Matthew 3:8, and Luke 3:8)

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is the purpose of the fruit of the Spirit?

[5:22]

Paul wrote about the Holy Spirit producing "fruit" inside Christians. He used a metaphor in the same way that Jesus used a metaphor to talk about Christians being part of the "vine" (see: John 15). Jesus and Paul both wanted to say that God wants Christians to get their help from God. In the same way that that fruit is fed by the tree that it grows on, Christians are to be "fed" by the Holy Spirit.

Paul also wanted to say that fruit is seen on a tree or vine. In the same way, Christians say and do things that are seen by others when they follow the Holy Spirit. When Christians do the things the Holy Spirit tells them to do, they will do what Jesus did. This shows other people what to do to honor God. This can cause other people to believe in Jesus.

The fruit of the Spirit is the opposite of what Paul wrote about in 5:19-21.

See: 2 Corinthians 6:6; Ephesians 4:2; 5:9; Colossians 13:12-15

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What are the "Fruits of the Spirit"?

[5:22, 5:23]

The "fruit of the Spirit" is one thing, but several things are part of this one thing. Paul listed the good things that are a part of the fruit of the Spirit. He wanted to say that the Holy Spirit gives Christians all of these things to use, so they can do the things that please God.

Why did Paul tell Christians they "crucified the sinful nature"?

[5:24]

When Paul wrote about Christians crucifying the sinful nature, he used a metaphor about extreme or harsh punishment. Readers understood that crucifixion kills people. So Paul wanted readers to know that they need to have their sins completely removed. This happens when God saves them because they believe in Jesus. But they need to make sure they continue to follow what the Holy Spirit tells them to do.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Metaphor](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 6

¹ Brothers, if someone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Be concerned about yourself, so you also may not be tempted. ² Carry one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ Each one should examine his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in someone else. ⁵ For each one will carry his own burden.

⁶ The one who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. ⁷ Do not be deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever a man plants, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who plants seed to his own flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction. The one who plants seed to the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the right time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the household of faith.

¹¹ See what large letters I write to you with my own hand. ¹² Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are trying to compel you to be circumcised. They do this only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ For not even those who circumcised themselves keep the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but what counts is a new creation. ¹⁶ To all who walk according to this standard, peace and mercy be upon them, even upon the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From now on let no one trouble me, for I carry on my body the marks of Jesus.

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Galatians 6

6:1-5

How are Christians to treat other Christians who commit sins?

[6:1]

Paul told the Galatians that when another Christian sins, the Christians who know that person is to "restore him in a spirit of gentleness." Sometimes people sin and need to be corrected (see: Matthew 18). When a Christian sins, they can dishonor God and hurt other people. But other Christians need to help the person know he sinned. They need to help him repent. That is, so God will forgive him of those sins. They need to act kindly, and they need to be ready to forgive the other person. This helps the person to honor God again.

A Christian needs to do this because he knows that he also has sinned and is not better than the other person who sinned. He knows God forgives him when he repents. So, he needs to be humble and to keep thinking about what he does and thinks. Then, he will sin less himself.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What was the law of Christ?

[6:2]

When Paul told the Galatians to "fulfill the law of Christ" (6:3), he wanted to say they are to love each other. Paul wanted his readers to understand that loving one another was far better than the laws that the false teachers told them to follow. When people love each other, it pleases God more than when they just follow laws.

Jesus spoke often about how his followers needed to love other people. He said that the greatest rule is that a person must love God. But the second greatest rule is that a person must love other people. So, Paul called this the "law of Christ."

Sometimes when Jesus talked about love, Jesus quoted from the Old Testament (see: Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:5). So Paul may have said "law of Christ" to make his readers think that even in the Old Testament, the Law of Moses, God said he wanted people to love each other.

See: Matthew 5:43, 22:39; Mark 12:30-31

See: [Law of Moses](#)

6:6-10

What did Paul teach the Galatians about "planting" and "gathering" or "harvesting"?

[6:7, 6:8, 6:9]

Paul wrote about "planting," "gathering," and "harvesting" to say that Christians need to do good to all people. God will favor them if they are good to others. He wanted his readers to understand that the things they said and affected both them and other people. To explain this, he used the metaphor of planting seeds and waiting for them to grow. He did this to say that Christians who do things that honor God will receive good back from God. This does not always happen right away. But if the Christians keep doing good things, sooner or later God will bring good things to them. In the same way, if they do bad things, sooner or later they receive bad things.

See: [Metaphor](#)

6:11-18

Why did Paul talk about writing "large letters"?

[6:11]

Paul talked about writing in "large letters" (6:11) to tell the Galatians that this letter was really from him. He needed to do this because of two things:

First, many scholars think Paul dictated to another person the words for this and other letters he wrote. Paul signed his letters before he sent them to the churches. Second, many scholars think Paul suffered from physical illnesses. These made it hard for him to read and write. This caused him to only write in large letters. His large signature looked very different from the rest of the letter.

So Paul wrote about this to tell his readers that the letter really was from him.

Why did Paul write about circumcision again?

[6:12]

Paul wrote about circumcision again because this message was so great. He wanted his readers to know that circumcision and following the Law of Moses did not honor God. He wrote about this throughout this letter. As he ended the letter, he wrote about circumcision one more time to help readers know how great was this issue.

So, he again warned about these false teachers (6:12). These people wanted to make the Galatian Christians obey the Law of Moses. That is, they wanted them to be circumcised. This disturbed Paul greatly. So he again wrote to the Christians that they did not need to be circumcised.

Paul also wrote (6:13) that not even the false teachers followed all the laws they wanted the Galatians to follow. Paul accused them of making the Galatians follow the laws because they wanted to boast about making new converts.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What did Paul mean about crucifixion and the cross?

[6:13, 6:14]

When Paul wrote about the cross and crucifixion (6:14), he wanted to say that Jesus was the greatest thing he possessed. Nothing in the world mattered to Paul in the same way believing in, trusting in, and following Jesus mattered to him. So he used the metaphor about the cross to tell his readers how important is Jesus. Paul called the things he did before he believed in Jesus dead. He wanted his readers to know that he thought of his actions in the same way he thought of dead people. That is, they did not do anything for him. He wanted his readers to think about their own past actions in the same way he did his own.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:17, Galatians 5:11, and Philippians 3:18

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did Paul write about the "Israel of God"?

[6:16]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about the "Israel of God" to tell the Galatians that Christians are truly God's people. Paul wanted his readers to think about what he wrote in Galatians 3. The false teachers wanted the Galatians to be circumcised. This joined them to "Israel" by following Law of Moses. The false teachers said this pleased God and made them God's people. But Paul taught that when people believe and trust in Jesus and God completely, that pleases God. And this makes them God's people. So anyone who believes in Jesus is the true "Israel of God."

Other scholars think that Paul was giving special greetings to the Jewish Christians. They do not think that Christians become Jews or the "Israel of God."

See: [People of God](#)

What were Paul's "marks"?

[6:17]

When Paul said that he had "marks of Jesus" on his body (6:17), he wanted readers to think about the scars he possessed from his stoning (see: Acts 14:19), sicknesses (see: 2 Corinthians 12:7-9) and violence (see: Acts 16:22; 2 Corinthians 11:23-29). These were his "marks." When he called them "marks of Jesus," he wanted his readers to think about the marks and scars Jesus got when the Romans beat him and crucified him. In the same way Jesus possessed permanent marks on his body, so did Paul. Paul wanted to say that no matter what happened to him, he followed Jesus.

Some scholars think that the Greek word for "marks" is the same word used for tattoos. Tattoos identified the wearer as a slave, criminal, or prisoner. That is, Paul wanted to say he was a slave to Jesus.

Book: Ephesians

Introduction to Ephesians

Why did Paul write Ephesians?

Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians to give courage and to teach the Christians in and near the city. He taught the Christians about God and his son Jesus. Also, he taught Christians to love each other and to help each other serve and honor God. That is, he taught Christians the things they needed to do to honor other Christians, to honor their families, and to honor those who are not Christians.

Who wrote this letter?

Paul wrote Ephesians (see: 1:1). Paul was in prison in Rome, and he may have written this letter while there. Paul said that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. God made him an apostle (see: 1:1; Galatians 1:1). Because God made him an apostle, Christians obey Paul's words in the same way they obey Jesus' words.

See: [Apostle](#)

To whom did Paul write?

Paul wrote to Christians in and around the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was in Asia Minor, which is now called the country of Turkey. Rome valued this city because of the boats that came in to sell and buy different things in the Roman Empire. The temple of the their god Artemis was built in this city. Many people went to Ephesus to see this temple and to buy and sell different things. Because of this, many people in Ephesus were rich

Paul went to Ephesus on his second trip to preach the gospel in other countries (see: Acts 18:18-21). Some of the Ephesians became Christians. During his third trip to preach the gospel in other countries, Paul lived in Ephesus for three years (see: Acts 19). Because he went to Ephesus twice, Paul knew the people well. This letter was very personal to him because they were Christians and his friends.

Most scholars think that Paul also wanted Christians around the city of Ephesus to have his letter. John, the author of the Book of Revelation, wrote of seven cities and churches in this area of Asia. So Paul wanted people from Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea to read this letter. Because he wrote to many cities, Paul did not write any specific greetings in the same way he did his other letters.

See Map: Ephesus

See: [Temple](#)

What Paul wrote about in Ephesians

Christians are "in Christ" or "in him."

In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul used the words "in Christ" or "in him" or "in the One he loves" eleven different times. Paul wanted Christians to know how Jesus loved them and how close they are to God because of what Jesus did for them.

See: [In Christ](#)

Christian Unity

In 1:10 Paul said that God brings everything together "in Christ." This means God brings all people and things in heaven and on earth together, not just people and things on earth. He brings all things together by Jesus sacrifice on the cross.

Paul said that God planned for all Christians to be united, both the Jews and the Gentiles. During the time of the Old Testament, God worked through the Jewish people. But now that Jesus has been sacrificed for all people, both Jews and Gentiles are brought together for God. This means that God sees all Christian Jews and Gentiles as united and a part of his nation and family. This was God's plan from the creation of

the world (see: 3:6-11). Paul said that God gave gifts to his people to teach other Christians about serving God and others. This unites all Christians in faith.

See: [Gentile](#)

Love

Paul wrote a lot about how Christians are to “love”(ἀγάπη/g0026) in the same way that Jesus loved all people. In the Greek language, there were four words for different types of love. The type of love Paul talked about in this letter is a love that only wants good for those who are loved, even when it is hard to do good to them. Also, Paul wrote about God’s love for all people and his love for Christians (see: 2:4-5). Christians love each other with this type of love. Christians love Christ when they worship him and care for other people with this love (see: 6:24).

See: [In Christ](#)

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote Ephesians because he needed to tell Christians what to know about God and how to live their lives in a way that honors God.

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, Paul told Christians what they need to know about God.

1. First, Paul told Christians about Jesus sacrifice. He told them how God put his anger on Jesus. This sacrifice stops God’s anger on the sin of Christians. That is, those who believe in Jesus are no longer punished for their sins (see:1:7, and 2:1-5). Christ was punished for the sins of Christians. God said that anyone who sinned had to die, physically and spiritually (see rom6:23). Jesus died for Christians so that they did not have to die spiritually. Jesus’ death stopped God’s anger for sin on those who believe in Jesus’ death and resurrection.
2. Second, Paul wrote that Christians are no longer looked at by God in the same way. They were now “in Christ,” instead of looking at a Christian’s sin, God now looks at Jesus. He took away their sin. Paul used the metaphor “sealed” by the Holy Spirit to tell Christians that they can know how God thinks about them. God makes Christians holy and blameless (1:4). Also, God makes Christians his children. This means that Christians can know that they will be in heaven with Jesus when they die (see: 1:5,13-14; 2:6-7).

In the last three chapters, Paul wrote about how Christians are to honor God by how they live.

1. Paul wrote that Christians must love each other. That is, they want only what is good for each other. He wrote that loving others in this way is the best thing for Christians to do for each other. Paul said that Christians whom God had given the gifts of preaching and teaching were to teach other Christians how to better love and serve each other. Also, Paul spoke about how Christians love in this way in their marriage, family life, and in their actions between masters and slaves.
2. Next, Paul told Christians that they needed to fight against Satan’s attacks. Paul used the metaphor of a soldier in 6:10-24 to tell Christians that they need to fight Satan in the the same way a soldier fights his enemies.

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Outline of Ephesians

1. Paul’s greeting to the Ephesians (1:1-2)
 2. Praises to God and prayer for the church (1:3-23)
 3. How God looks at Christians (2:1-3:13)
 4. Prayer for Christians (3:14-21)
 5. How Christians are to live (4:1-6:9)
 6. How Christians are to fight Satan (6:10-20)
 7. Conclusion (6:21-24).
-

Ephesians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to God's holy people in Ephesus, who are faithful in Christ Jesus. ^[1]

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. ⁴ God chose us in him from the foundation of the world, that we may be holy and blameless in his sight in love. ⁵ God predestined us ^[2] for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. ⁶ Our adoption results in the praise of his glorious grace that he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In Jesus Christ we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. ⁸ He multiplied this grace to us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ God made known to us the mystery of his will, according to what pleased him, and which he demonstrated in Christ, ¹⁰ with a view to a plan for the fullness of time, to bring all things together, all things in heaven and on earth, under one head, even Christ. ¹¹ In Christ we were given an inheritance, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything according to the purpose of his will. ¹² God appointed us as heirs so that we, who are the first to hope in Christ, would be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In Christ, you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, you believed in him and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's holy people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped thanking God for you as I mention you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, that you may know the hope to which he has called you and the riches of his glorious inheritance among all God's holy people. ¹⁹ In my prayers I ask that you may know the incomparable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of the strength of his might. ²⁰ This is the same power that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. ²¹ He seated Christ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named. Christ will rule, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. ²² God subjected all things under Christ's feet and gave him to the church as head over all things. ²³ The church is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Footnotes

1:1 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies do not have,

1:5 ^[2]Some interpreters place the last phrase of Ephesians 1:4

Ephesians 1 Commentary

1:1-3

Did 1:1 originally contain the words “in Ephesus”?

[1:1]

See: [Introduction](#)

Why did Paul say that God wanted him to be an apostle?

[1:1]

Paul was an apostle because God wanted him to be an apostle. Perhaps Paul wanted people to know that God specifically chose him to be an apostle. On perhaps, Paul wanted people to know that he spoke for God. Therefore, when a person rejected Paul, they also rejected God. Both of these things may have been true.

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

What did Paul say when he wrote greetings to the church in Ephesus?

[1:2]

Paul greeted the Christians in Ephesus in a way that was similar to other letters. However, it was also different from other letters, because he also prayed that God would give “favor” or “grace”(χάρις/g5485) and peace to the Christians. This greeting is similar to Paul’s other letters (see: Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; Galatians 1:3; Philippians 1:2). Perhaps this reminded the Christians in Ephesus of the favor God showed them. Favor or grace is one of the things that Paul wrote about the most in Ephesians.

See: [Grace](#)

When does Paul’s sentence end?

[1:3]

In Greek, the sentence beginning in 1:3 stops at the end of 1:14. However, it is common for translations to break this sentence into many smaller sentences.

How does Paul speak about blessing?

[1:3]

Paul said that God is “blessed,” that is, God should be worshipped and should be honored. Paul then said that God has blessed Christians. This means that God helps Christians in certain ways. Paul explained that the way God helps to Christians is not easily seen or understood. These blessings are not the same as the things that a person is born able to do.

Many scholars believe that the blessings which cannot easily be seen come from the Holy Spirit. However in 1:3, Paul stated that these blessings come from the place where God lives. Paul also stated that these blessings are “in Christ.” Christians receive these blessings because they are in Jesus.

See: [In Christ](#); [In Christ](#)

1:4

How did God choose Christians?

[1:4]

Some scholars think that God “chose”(ἐκλέγομαι/g1586) each Christian before they were born. God helped them to, or made them, believe in Jesus. Other scholars think that God chose the church, that is, all Christians. They think God always planned to create a group of people who believe in Jesus. Other scholars think that “chose” means that God created all Christians to serve him in a certain way. God chose them before he made the world.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

When did God choose Christians?

[1:4]

Paul explains when God “chose”(ἐκλέγομαι/g1586) Christians. Some scholars think that this was at the same time that God created the world. Other scholars think that God did this before he created the world.

See: John 17:24; 1 Peter 1:20

Why did God choose Christians?

[1:4]

God “chose” or “determined”(ἐκλέγομαι/g1586) that Christians are to try to be “holy”(ἅγιος/g0040) or to act like Jesus. They are also to be “without a fault”(ἄμωμος/g0299), that is, people should not be able to say that they do the wrong things. They are to do the same types of things that Jesus did, but not do the evil things that non-Christians did (see: 1 Peter 1:16). The Holy Spirit helps Christians to live in a way that honors God.

Does the phrase “in love” with the sentence in 1:4 and 1:5?

[1:4]

The phrase “in love” could be part of 1:4 or 1:5. If it is part of the sentence in #v4, it would explain that Christians love God. It would be similar to other uses in Ephesians (see: Ephesians 3:17; 4:15-16; 5:2). If “in love” is a part of 1:5, then it would explain the reason why God “chose”(ἐκλέγομαι/g1586) Christians. Paul also used it in this way in Ephesians (see: Ephesians 2:4-5)

1:5-6

How are Christians adopted?

[1:5]

Part of God’s plan was for Christians to be “adopted” into his family. In Scripture, Christians are spoken about as if they were adopted into God’s family. This is because they receive all the legal rights and blessings that a child would receive from a parent. This adoption can only occur through Jesus (see: Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:4-5).

Advice to translators: Children receive an inheritance from their parents. This means that they get receive their parents’ property and money after they die. In this question, the inheritance is called “legal rights,” that is, legal rights as heirs.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

1:7-14

What are some things that God gives to those whom He has chosen?

[1:7, 1:9, 1:11, 1:13]

God blessed Christians in many different ways.

1. Christians have “redemption”(ἀπολύτρωσις/g0629), that is, Christians are freed from their sin enslaving them. This redemption is only found in Jesus (see: Romans 3:23-25; Colossians 1:13-14).
2. Christians are forgiven of their sins. When God forgives somebody, they are pardoned or permanently released from the punishment because of their sin.
3. Christians know more about God’s plans. Parts of God’s plan have previously been hidden. Paul refers to the things hidden as a “[mystery](#)” (see: Ephesians 3:4-5, 9).
4. Some scholars think that Christians will receive an inheritance from God. This inheritance is that Christians will live with God in heaven (see: Philippians 3:20-21). However, fewer scholars believe 1:11 indicates that Christians are God’s inheritance, that is, Christians belong to God.
5. The Holy Spirit has “sealed” or “secured”(σφραγίζω/g4972) Christians. Some scholars think Jesus protects Christians so that they will live together with God forever. However, other scholars think

Paul taught that Gentiles have become part of the people of God and this is what the Holy Spirit has sealed.

See: [People of God](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Seal](#); [People of God](#)

How will God “bring together” all things in Jesus?

[1:10]

God will “bring together”(ἀνακεφαλαιόω/g0346) all things together in Jesus. This includes all things in “heavenly places” or “the universe”(οὐρανός/g3772) and all things on earth. God’s plan was that Jesus would have first place in everything, that is, for everyone and everything to worship Jesus.

1:15-16

Why did Paul appreciate the Christians in Ephesus?

[1:16]

After talking about the Christians in Ephesus, Paul now talked about why he appreciated them. Some scholars think Paul’s appreciated the things that God did for both him and the Ephesians. This is what Paul talked about in 1:3-14. Other scholars think Paul appreciated the Christians in Ephesus because they believed in Jesus and lived in a way that honored God. They did this by loving one another. They think this is what Paul talked about in 1:13-14.

Advice to translators: To “appreciate” someone is to be thankful for them and to tell them this.

1:17-19

What did Paul ask God to give the Christians in Ephesus?

[1:17]

Paul asked God to give several different things to the Christians in Ephesus.

Paul asked God to give Christians the “spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151) of “wisdom”(σοφία/g4678). This is a certain wisdom that comes from the Holy Spirit or the wisdom to lead a life that honors God.

Paul also asked God to give Christians the Spirit of “understanding”(ἀποκάλυψις/g0602). This meant to learn more about God.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

Why did Paul want the Christians in Ephesus to know?

[1:19]

Paul wanted the Christians in Ephesus to know something they did not know before.

1. Paul wanted these Christians to know that they would get to live together with God in heaven forever. Therefore, Christians should be confident about this. (see: 1 Peter 1:3-5; Romans 5:1-2)
2. Paul wanted these Christians to know that they have received a great inheritance from God, that is, God gave them certain gifts.
3. Paul wanted these Christians to know that God is very powerful. God uses his power to help Christians.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

1:20-23

Why is Jesus sitting next to God?

[1:20]

The permission God gives to Jesus to rule is spoken of as if it were his right hand. God gave Jesus the permission to rule with him. Paul talked about God ruling on his throne in heaven while sitting down. Paul wanted to say that Jesus rules alongside of or with God. The ruler was expected to sit on a throne when he made decrees, that is, when he gives rules for others to follow.

Why are Christians to trust that God is able to do these things?

[1:21]

Christians are to trust that God is able to do these things because:

1. God had the power to bring Jesus back to life after Jesus died.
2. God had the power to give Jesus permission to rule alongside of him.
3. God made Jesus greater than many different things and people (see: 1:20). Paul explained that God made Jesus greater than anything or anyone with the power or the permission to rule others. He has more power than any other person in heaven or on earth. (see: Philippians 2:9-11)
4. God made Jesus the leader of the entire church and Jesus has the power to keep it going and to help it to grow.
5. God made Jesus leader over everything. When something is “put under”(ὑποτάσσω/g5293) another person’s feet, the person controlled or ruled over that thing.

See: [Church](#)

How is Jesus’ name greater than any other name?

[1:21]

In the ancient Near East, a person’s “name” often symbolized who that person was. In 1:21, Jesus’ name refers to Jesus himself. Paul said that Jesus is much greater than every other person. This is true both now and in the future.

Jesus is also greater because all things have been “[put under](#)” his feet.” This means that permission to rule everything has been given to Jesus (see: 1 Corinthians 15:27; 1 Peter 3:22).

Why is the church called Jesus’ body?

[1:23]

In Scripture, all Christians are called the church. The church is spoken about as if it were Jesus’ body. This is because the church is a single group working together to serve a single purpose. This purpose of to serve God. Jesus is the “head” of this body because he leads it.

Jesus “filled” the church, that is, he gave the church many blessings.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:12-17; Colossians 1:18

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Body of Christ](#)

Chapter 2

¹ And as for you, you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked, according to the ways of this world. You were living according to the ruler of the authorities of the air, the spirit that is working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Once we all lived among these people, fulfilling the evil desires of our flesh, and carrying out the desires of the flesh and of the mind. We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of humanity. ⁴ But God is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us. ⁵ While we were dead in trespasses, he made us alive together in Christ—by grace you have been saved. ⁶ God raised us up together with Christ, and God made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show to us the immeasurably great riches of his grace expressed in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this did not come from you, it is the gift of God, ⁹ not from works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good deeds that God planned long ago for us, so that we would walk in them.

¹¹ Therefore remember that once you were Gentiles in the flesh. You are called "uncircumcision" by what is called the "circumcision" in the flesh made by human hands. ¹² For at that time you were separated from Christ, foreigners to citizenship in Israel, strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away from God have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, because he made us both one. By his flesh he broke down the dividing wall of hostility. ¹⁵ He set aside the law with its commands and ordinances so that he might create in himself one new man out of two, so making peace. ¹⁶ Christ reconciles both peoples into one body to God through the cross, putting to death the hostility. ¹⁷ Jesus came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Jesus we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then, now you Gentiles are no longer foreigners and strangers. Rather you are fellow citizens with God's holy people and members of the household of God. ²⁰ You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building fits together and grows as a holy temple in the Lord. ²² It is in him that you also are being built together as a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2

2:1-3

How is a non-Christian dead?

[2:1]

Paul spoke about non-Christians as if they were dead. They are "dead" (νεκρός/g3498) because of their sins. Non-Christians are spoken about as if they are dead because they are separated from God and because they have no hope. Dying is a type of separation. It separates the soul from the body. When a non-Christian dies, his soul is separated from God forever (see: Ephesians 4:18). Non-Christians were also considered to be without hope (2:12), that is, they would not be able to live together with God in heaven. Non-Christians are also considered dead because they inherited sin from their fathers, going all the way back to Adam and sin leads to death (see: Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23).

See: [Soul](#); [Soul](#)

How do non-Christians live?

[2:2]

Paul talked about the way that non-Christians generally live. While Paul spoke about non-Christians in general, all non-Christians live in a way that does not honor God. They may dishonor very much or very little.

1. Non-Christians live in the same way that the “world” lives. In Scripture, this is a common metaphor. All sinful people are called the “world.” These people do not live in a way that honors God. This is because the rules of the world oppose all things that honor God (see: John 15:18-19; Colossians 2:8).
2. Non-Christians live in the way Satan wants them to live. In #v2, Satan is described as a ruler of the earth.
3. Paul described three different heavens. In ancient Israel, this was a common Jewish way of describing the universe. There are three heavens: the earth, the universe, and the place where God lives. In 2:2, Paul uses the word “air” as a metaphor for the first heaven, which is the whole earth.
4. Some scholars believe that Satan currently lives in a part of heaven, the place where God lives. This is because these scholars do not think that he has been removed from heaven yet (see: Revelation 12:7-9). In this heaven, he controls some of the angels, who are also called demons.
5. Non-Christians do the things that their “physical body” or “flesh”(σάρξ/g4561) wants to do. In Scripture, the flesh is a metaphor that means that non-Christians sin want to do things that do not honor God (see: Galatians 5:19-21).
6. Non-Christians do the things that their “mind” or “thoughts”(διάνοια/g1271) desires. In Scripture, the mind is a metaphor that means that non-Christians sin by following their sinful thoughts. Yet, they may believe that they are doing a good thing.
7. Non-Christians do not honor God with their actions. They do not need help to do this. This is normal for them.

See: [World](#); [Demon](#); [World](#)

Why is Satan described as a prince?

[2:2]

God is the ruler over everything. In Scripture, God is the king who rules all kings. Therefore, God is the ruler of the earth. However, Scripture also calls Satan the ruler of the earth. Since God is still ruler over Satan, Satan is called a “prince.” A prince is a person who rules under a king.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How are non-Christians “children of wrath”?

[2:3]

Non-Christians are called children of “wrath” or “God’s anger”(ὀργή/g3709). After becoming a Christian, a person becomes a child of God (see: 1 John 2:29). God created all people, but not all people are his children. Before believing in Jesus, non-Christians are children of the devil (see: 1 John 3:10). God will punish these evil people. God will punish their sin with of his wrath.

2:4-6

Why did God do great things for people who did not honor him?

[2:4]

God did great things for people who did not honor him. This is because God is kind to all people and does not always punish them, even when they deserve to be punished. He does this because he loves everyone, even when they do not honor him.

Fewer scholars think that God only loves non-Christians who will become Christians. They think God hates sinners (see: Psalm 5:5) and this type of kindness is only for those who become Christians.

How does God make Christians alive?

[2:5]

Paul spoke about Christians as if they are alive in a certain way. This is because Paul talked about non-Christians as if they are dead. After believing in Jesus, Christians become “alive.” Christians are now able to live in a new way, a way that honors God. They are no longer controlled by their desire to sin, that is, they do not have to do the evil things they want to do.

In 2:6, Paul also used the metaphor of waking up from sleeping. When God makes a Christian “alive,” it is as if they have woken up from sleep. This was also a way to describe someone who had risen or come back to life after they died.

See: Colossians 2:13

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Why are Christians seated with Jesus in heaven?

[2:6]

Christians are seated with Jesus because believers are “in Jesus.” While Christians are not physically with Jesus at this time, heaven is their new “home” (see: Philippians 3:20). This means that they are to act as if they are from heaven, instead of the earth, which Paul said is evil. Some scholars think this refers to a future time when Christians will rule alongside of Jesus (see: 2 Timothy 2:11; Revelation 3:21). Other scholars think that Christians share in the victory over sin and Satan in their life (see: Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

See: [In Christ](#)

2:7

What will God do in the future?

[2:7]

In the end, God’s plan is for Christians to honor him. It will display his favor and kindness, which is so great, it cannot be measured. In Scripture, everything serves God’s plan, which will one day reach its greatest or highest point. At its greatest point, God’s plan will be completed.

2:8-9

Does God give Christians what they deserve?

[2:8]

Paul said that God does not give Christians what they deserve. He gives them better than they deserve. This is because they believed in Jesus. They deserved punishment, but they get to live together with God forever. They cannot do anything to earn this. However, people need to believe in Jesus in order to receive this gift from God.

See: Romans 11:6; 2 Timothy; Titus 3:5

What is the gift of God?

[2:8]

Some scholars think that God delivering people from the punishment that came as a result of their sin is a gift from God. Other scholars think God’s gift is making people believe in Jesus. They believe this because they also think that non-Christians are unable to believe in Jesus, unless God makes them believe in Jesus. 2:10

Why does God save Christians?

[2:10]

Christians are God's "works," that is, God made all people. However, he also remakes all Christians or makes all Christians new when they believe in Jesus. They are now able to honor God in the way that they live. God is the one who does this. The reason that God has done this is so that Christians can do things that honor God.

Christians are not able to be saved by honoring God. Instead, it is because God has saved Christians that they are then able to live in a way that honors God. However, God must first save Christians.

There are specific things that Christians will do in their life that honor God. God knows what these specific things are, even before a Christian does them. Elsewhere, Scripture speaks about these actions as if God did them (see: Philippians 2:13). This is because God helps the Christian to live in a way that honors him.

Advice to translators: In this passage, "save" means to not be punished for their sins. When God saves a Christian, they will live together with God in heaven forever. It does not mean that they are save from some physical danger.

See: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15

See: [Walk](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Walk](#)

2:11-12**How were the Gentiles separated from God?**

[2:12]

Paul reminded the Gentiles that they used to be separated from God. They were not part of the covenant God made with Abraham. Israel obeyed this covenant by circumcising their male children when they were 8 years old (see: Genesis 17:9-11).

Because they were not part of this, they were not part of the "people of God." The Gentiles were called "uncircumcised." However, this meant more than just "not circumcised." It was a way to insult the Gentiles. The Jews hated the Gentiles because they did not honor God.

Paul talked about the different ways the Gentiles were separated from God. He told them to remember these things about how they used to be separated from God:

1. They did not have anyone to deliver them from difficult circumstances. Perhaps God would not help them.
2. They were not a part of the nation of Israel, God's chosen people.
3. They were not able to inherit the promises God gave to Israel. God called them "strangers" or "foreigners" to God's covenants. This is because they did not get to participate in these covenants or receive the blessings of these covenants.
4. They did not have any hope. Some scholars think they did not have hope that God would help them. Other scholars think that they did not have any hope that their future would be better.
5. They did not know about the God of Israel.
6. They were far away from God. Paul used this metaphor to explain that the Gentiles were not honoring God in anything that they did. Before they could honor God, they first needed to learn about God and learn about God could be honored. Only then could they try to honor God.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [People of God](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

2:13**How have things changed for Gentiles?**

[2:13]

After Jesus' death, things between the Gentiles and the God of Israel have changed. Now, God brought the Gentiles, who became Christians, close to him. Paul used this metaphor to explain that the Gentiles could

now honor God. Some scholars think that this metaphor was originally used when a Gentile began to obey the Law of Moses. However, Paul used it in a different way because the Jews and Gentiles both became Christians.

See: Isaiah 57:19; Acts 2:39; 22:21

2:14-16

Are Jews and Gentiles equal in the church?

[2:14]

In the Church, Jews and Gentiles were joined together into one group. Because of this, they are considered equal. Before the church began, the Gentiles needed to follow the Jewish religion. They were evil and did not honor God. When Paul wrote, calling someone a Gentile was even considered an insult. Therefore, the Jews believed that they were far better than the Gentiles. In the church, being a Jew is not better than being a Gentile.

See: [Church](#)

What was the wall between the Jews and Gentiles?

[2:14]

Paul spoke about the Jews and Gentiles being separated as if it were a wall between them. The Jews and the Gentiles hated each other. This “wall” was a type of barrier between them. Some scholars think that the wall reminded people of the wall that physically separated the Jews and Gentiles in temple. Other scholars think that the wall reminded people of the curtain in the temple that separated the people from God. Still other scholars think that the wall reminded the people that they did not need to obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How did Paul talk about peace in this passage?

[2:15]

Paul uses the word “peace” several times in this passage. Jesus is peace, that is, he brings peace. He brings peace to the Jews and the Gentiles. Before, they hated each other. Jesus made them into one new group. This new group is spoken about as if it were a man because a man cannot be separated into two different people.

2:17-18

To whom did God give peace?

[2:17]

In Israel, it was common to talk about the Jews as if they were close to God. It was also common to talk about the Gentiles as if they were far from God (see: 2:13). God gave made it possible for both Jews and Gentiles to be at peace with him.

In 2:17, God gave peace to those believe in Jesus. In Scripture, non-Christians are described as being at war with God (see: Romans 8:7). By believing in Jesus, they no longer fight against God.

Can Christians directly approach God?

[2:18]

Both Jews and Gentiles have been given the ability to speak to God without the need for another person who speaks to God for them. In Judaism, a person could not speak to God without a priest. The priest was the only person who could speak to God. The Gentiles needed the Jews, and the Jewish priests, in order to talk to God. After Jesus died, this changed. The curtain in the temple that separated God from man was

torn (see: Matthew 27:51). Now, Jesus approaches God for people. No one else is needed for both the Jews and the Gentiles.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

2:19-22

How did Paul describe Christians?

[2:19]

Paul described Christians in different ways in this passage.

1. They are not “strangers” or “outsiders” and “aliens” or “foreigners.” These two words mean almost the same thing. Both of these words use the same metaphor of being a foreigner or outsider. God is not a foreigner to Christians. They now know about God. In addition to this, Christians are visitors or foreigners on the earth (see: Philippians 3:20). When they die, Christians will go to their new home in heaven.
2. They are “fellow citizens” or “citizens of the same nation.” This is the opposite of being strangers and aliens. Paul continued his metaphor and said that all Christians are from the same nation or tribe.
3. They are part of God’s family. This is a common metaphor in Scripture. All Christians are called children of God. In this passage, Paul indicated that the Christians join a group of all those who trust in God. All of these people are united as part of God’s family.

See: [Children of God](#)

How does the church resemble a building?

[2:20, 2:21, 2:22]

Paul spoke about the church as if it were building. This building was a temple.

1. The apostles served as the foundation of the building. They are the base upon which everything else is built or are themselves the base. They helped the church to grow.

Some scholars think that Paul walk talking about the apostles and prophets who lived when he lived. These were titles given to certain people. Everything that came after these people built upon the things they had done.

Other scholars think that the prophets could have been the prophets in Israel. They think that Paul wanted to remind people that the church came out of the Jewish religion.

Other scholars think that the church continues to have people who serve God as apostles and prophets. The apostles are people who God sends out to serve him. The prophets are people who God sends out to speak for him. 2. Jesus is the “cornerstone.” When making a building, the cornerstone is the stone that is the most essential part of the building and it is the first stone put in place. This stone guides every other part of the building so that it is the right place. This is what Jesus does for the church. He is also the one who holds the whole building together and helps it to grow. 3. The church is a temple. The church is made of Christians who try to honor God in the way that they live. The temple was a place where God was worshipped. Now, the church is where God is worshipped. He is worshipped when Christians live in a way that honors him (see: Romans 12:1). 4. The church is where the Holy Spirit lives.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophet](#); [Temple](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 3

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— ² I assume that you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God that was given to me for you. ³ The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read about this, you will be able to understand my insight into this mystery about Christ. ⁵ In other generations this mystery was not made known to the sons of men. But now it has been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This hidden truth is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and they share the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ For I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given to me through the working of his power. ⁸ To me—although I am the least of all God's holy people—this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone the plan—the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ This plan was made known through the church so the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places would come to know the many-sided nature of the wisdom of God. ¹¹ This happened according to the eternal plan that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² For in Christ we have boldness and access with confidence because of our faith in him. ¹³ Therefore I ask you not to be discouraged because of my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

¹⁴ For this reason I bend my knees to the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. ¹⁶ I pray that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit, who is in your inner person. ¹⁷ I pray that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and that you may be rooted and founded in his love, ¹⁸ in order that you might be able to understand, along with all God's holy people, what is the width, the length, the height, and the depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ, which goes beyond knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far beyond all that we ask or think, according to his power that works in us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3

3:1-6

Why was Paul in jail?

[3:1]

Paul was in jail because he was a Christian. He did not do anything evil. The Romans believed that their gods brought them favor, made their empire very great, and gave them peace with other nations. When someone rejected their gods, or worshipped another god, he rejected the gods the Romans believe in, who helped their nation. Because of this, they rebelled against the gods and the nation. This caused the Romans to say that Christians were trying to cause problems for their nation. Perhaps this was why Paul was imprisoned.

What is the “mystery of Jesus”?

[3:3]

The “mystery of Jesus” was a certain part of God’s plan. People did not know about this part of God’s plan before Jesus told them about it. After Jesus came to the earth, he talked much about this because God wanted him to tell people more about God’s plans. Before, God hid this “mystery.” Now, Jesus has talked about this mystery and explained it to people.

Before Jesus came to the earth, people did not believe that the messiah would come to the earth to die for the sins of mankind. However, the Old Testament said that this would happen (see: Isaiah 53). They also did not believe that the Gentiles would be joined together with the Jews. However, Jesus said that this happened. They also did not believe that God would promise certain things to the Gentiles or that God would give them favor. Jesus said that this now happens.

Advice to translators: Translate “mystery” as your local translation does.

See: Galatians 1:11-12; Colossians 1:24-27

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How was the “mystery” revealed by God?

[3:5]

God did not tell the prophets who lived during the Old Testament times everything about this “mystery.” Now in the New Testament times, God told the apostles and prophets to tell people more about this mystery. This was always part of God’s plan (see: 3:11).

See: 2:19-22

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Prophet](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

3:7

How did God make Paul someone who would teach others about the gospel?

[3:7]

God made Paul a “minister of” or “someone who would teach others about”(διάκονος/g1249) the gospel. This is how he served God. Paul wanted people to know that it was God’s choice to do this and not his own choice. Paul said that God gave him a gift of favor (see:3:2). Paul also said that God did this by the “working of his power” (see: 1 Corinthians 15:10).

3:8-10

Why did God want Paul to serve him?

[3:8]

Paul told the Christians in Ephesus that God had three reasons why he wanted Paul to serve him.

1. God wanted Paul to “preach” or “proclaim things about God”(εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) to the Gentiles. Part of Paul’s message was to tell the Gentile Christians about the “unfathomable riches” found in Jesus (see: Romans 11:33). Some scholars think that the word “unfathomable” means that Christians cannot know how great God is. Other scholars think that Paul taught about something that came from God and it could not be known without God’s help.
2. God wanted Paul to serve him in order to “shed light” on how God’s previously “hidden purpose”(μυστήριον/g3466) started to happen, that is, God wanted Paul to explain to people what God wanted them to know after the church began. This is also called a “mystery,” which hidden from the beginning of the world, and only God knew it. Perhaps Paul was thinking about the words he said in 1:4.
3. God wanted Paul to serve him by telling people about God’s wisdom. He spoke about God’s wisdom as if it were an object with many different sides, that is, God’s wisdom is complex and cannot be fully understood by man. God wanted the rulers or leaders in the world to know about his wisdom and he wanted Paul to tell them about it. God also wanted the “authorities” or “those who rule”(ἐξουσία/g1849) in the “heavenly places”(ἐπουράνιος/g2032) to do this.

See: [In Christ](#); [Church](#); [In Christ](#)

Advice to translators: Translate “authorities in heavenly places” as your local translation does. A “being” is a living creature that is not a human being.

Who were the authorities in the heavenly places?

[3:10]

Scholars think that the “authorities or those who rule”(ἐξουσία/g1849) were good and evil beings. These beings did not live in this world, but somewhere in a “heavenly place”(ἐπουράνιος/g2032).

3:11-12

What did Jesus give to Christians?

[3:12]

Christians have many things because of Jesus:

1. Christians have “boldness, confidence, no fear, or no need to hide things from God”(g3954). Christians do not need to fear when they approach God. Christians can speak to God without needing to hide anything from God (John 7:26; 11:14).
2. Christians have “confident access to, confidence in, or trust in”(προσαγωγή/g4318) God (see: Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-22). Christians can go to God without worrying that he will punish them. This is because God said that they can come to him. Christians should trust the things that God says.

3:13

What did Paul want for the Christians in Ephesus?

[3:13]

Paul wanted the Christians in Ephesus not to “lose heart”(ἐγκακέω/g1573), that is, Paul did not want them to struggle because of his “tribulations, trials, or difficult circumstances”(θλίψις/g2347). He had difficult circumstances for them (see: 3:1; Philippians 2:17). Instead, Paul wanted them to think about all of the things that he just said and all of the great things Jesus gave to them.

Paul also explained to them that he was “honored” to go through these difficult circumstances. This is because he was able to help them.

3:14-15

How did Paul pray?

[3:14]

Paul continues the prayer that he had started in 3:1. He also wanted people to think about what he said in 2:11-22.

Paul said, “I bend my knees to the Father.” Paul wanted to say that God was in control over everything in his life. He also wanted people to know that he was friends with God.

See: Philippians 2:10-11; Isaiah 45:23

Who did Paul pray for?

[3:14, 3:15]

Paul prayer for people all over the world. God created people and God cares for them. Perhaps Paul wanted people to think about how God loves both the Jews and the Gentiles and how God now saves both of them.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

3:16-19

How did Paul ask God for something?

[3:16]

Paul asked God for something because he knew what God is like or how powerful God is. He described God as if God were rich, wealthy, too rich to be counted, perhaps he has much power. Or perhaps he is just very great in many different ways. He is so great, that it cannot be measured or counted

Paul asked God to give power to the Christians in Ephesus. What type of power is this?

[3:16]

Paul wanted God to “strengthen or make strong” the Christians with God’s power. This strength was to be given to the believers through the Holy Spirit. In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is the one who gives Christians power (see: Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). Paul wanted Christians to have or use God’s power in the “inner person” (see: Romans 7:22; 2 Corinthians 4:16).

Advice to translators: Each culture will have a way to speak about the inner person. In English, the “heart” is used to describe what happens inside of a person, that is their thoughts.

See: [Inner Person](#)

How does God make Christians strong?

[3:16]

Paul speaks about Christians growing and becoming strong as if they were a tree growing deep roots. They are “grounded”(θεμελιόω/g2311) in love, that is, they often love other people and God. They have done this for a long time. This type of love only comes from God.

Some scholars think that Christians are to get better at loving other people and loving God in every possible way. This is what Paul wanted to say when he talked about height, width, and depth. Other scholars think that Paul wanted to say that Christians are to know about God’s power. Still other scholars think that Paul wanted to say that Christians needed to know more and more about how much Jesus loves people.

How are Christians to be filled with God?

[3:19]

Paul often spoke about the Holy Spirit being in Christians, and being “filled” with the Holy Spirit when they obey God. Perhaps here, Paul wanted the Christians to be completely full of the Holy Spirit, that is, completely obedient to God. He wanted the Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

3:20-21

How did Paul end his prayer?

[3:20, 3:21]

When Paul said, “Now to Him...,” he is praising God, that is, Paul honored God. He knows that God has done something, he has answered Paul’s prayer. Paul honored God when he said that God is able to or can do more than a Christian could ask him to do. Perhaps Paul said that God can do more than a Christian can even think. While some may think that Christians can think about anything, God can actually do more things than people can even think about. The phrase, “far beyond” means that God can do anything.

Because of this, God deserves to be honored by “everyone” or “all generations”(γενεά/g1074). This was true then, and it is true now, and it will always be true.

Chapter 4

¹ I, therefore, as the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk worthily of the calling by which you were called. ² I urge you to live with great humility and gentleness and patience, bearing with one another in love. ³ Do your best to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling. ⁵ And there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ and one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ To each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. ⁸ It is as scripture says:

"When he ascended on high,
he led the captives into captivity,
and he gave gifts to the people."

⁹ What is the meaning of "he ascended," except that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the same person who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. ¹¹ Christ gave some to be apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers ¹² to equip God's holy people for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, so that we become mature and reach the measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Christ builds us up so that we should no longer be children who are tossed back and forth by the waves, carried away by every wind of doctrine and by the trickery of people in their deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ Christ builds the whole body, and it is joined and held together by every supporting ligament, and when each part works together, that makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

¹⁷ Therefore, I say and insist on this in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts. ¹⁹ They have become shameless and have committed themselves to sensuality, and they practice every kind of uncleanness with greed. ²⁰ But that is not how you learned about Christ. ²¹ I assume that you have heard about him, and that you were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus. ²² You were taught to put off what belongs to your former manner of life, to put off the old man. It is the old man that is corrupt because of its deceitful desires. ²³ You were taught to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new man that is created in the image of God—in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore, get rid of lies, and let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, because we are members of one another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger. ²⁷ Do not give an opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ The one who had been stealing must steal no longer. Instead, he must labor, working at what is good with his hands, so that he may have something to share with those who are in need. ²⁹ Do not let any harmful talk come out of your mouth. Use only words that are good for the edification of those who need it, so that your words give grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, for it is by him that you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Put away all bitterness, rage, anger, quarreling, and insults, along with every kind of evil. ³² Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4

4:1-3

How does Paul want Christians to live?

[4:1, 4:2, 4:3]

Paul really wanted all Christians to live in a way that honored God. In Ancient Near East, people expected that a person would live in a way that would bring honor to their leader or someone they followed. Paul wanted to say that when Christians do the right things, they honor God. When a person believes in Jesus, God becomes his leader, so he needs to live the way Paul wrote about. (see: 1:4, 18; Philippians 1:27).

In order to do this, Christians must do these things:

1. They should be humble. A Christian should not think that they are greater than they are. When someone is humble, they are not impressed when other people think that they are great or tell them that they are great. They do not have too much pride.
2. They should be gentle or mild. This does not mean that a Christian is weak. Instead, a Christian controls the way he does something. He does not do things because of some bad feeling. He is not cruel or severe to others.
3. They should be patient. Christians are to wait and expect God to do something because he said he will do it.
4. They should endure. A Christian must keep doing the right things even if bad things are happening to them. They do this because they love other Christians and want to serve them.

Paul wanted Christians to do everything that they could to remain united, joined together, one group in the Spirit. While the Spirit joins all Christians together into one group, Christians need to work to remain friends with other Christians.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

4:4-6

How else did Paul speak about Christians being joined together in this passage?

[4:4, 4:5, 4:6]

In these verses, Paul used the word “one” many times. He wanted all Christians to work together to be friends. This is called “unity.”

Paul often wrote about all Christians as if they were part of one “body.” He wrote that all Christians as a group form “one” body, not many bodies. He also used this word to describe how all Christians should have the same purpose and trust in God, even though they are all different as people.

Paul wrote that there is one “spirit” (see: 2:18). This is the Spirit of God, who gathers all Christians into the one body. The Holy Spirit and God the Father work together perfectly. In the same way, Christians are to work together.

Paul said the body of believers have one “hope” (ἐλπίς/g1680) that is, Christians are completely certain that God will do good things He has promised (see: 1:11-12; 1 John 3:2-3; Romans 15:4; Hebrews 10:23; 1 Peter 1:13).

Next, Paul said that Christians are joined together because there is one “Lord” or “master” (κύριος/g2692), Jesus. He is also the ruler over all Christians (see 1:22-23). All Christians serve the same master.

When Paul wrote about one “faith”, he wanted Christians to know that all Christians believe the same thing, Jesus.

Paul also wrote about one baptism. However, Paul did not mean the physical act of water baptism. Paul used the word baptism as a metaphor to mean that in some way God sees the believer as if they had been buried with Christ and also raised to a new life with Jesus. This means that God has given believers an ability to live in a way that pleases God. (see: Romans 6:3-11; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12).

Finally, Paul wrote that there is one God and Father of everyone. Paul used the word “above” to talk about God's great power and the permission he has to rule everything. Paul then said that God works through everyone. Paul wanted his readers to think about how God accomplishes part of His purposes because believers willingly obey him (see: 2:10). Paul said that God is in everyone. He meant that the Holy Spirit works in all believers (see: John 14:16-17; 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Body of Christ](#)

4:7-10

How does Jesus help all believers to serve God?

[4:7]

Paul wrote that God gives every believer favor or a gift in the amount that Jesus chooses. Jesus gives the gift and he decides how much of the gift each believer will receive (see: Romans 12:3-6). Paul wants his readers to know that God has given each believer a gift so they can perform a serve God in a special way (see: Romans 12:6-8).

What did Paul mean when he wrote about Jesus coming down and going up?

[4:9]

Paul wrote that Jesus “came down” and also “went up.” In Scripture, heaven is often described as being “up.” When Jesus came from heaven, he went “down” to earth. Then, Jesus went back “up” to heaven. Some scholars think that Paul was speaking about Jesus coming down when he was born. Other scholars think that Paul was speaking about Jesus coming down at Pentecost. At Pentecost, the Spirit of God came “down” upon people and gave them certain gifts (see: Acts 2:1-6).

Paul further wrote that Jesus went “up” so that He might fill all things, that is, when Jesus went up, God gave him permission to rule over the entire world. Therefore, he had the right to give gifts just as he wanted.

See: [Pentecost](#)

4:11

What special gifts does Jesus give for His body, all believers?

[4:11]

In this verse, Paul wrote that Jesus gave Christians different gifts to serve him and the church (see: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-31). Jesus gives these gifts to “build up” other Christians, that is, to serve other Christians and help them to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

4:12-13

Why does God give these particular gifts?

[4:12]

Paul wrote that God calls all Christians to use their gifts people to serve him until all believers become “mature or grown” (τέλειος/g5046). Paul did not want to talk about growing in size. Instead, he wanted to say that Christians grow to become more like Jesus in the way they live.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

4:14-16

What is the result that Paul wanted readers to think about?

[4:15]

Paul often spoken about people who were not “mature” or “grown”(τέλειος/g5046) as if they were young children. In 4:14, Paul talked about immature believers using the metaphor of a boat. When a boat is being sailed by a person who does not know how to control it, the boat will be moved by the waves and the wind. It will go places that the people in it do not want to go. In the same way, when someone is not mature, they go the wrong places. Perhaps Paul wanted to say that a believer who is not mature can be tricked into accepting the false things that other people teach (see: 5:6-13).

Paul then wrote about how “mature” Christians should act. He wrote about “speaking the truth”(ἀληθεύω/g0226) with love (see: Galatians 4:16). When believers become more mature, they talk and live more like Jesus lived. They help other people to know about the love of Jesus. Like he had written earlier in Ephesians, Paul once again wrote that Christ is the head, meaning where the body is guided from (see: 1:22-23).

Paul then wrote that in Christ the “whole body,” that is, all Christians are “joined”(συναρμολογέω/g4883) and “held together”(συμβιβάζω/g4822) (see: 2:19-22). God brought together all people who believe in Jesus, whether they are Jews or Gentiles (see: 2:13-22). All Christians are joined together because they each serve God and other Christians in a special way.

Advice to translators: Someone who is a “mature” Christian is a Christian who lives in a way that honors God. A Christian who is not mature is “immature.”

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

4:17-19

How did Paul describe the way unbelievers act?

[4:17, 4:18, 4:19]

In 4:1-3, Paul wrote that Christians should live in a way that honors God. In these verses, he wrote that Christians must stop living in the way Gentiles lived. Paul wrote about how unbelieving Gentiles behave in several ways.

1. Unbelievers do not know much about God. This means they cannot do things to serve God or do things that will please God (see: Romans 1:21-23).
2. The unbeliever's hearts are in a spiritual and moral darkness, that is, they do not understand things about God because they cannot see him and they do not understand how to live in a way that honors God. Most scholars think that this darkening of their minds keeps them from being able to know about God.
3. The unbeliever's life is separated from God because of the unbeliever's ignorance. However, they do not just lack information about God. They reject God. Paul spoke about this as if their hearts were becoming hard (see: Romans 1:18-23).
4. Finally, Paul talked about the unbeliever losing all feeling of God and what is right, that is, they choose to make themselves feel good instead of trying to please God. They want to do this. They want to do wrong things and to do evil things.

Advice to translators: Unbelievers are people who do not believe in Jesus, or who reject Jesus.

See: [Gentile](#)

4:20-21

How do Christians learn more about Jesus?

[4:20]

Paul wrote about Christians understanding or learning more about Jesus in a way that is much better than how unbelievers can think or know anything. In the New Testament, only Paul wrote about “learning Jesus” and he only wrote about it here in 4:20. Christians are to know about Jesus in the way you know another person. When a Christian knows Jesus in this way, he wants to live in a way that pleases Jesus.

4:22-24

What did Paul mean when he wrote about the old self and the new self?

[4:22, 4:23, 4:24]

Paul wrote about how believers “learn more about Jesus” using the metaphor of changing clothes. He wrote about the way that Christians used to live as if it were putting off or taking off a piece of clothing called the “old self.” He also wrote about the way Christians are now to live as if they were “putting on”(ἐνδύω/g1746) a new piece of clothing called the “new self.”

Paul also told Christians to be “renewed”(ἀνανεόω/g0365) in the way they think, that is, to think about how they are to live in a new way. Paul wanted them to honor God, not to live how they used to live before they believed in Jesus.

See: [Old and New Self](#)

4:25**What change did Paul write that believers should make in how they talk?**

[4:25]

Paul wrote that Christians need to change the way they talk to other people. They are to “putting on” the new self and not tell lies or speak falsely in any way. In their old self, Christians used to follow Satan, who is the father of lies (see: John 8:44). However, the Holy Spirit gives Christians the power to follow the Holy Spirit instead of Satan.

See: [Old and New Self](#)

4:26-27**What did Paul write to the believers about anger?**

[4:26]

Paul quoted from Psalm 4:4 and wrote that in the believer, anger should be not sin. Although a Christian may get angry, he should make sure he does not commit any sin because of that anger.

Paul also wrote that believers must be at peace with other people, even after they are angry with them. Paul wanted to say that when it can hurt a Christian to remain angry with someone.

4:28-30**How are believers taught to speak to one another?**

[4:29]

Paul already wrote that Christians should not lie (see: 4:25). Now in these verses, he wrote more strongly that Christians are not to say any “unwholesome” or “corrupt”(σαπρός/g4550) words or ideas.

Christians should speak in a way that “builds up” other people. When a believer speaks like this, they bless or give a great gift to the people who hear them.

Advice to translators: Some cultures use the metaphor of a wall to talk about the way people speak to one another. The things people say can “build up” a person. They can also “tear down” a person.

How do Christians grieve the Holy Spirit?

[4:30]

Paul wrote that believers must not “grieve”(λυπέω/g3076) the Holy Spirit of God. One way they do this is to speak in a way that was wrong or evil (see: Isaiah 63:10; Acts 5:1-10).

4:31-32**What changes did Paul write that a believer needs in his life?**

[4:31, 4:32]

Paul concludes the things that Paul was talking about. Paul wanted Christians to change the way they live. God gave the Holy Spirit to Christians to help them to do this.

Some changes are things the believer needs to put away. That is, a person must let the Holy Spirit remove these things from them. Paul started with the inner attitudes of the believer and ended with his outward actions. The bad things that need to be removed are:

1. “Bitterness”(πικρία/g4088)- This means any attitude of resentment (see: Hebrews 12:14-15).
2. “Anger”(ὀργή/g3709) and “fierce-anger”(θυμός/g2372)- Some scholars think that these two words mean two different things. They think fierce-anger as a sudden, violent action, but anger is inside a

person, they think in a certain way. Other scholars think that the two words mean the same thing, one type of anger causes the other type of anger.

3. All “shouting”(κραυγή/g2906) and “abusive speech”(βλασφημία/g0988). Shouting is when a person talks in a way that is very loud. Abusive speech is an evil way of speaking. It includes insults, gossip, lying, and cursing.
4. “Hatred”(κακία/g2549). This is all types of evil actions that toward other people. Some scholars think that all of the things that Paul talked about are all ways a person can show that they hate other people.

However, Paul also talked about how a Christian can live in a way that honors God and be at peace with one another.

1. With “kindness”(χρηστός/g5543)- Kindness means being genuine, pleasant and nice to other people. This is one of the “fruit of the Spirit” (see: Galatians 5:22). Paul also wrote about the kindness God showed to believers (see: 2:7).
2. “Tender-hearted” or “compassionate”(εὐσπλαγχνος/g2155)- Christians to care for other people in both how they think and in the things that they do (see: Colossians 3:12). Jesus did this for Christians (see: Matthew 9:36).
3. “Forgiveness”(χαρίζομαι/g5483). Christians should forgive one another because God forgave them (see: 1:7-12; 2:4-10).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as also Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But sexual immorality or any kind of uncleanness or of greed must not even be named among you, for these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness, no foolish talk, and no crude jokes—all of which are improper. Instead there should be thanksgiving. ⁵ For you know and are certain that no sexually immoral, impure, or greedy person—that is, an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore, do not join in with them. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ and test and approve what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Do not associate with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² For it is disgraceful even to mention the things they do in secret. ¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible. ¹⁴ For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Awake, you sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

¹⁵ Look carefully how you walk—not as unwise but as wise. ¹⁶ Redeem the time because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that leads to reckless behavior. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, ²⁰ always giving thanks for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father, ²¹ being subject to one another in reverence for Christ.

²² Wives, submit to your husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, himself the Savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself as glorious, without stain or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In the same way husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and treats it with care, just as Christ nourishes and treats the church with care, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³² This hidden truth is great—but I am speaking about Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless, each of you also must love his own wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Ephesians 5

5:1-2

Why did Paul tell Christians to imitate God?

[5:1]

Paul wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God (see: 4:17-32). Paul told the Christians that they needed to imitate God. That is, they need to do the things that God does, closely follow God, or do the things that God wants them to do in Scripture. When they do this, they teach other people about what God is like. Also, Paul explained that learning to imitate God is something Christians must always do. Christians must never stop learning to live in the way God wants them to live.

How did Paul tell Christians to imitate God?

[5:1, 5:2]

Christians imitate God by loving all people. Paul used a Greek word for a certain type of love. When someone loves in this way, they want to do good for the people they love without wanting anything from them. This is how Christians should love one another. Jesus loves all people with this type of love, and he showed it by dying for all people. Christians are to love all people in the same way Jesus loves all people.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did Paul tell Christians to love all people?

[5:2]

Paul told Christians to love all people. This is because:

1. Christians must love all people because God made them his children (see: 1:5; 2:19; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:35-36).
2. Christians must love all people because Jesus loves them. Jesus loved other people by serving them and even dying for them. In the same way this made God happy, it will also make God happy when Christians love in the same way Jesus did. (see: 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Romans 3:21-26).

See: [Adopt \(Adoption\)](#)

What is fragrant aroma?

[5:2]

See: [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#)

What warnings did Paul write to Christians?

[5:3, 5:4]

Paul wrote many warnings to Christians. He wrote about the things Christians are not to do or say (see: Colossians 3:5-8; Galatians 5:19-21).

1. Paul said Christians are not to have sex for money, have sex with people of the same gender, have sex with anyone other than their spouse, or have sex with someone in their family (see: 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9, 16; Matthew 5:28).
2. Paul also told Christians that "impurity" (ἀκαθαρσία/g0167) of any kind is not to be found in them. That is, they are never to do things that dishonor God. Instead, God wants all Christians to honor him by their actions (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8). He wants Christians to be holy because he is holy (see: 1 Peter 1:16). They are not even to talk about impure things.
3. Paul said that Christians must not talk using "obscenity" (αἰσχρολογία/g0151), [foolish talking](#), or "harmful ridicule" (εὐτραπελία/g2160). Some scholars think this means making jokes about sex in ways that dishonor God or joking about doing anything that dishonors God. Other scholars think that Paul did not want Christians to talk in any way that does not help another person. That is, speech that insults or mocks another person does not honor God. Instead, Paul wrote that Christians need to live a life that gives 'thanks' (εὐχαριστία/g2169) in the way they talk and what they do. That is, they are thankful to God and live in a way that shows God they are thankful. Paul also wrote about the difference between gratitude and doing what does not honor God in the Book of Romans (see: Romans 1:21).

5:5

What did Paul say happened to those who did not listen to his warnings in 5:3-4?

[5:5]

Paul told Christians that those who did not follow his warnings can not have an “inheritance” in the kingdom of God. He said there were three types of people who can not have a place in God’s kingdom:

1. The sexually immoral person. That is, a person who has sex with someone whom they are not married to.
2. The impure person. That is, a person who does things that do not honor God.
3. The covetous person. That is, a person who wants things that are not theirs.

Paul wrote that a person who does any of these things worships an idol. That is, they were really worshipping something or someone other than God. Paul wanted his readers to know that people who live their lives in this way cannot have any inheritance in God’s kingdom.

Paul wrote “for you can be sure of this” to make Christians give special attention to what happened to those who did not follow his warnings in 5:3-4. Some scholars think Paul wrote these words because he wanted them to remember what he already told them while he was with them. Other scholars think Paul really was giving a command to these Christians. Paul wanted them to obey what he wrote.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Sexual Immorality](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

5:6-7

Who are “sons of disobedience”?

[5:6]

The “sons of disobedience” are people who disobey God.

What did Paul say about God’s anger on those who did not obey Paul’s warnings?

[5:6]

Paul wrote that God must punish the “sons of disobedience.” That is, people who live in ways that do not honor God. Paul told Christians that God becomes very angry when people do the things Paul wrote about in 5:3-5. Because of his anger for people not honoring him, God will punish these “sons of disobedience.” Some scholars think that God will punish sin in the future. Other scholars think that God is punishing it now and in the future (see: Romans 1:18-32; 2:5-6).

Also, Paul told Christians not to let “empty words” from the sons of disobedience make them sin. People who speak “empty words” are those who make excuses for the bad things they do, and they say that God will not punish them for those things. Paul told Christians that listening to empty words

Paul ended his warning by telling Christians not to do the things that the sons of disobedience do. That is, Christians are not to do things that do not honor God.

What is the command Paul gave believers?

[5:7]

Paul commanded Christians not to allow anyone to deceive them with “empty words.” That is, Paul wanted to write about a person who makes excuses for doing evil things. This person speaks empty words because they are not true and are against what God wants.

Paul warned Christians that God becomes very angry when people do what Paul wrote about in 5:3-5. Paul called people who persistently behave in these ways the “sons of disobedience.” Some scholars believe that God will show his strong anger sometime in the future. Other scholars believe that God is showing his strong anger now, and will also show it in the future (see: Romans 1:18-32; 2:5-6).

Paul concluded his warning by stating that Christians must not join with the sons of disobedience. This means that Christians must not behave like or associate with people who behave like this.

5:8-14**What did Paul say about the things people thought and did?**

[5:8, 5:9, 5:10, 5:11]

Paul used the metaphor of darkness to talk about the things that those who do not believe in Jesus do. In 5:3-6, Paul talked about things a person of darkness does. Now in 5:11-12, Paul wrote that a person of “darkness” does things that do not honor God. Also, because they do not want others to see them doing these things, they only do these things when they are alone.

Paul then talks about Christians as “light in the Lord” and “children of light.” Paul told Christians to think about things and to do things that show others God's light. That is, Christians follow God's commands to show others God's light. When Christians follow God's commands, the light of God is shown in their lives in three ways:

1. “Goodness”(ἀγαθωσύνη/g0019)- This means that a believer in Jesus does only what is good, honors God, and they give to others. This is the opposite of non-Christians. That is, people who are sexually immoral, impure, or greedy in other ways are in darkness (see: 5:3).
2. Living in the right way- This means that Christians do the things God wants. This is the opposite of people who do impure or covetous things (see: 5:3 and 5:5).
3. Truth- This means that a believer in Jesus only says what is true, and they do everything God says. Christians are to speak and act in the way God wants them to live. This is the opposite of people who lie and do not do what God wants (5:6).

Paul also said that the believer in Jesus is a person who “find out” the things that the Lord wants. That is, Christians carefully think about the things they do and the things they think about to know if it is what God wants from them. Paul writes about proving in other letters as well (see: Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 1:9-11).

Paul wrote that Christians must not do the things that those who are in darkness do. That is, they must not do things that do not honor God. Also, Paul said that they must “expose” the things that those in darkness do, that is, they make them known. Some scholars think that Christians expose these things by always following God's commands. These scholars think Paul was saying that when non-Christians see the things Christians do and do not do, they see that the things they are doing themselves are wrong. Other scholars think that what Christians say or do not say also exposes the things that those in darkness do. These scholars also think that Paul wanted to talk about Christians who have gone back to doing the things that dishonor God.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Sexual Immorality](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

How does Paul speak about sleeping and death?

[5:14]

In 5:14, some scholars think that Paul used the metaphors of sleep and death to talk about those who did not believe in Jesus. He wanted to say that those who did not believe in Jesus needed to “wake up” from the dead. That is, those who did not believe in Jesus needed to know that the way they thought and the things they did were wrong. They needed to believe in Jesus, change the way they thought, and change the things they did.

Other scholars think Paul used the metaphors of sleep and death to talk about Christians. That is, Christians who do things that do not honor God need to wake up and stop sinning, because sin makes them like dead people (see: 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6).

See: [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#); [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#)

5:15-20**What did Paul tell Christians about wisdom and the Holy Spirit?**

[5:15, 5:18]

In 5:15-20, Paul wrote that Christians must do things that are wise. When Christians learn, know, and do the things God wants them to do, they are wise. Paul wanted Christians to not do what was unwise. He

already wrote about God giving wisdom to Christians (see 1:7-10, 1:17). Then, he wrote that Christians needed to use the wisdom God gave them to understand what God wanted them to do (see: 5:17).

One way a Christian uses wisdom is by “making the most” of his time. Paul wanted Christians to know that their lives are not long. If they are wise, they will do what honors God while they are alive. Wise Christians will not do deeds of darkness. That is, they will not do things that do not honor God. Paul wrote that the “days are evil” (see: 5:16) That is, the world is filled with evil people. Christians are to be wise and not do the same things that those who are not Christians do.

Paul told Christians not to get drunk because this will make them do things that are unwise. Instead, Christians must always be filled with the Holy Spirit. This will help them to do what honors God. People will be able to know when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit because of the way they talk and the way they worship God. This person will give thanks to God for everything in their life, even the bad things. The person filled with the Holy Spirit knows that all things in life work together for his good (see: Romans 8:28).

Next, Paul wrote commands in 5:19-6:9 for the person filled by the Holy Spirit to follow.

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

5:21

What did Paul say to Christians about submission?

[5:21]

Paul wrote that Christians need to “submit”(ὑποτάσσω/g5293) to one another. That is, Christians are to willingly obey one another. Also, Paul wanted Christians to know that they all need to obey, worship, and respect Jesus. So, Christians are willing to obey each other because they want to do the things that Jesus told them to do.

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#) 5:22-24

What did Paul write to wives?

[5:22, 5:23, 5:24]

Paul told wives to “submit”(ὑποτάσσω/g5293) to their own husbands like they submit to Jesus. That is, the wife first submits to Jesus, whom God has made the leader over all believers. This does not mean that a wife is her husband’s property (see: Galatians 3:27-28). Instead, God has also designed marriage so that the husband is the leader over his family in the same way that Jesus is the leader over all Christians. Whatever God leads the husband to do, the husband leads his family to do the same. But Jesus is the leader over the husband. In this way, the family is like the church. Because the wife sees the order of God’s design for the family, she wants to submit to it.

5:25-33

What did Paul write to husbands?

[5:25]

Paul commanded that husbands need to love their wives. He used a certain Greek word for “love.” This means a husband says and does what will honor his wife. Paul used the metaphor of Jesus living and dying for sinners to talk about the love a husband is to have for his wife (see: 5:2; John 10:11-17; 15:12-13). Jesus willingly sacrificed himself for all Christians because he loves them. In the same way, the husband must be willing to sacrifice the things he wants or needs, even his life, for his wife's good.

In 5:28, the word “should” or “ought”(ὀφείλω/g3784) means the husband has a duty to his wife. So, the husband must have unconditional love for his wife. That is, a husband is to love his wife even if she does not submit to him or does what is not good to him. Because of this love, the husband “nourishes”(ἐκτρέφω/g1625) and “cherishes”(θάλπω/g2282) his wife like Jesus nourishes and cherishes all Christians. Paul wrote these words because he wanted husbands to know that they are to care for their wives like God takes care of his children.

Paul's final instructions for marriage are found in 5:33. He again commanded husbands to love their wives as much as they love themselves. And in 5:33, he told wives to "respect" (φοβέω⁵³⁹⁹) her husband in the same way she does for Jesus.

Some scholars think Paul's instructions came directly from 5:31-32. That is, Jesus has made Christians a part of his body in the same way that a husband and wife become one person when they marry. A husband is to love his wife in the same way that he loves himself because she is now a part of his own body in the same way Christians are a part of the body of Jesus. And, in the same way that all Christians are to honor Jesus, the head of their Christian body, the wife is to honor her husband, the head of their joined body.

See: [Children of God](#); [Body of Christ](#); [Children of God](#)

Why did Jesus sacrifice himself?

[5:25, 5:26, 5:27]

Paul wrote that Jesus sacrificed himself to "sanctify" all believers in Jesus. That is, Jesus' sacrifice makes Christians acceptable to God and sets them apart for God (see: 5:8-9; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 10:10).

Also, Jesus cleansed all believers. That is, he made Christians acceptable to God. Jesus served the punishment for their sin. Paul did not say that Christians would not sin anymore during their lives. But because Jesus died, God can see Christians as if they were never sinners.

Paul said that Jesus cleanses and sanctifies all Christians by washing them with the water of the word. That is, when people hear the gospel and believe in it, they are cleansed and set apart for God.

Finally, Paul wrote that Jesus did these things so that all Christians will be with God. Jesus will take them for a great and beautiful gift at the end of the world. God wanted to do this for those who trust in him, even before the beginning of the world (see: 1:4).

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What did Paul say about marriage in 5:31-32?

[5:31, 5:32]

In 5:31-32, Paul said that God created marriage to be like the love Jesus has for all believers. He also said that in the same way Jesus is joined to all believers, a man and woman join together in marriage.

When Paul wrote instructions to husbands about marriage he quoted from an Old Testament passage (see: Genesis 2:24). When God created people, God made the first woman from one of Adam's ribs. Then Adam said, "this one is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (see: Genesis 2:23). He said this because the woman came from a part of his body. Also, he said this because he and the woman are to live their lives together like they are one person instead of two people. The husband and wife will leave their parents homes, and they will become united in a new family.

Paul called this a "mystery." In the Bible, a mystery is something that people did not understand. But, when Jesus came to earth, people began to understand. So, in 5:31-32, Paul wanted Christians to know that marriage should be like the way Jesus loves those who believe in him and how Christians are to love each other.

See: [Mystery](#)

Chapter 6

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is proper. ² "Honor your father and mother" (which is the first commandment with promise), ³ "so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger. Instead, raise them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

⁵ Slaves, be obedient to your masters according to the flesh with deep respect and trembling, in the honesty of your heart. Be obedient to them as you would be obedient to Christ. ⁶ Be obedient not only when your masters are watching, in order to please them. Instead, be obedient as slaves of Christ, who do the will of God from your heart. ⁷ Serve with all your heart, as though you were serving the Lord and not people, ⁸ because we know that for whatever good deed each person does, he will receive a reward from the Lord, whether he is slave or free.

⁹ Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them. You know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the scheming plans of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and after you have done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, by which you will be able to put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ With every prayer and request, pray at all times in the Spirit. To this end, always be watching with all perseverance as you offer prayers for all God's holy people. ¹⁹ And pray for me, that a message might be given to me when I open my mouth. Pray that I might make known with boldness the hidden truth about the gospel. ²⁰ It is for the gospel that I am an ambassador who is kept in chains, so that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

²¹ Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you, so that you may know how I am doing. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are, and so that he may encourage your hearts.

²³ Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be to all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an incorruptible love.

Ephesians 6

6:1-4

What did Paul tell children?

[6:1, 6:2, 6:3]

Paul told children that they must "obey" (ὁπακούω/g5219) their parents "in the Lord." That is, they are to honor their parents in the same way they honor God. They are to do this by obeying their parents. Paul wanted them to know that what God told Christians to do is right because God said to do those things (see: Exodus 20:12).

Paul repeated the Old Testament command that children must honor their father and mother (see: Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16). Also, Paul wrote that this command came with a promise from God (see: Matthew 22:37-40). Jesus taught that Christians must love and respect all people. He said that this is the second greatest command. Paul wanted Christians when they honored their father and mother, they learned to respect all people. Paul told Christians that God blesses those who follow this command. Also, it will help them to live a long life on the earth.

See: [Hope](#)

What did Paul tell fathers?

[6:4]

Paul told Christian fathers to remember that the Holy Spirit fills them (see: 5:18). He told fathers that the Holy Spirit helped them teach their children about God and how to do what honors him (see: Colossians 13:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

See: [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#)

6:5-9

What did Paul tell slaves?

[6:5, 6:6, 6:7]

Paul commanded slaves to obey their masters (see: Colossians 3:22-25). He said that slaves needed to serve their masters in three ways:

1. Slaves needed to honor their masters. This verse used the same word for “submit” used in 5:21. That is, slaves were to submit to their masters in the same way they submit to other Christians.
2. Slaves needed to do their work well.
3. Slaves needed to serve their masters in the same way they served Jesus. Paul wrote to slaves who were Christians. Non-Christians do not serve Jesus.

Paul told slaves to work with “enthusiasm”(εὐνοια/g2133) because their work was for Jesus. Slaves must not do their work to “attract attention”(ὁφθαλμοδολία/g3787) or to “impress people”(ἀνθρωπάρεσκος/g441). Paul told Christians that God will bless all of his servants who do their work well.

When Paul was alive, many people were slaves. Some of these slaves became Christians. Paul wanted Christian slaves to think about how to please God while they were slaves. Paul did not say that slavery was good. But he wanted all Christians to know that doing what honors God is the most important thing for them to do.

What did Paul tell masters?

[6:9]

Paul wrote that masters must be fair, honest, and respectful to their slaves (see: Colossians 4:1). If they obey Paul’s command, masters do not need to threaten slaves to make their slaves obey them.

Paul wanted Christian masters to remember that God is the master of everyone. God does not show “favoritism.” That is, God all people, even slaves and masters, in the same way (see: Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:10-11).

6:10-17

How did Paul tell Christians to be strong?

[6:10]

Paul commanded Christians to be strong. Because he knew the enemies of God attack Christians, Paul commanded Christians to be ready for these attacks.

Paul told Christians to “put on the whole armor of God.” Paul used the metaphor of a soldier wearing his armor to talk about how Christians prepared for attacks from their enemies. By wearing the “whole armor of God,” Christians get ready to fight against the enemies of God in the same way soldiers get ready to fight their enemies (see: 6:11).

Paul also commanded Christians to “stand firm.” That is, Paul wanted Christians to know that the enemy cannot cause Christians to sin against God (see: 4:27).

Paul told Christians that their strength came from God. This means Christians must not think they can fight against the devil by themselves. Instead, Christians must get their strength from the Holy Spirit to fight the devil.

Paul wrote that Christians must use all of the armor of God. This allows Christians to win against the enemies of God. Paul wanted Christians to know that they must always be prepared for all types of spiritual battles. That is, battles they know about and those battles that they do not know about.

Some scholars think that the “time of evil” in 6:13 is talking about a time in the future. A time when God allows a lot of evil on the earth before Jesus comes back to earth. Other scholars think that Paul wanted to talk about the entire Christian life. That is, a Christian’s life from the time he believed in Jesus until he died. Other scholars think Paul wanted to say that spiritual attacks come at different times and at different strengths in a Christian’s life.

See: [Spiritual Warfare](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#)

6:12

What causes spiritual battles?

[6:12]

Paul wrote that Christians do not fight against people. Instead, they fight against the spiritual world. That is, Paul wanted Christians to know they fought Satan and against beings that cannot be seen. Paul wrote that Christians fought against three things:

1. Beings who ruled and “authorities”(ἐξουσία/g1849)- Paul wanted Christians to know that there are some beings, which cannot be seen, who fight against Jesus and have some permission to do things that affect people on earth (see: Colossians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
2. “Powers”(κοσμοκράτωρ/g2888) over this present darkness- Again, Paul spoke of about beings who were not from the earth. They do the things that Satan wants them to do. They exist to do only evil things to people. Paul used the metaphor of darkness in 6:12 to tell Christians what Satan wanted to do in the world. He wanted to say that Satan affected people in an evil way because God allowed him to.
3. “Spiritual forces”(πνευματικός/g4152) of evil in the heavenly places- Paul wrote that all beings, even those in heaven, must fight against evil. Spiritual battles happen everywhere, not just on earth. Paul used the word “wickedness” to say that they try to get others to do what is evil. That is, doing things that do not honor God and his commands.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

6:13-17

What is the armor of God?

[6:13, 6:14, 6:15, 6:16, 6:17]

Paul used the metaphor “armor of God” to tell Christians that they needed to wear protection. In the same way armor protects soldiers in battle, the armor of God protects Christians against the enemy’s attacks.

Paul wrote that different pieces make the armor of God. Paul wanted Christians to know that they must wear all of these pieces everyday. Without this armor, they cannot fight against the enemy, that is, Satan. Paul wrote about six pieces of armor that the Christian must wear:

1. The “belt of truth”- Paul used the metaphor of a belt to tell Christians that they must always “wrap” themselves in truth. That is, they must always speak truthfully. The belt of a Roman soldier held all the pieces of their armor together at their waist. In the same way the soldiers belt held their armor together, the belt of truth holds the Christian together. That is, Christians must know and speak things that are truth. God’s word is true. The Bible is God’s word. When Jesus prayed to the God the Father he said, “your word is truth” (see: John 17:17). Christians must read and study the Bible. This allows them to learn the truth and be changed by the truth (see: Romans 12:2). Also, when Christians know the true things taught in the Bible, they know what is true and what are lies.

2. The “breastplate of righteousness”- In the days of Jesus, Roman soldiers wore a hard piece of armor over their chest called a breastplate. This piece of armor protected their most important part of the body against attack from the enemy. Paul used the metaphor of a soldier’s breastplate to tell Christians that in the same way this piece of armor protects the soldier’s heart, God protects the spiritual heart of Christians. That is, it keeps them from believing in the enemy’s lies.
3. “Shoes for your feet, put on the readiness”- Paul used the metaphor of shoes to tell Christians to stand strong in Jesus. That is, Christians are to keep doing the things that God wants them to do. The shoes of a Roman soldier had long spikes on the bottom to keep their feet from slipping. In the same way these shoes kept soldiers from being moved, the shoes of readiness keep the Christian from moved away from God and the things that he taught. By standing strong in Jesus, Christians have peace. In order to stand strong in Jesus, Christians must never forget the truth of the gospel.
4. The “shield of faith”- A Roman soldier’s shield provided complete protection for the soldier against enemy arrows and swords. In the same way, believing in Jesus completely protects Christians. This protects Christians against the devil’s evil plans (see: 1 Peter 5:8-9). Paul used the words “flaming arrows” to tell Christians about the different ways the devil attacks. In the same way the soldier’s shield protects them against their enemy’s arrows, so the shield of faith protects Christians against the devil’s arrows. Believing in Jesus keeps the enemies attacks from hurting Christians.
5. The “helmet of salvation”- The helmet protected the soldier’s head from attack. In the same way the helmet protected the soldier’s head, so does the helmet of salvation protect the Christian. God saves all Christians. Perhaps this helmet protects Christians from the lies that the enemy tells Christians about how God saves them (see: 2:5; Isaiah 59:17).
6. The “sword of the spirit”- The Roman soldiers used their swords to attack their enemy and to block the enemies sword. Paul wanted to say that the “word of God” is a spiritual sword given to Christians by the Holy Spirit. Believers use the Bible to defend themselves against wrong ideas about God and replace these wrong ideas with the truth. Jesus used the word of God. During Jesus’ temptation by Satan, Jesus used the word of God to both defend and attack (see: Luke 4:1-13).

See: [Word of God](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Word of God](#)

6:18-20

How did Paul tell Christians to pray?

[6:18, 6:19]

Paul told Christians to pray all of the time and in all kinds of ways. They are to pray with other people and by themselves. They are to pray in front of other people and by themselves. Paul wrote that Christians pray in the Spirit. That is, Christians pray with the power of the Holy Spirit and can talk with God directly (see: Romans 8:26-27).

Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that the armor of God can only be put on by prayer. Fewer scholars think that wearing the helmet and carrying the sword needed prayer because Paul had just written about those pieces. Fewer scholars think Paul wanted Christians to pray before using the entire armor of God. This allows them to do the things God wants them to do.

Paul wrote that Christians must always be alert or ready (see: Luke 21:34-36). This allows them to always be ready for spiritual battles. That is, they are ready to battle against Satan and the enemies of God whom they cannot see. In order to be ready for spiritual battle, Christians must continue to pray at all times.

Also, Paul wrote Christians must pray for one another as well as for Paul himself (see: 1 Peter 5:8-9). So, he asked the believers in and around Ephesus to pray for him. Paul knew he needed God’s help to do what God wanted him to do. So he asked the Christians to pray that he continue to tell others people about the gospel bravely and clearly.

See: [Gospel](#)

6:21-22**How did Paul let the believers know about his circumstances?**

[6:21]

Paul sent Tychicus to Ephesus with this letter. Paul was in prison in a house near Rome. Paul was unable to leave because he was being guarded. However, Tychicus was not in prison. He followed Paul. So, Tychicus went to Ephesus with the letter. Tychicus also told Christians in Ephesus about Paul's imprisonment. Most scholars think that Tychicus also took the other letter Paul wrote to the Colossians.

6:23-24**How is the ending of this letter similar to Paul's other letters?**

[6:23, 6:24]

In the Ancient Near East, it was common to end a letter with a blessing. Paul did this in many of his letters. These blessings included peace (see: Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 13:11). Paul prayed for God to love the people reading this letter (see: 1 Corinthians 16:24; 2 Corinthians 13:14) and for God to increase their trust in Jesus (see: Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 16:23). Finally, Paul said that God blessed those who love Jesus.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

Book: Philippians

Introduction to Philippians

Overview

When Paul wrote this letter, he was in prison because he had preached about Jesus. However, he wrote about how happy he was. He was happy because he had peace with God. He also helped the Christians to know that they could have peace with God only if they trusted in Jesus Christ. If they thought that God would save them if they obeyed the Law of Moses, they would never have peace with God.

If anyone has peace with God, he can endure any suffering.

Paul loved the church in Philippi. He had helped start it when he was traveling through that part of Greece.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Who wrote this letter?

This letter begins with the words "Paul and Timothy." However, Paul and Timothy did not write this letter together. The apostle Paul wrote this letter while he was in prison in Rome. He wrote this letter when Timothy was with him. Perhaps Timothy wrote down the words that Paul spoke. This is how most people at that time wrote their letters.

See: 1:1, 1:7

Who did Paul write it to?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Philippi. There were many more Gentiles in that church than Jewish believers. The city of Philippi did not even have ten Jewish men, which was the smallest number of Jews who could make a synagogue.

In this letter, Paul did not even repeat any verses from the Old Testament. This is because Gentile Christians in Philippi probably did not know much about the Old Testament.

Philippi was a city in the region of Macedonia, north of Greece. The city was a Roman city. This meant that the citizens of Philippi were also citizens of the Roman Empire. The people of Philippi were proud that they were citizens of Rome. However, Paul told the believers that they were citizens of heaven, that is, their true home was with God in heaven (see: 3:20).

Advice to translators; A citizen is a person who lived in a city. He was free, that is, he was not a servant. Also, he could vote in elections and become a leader in the city.

See: [Synagogue](#); [Citizen](#)

What Paul wrote about in this letter

Paul rejoiced

Paul wrote much that he had "joy." He also spoke much about rejoicing. Paul wanted to write about this because he had much joy even though he was in prison for teaching others about the gospel. He wanted the Philippian Christians to also have this same joy.

In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul often spoke about joy and rejoicing. He wanted Christians to be happy like he was happy, even though he suffered while he wrote this letter. Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter, even though he did not do anything wrong. Despite this, he was still able to rejoice in the Lord.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Suffer](#)

Christians should have peace with each other

Paul wanted the Christians in Philippi to be at peace with one another. Some of them were quarreling with one another (see: 2:3-4). Perhaps some of them thought that they were better than the others. Paul even wrote the names of two of these people. He told them to be at peace with one another (see: 4:2)

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote this letter because he wanted to do several things.

- (1) Paul wanted to thank the Philippian Christians for giving him money to help him.
- (2) Paul wanted to tell them about how he was doing while he was in prison in Rome.
- (3) Paul wanted to tell them not to believe false teachers, those who said they must obey the Law of Moses (see: 3:2-16).
- (4) Paul wanted them to be happy because they were at peace with God, even if they were suffering hardships.
- (5) Paul wanted to give them news about Epaphroditus. This man had come to help Paul. While he with Paul, he became very ill. Epaphroditus was returning to Philippi, so Paul sent a letter with him.

Outline of Philippians

1. Greeting, thanksgiving and prayer (1:1-11)
2. Paul's report on his ministry (1:12-26)
3. Instructions
 1. To be steadfast (1:27-30)
 2. To be united (2:1-2)
 3. To be humble (2:3-11)
 4. To work out our salvation, and God working in you (2:12-13)
 5. To be innocent and light (2:14-18)
4. Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30)
5. Warning about false teachers (3:1-4:1)
6. Personal instruction (4:2-5)
7. Rejoice and do not be anxious (4:4-6)
8. Final remarks
 1. Values (4:8-9)
 2. Contentment (4:10-20)

Philippians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all God's holy people in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons.

² May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ always, in every prayer of mine for all of you, making my prayer with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷ It is proper for me to feel this way about all of you because I have you in my heart. You all have been my partners in grace both in my imprisonment and in my defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹ So this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and all understanding ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so you may be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

¹² Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. ¹³ As a result, my chains in Christ came to light throughout the whole palace guard and to

everyone else. ¹⁴ Most of the brothers have far more confidence in the Lord because of my chains, and they have courage to fearlessly speak the word. ¹⁵ Some indeed even proclaim Christ out of envy and strife, and also others out of good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ But the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely. They think they will cause me distress while I am in chains. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way—whether from false motives or from true—Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that this will result in my deliverance through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰ It is my eager expectation and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² But if I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which to choose? I do not know. ²³ For I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, ²⁴ yet to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. ²⁵ Being convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have increasing reasons to boast in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷ Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or am absent, I may hear about you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. ²⁸ Do not be frightened in any respect by those who are your opponents. This is a sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation—and this from God. ²⁹ For it has been freely given to you for the sake of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake, ³⁰ having the same conflict which you saw in me, and now you hear in me.

Philippians 1 Commentary

1:1-2

Why did Paul say that Timothy also wrote this letter?

[1:1]

This letter begins with Paul and Timothy's names. However, only Paul wrote this letter. Perhaps Paul wrote Timothy's name here because he was with Paul at this time. Or perhaps Timothy also wrote down the words of the letter as Paul spoke them to him.

See: Romans 16:22; 1 Corinthians 16:21; 2 Thessalonians 3:17

Paul said that he and Timothy were servants of God. What did he want to say when he said this?

Paul said that he and Timothy were "servants (δοῦλος/g1401) of Christ Jesus." The New Testament often says that Christians are God's servants. Paul and Timothy did not do what they wanted to do. Instead, they did what Christ had wanted them to do. They did this because they wanted to honor God.

Some scholars think that Paul wanted to say that he and Timothy belonged to Jesus. That is, they served Jesus. They did what Jesus wanted them to do.

Other scholars think that Paul wanted to say that he and Timothy were messengers of God. This is because writers often wrote the Greek word "servant" in the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament to talk about people such as Moses, Joshua, and other prophets (see: 2 Kings 8:12; Psalms 104:26; Joshua 24:29; Nehemiah 1:6; Ezekiel 34:23).

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

Who were the people to whom Paul wrote?

[1:1]

Anyone who believes in Jesus is a "holy one," that is, he is "set apart." God has separated him from the other people. He belongs to God. He does things for God. God wants Christians to be different from the rest of the people in the world. Christians should live in this way, because they want to honor him. Paul said that they are "in Christ."

See: [In Christ](#); [In Christ](#)

Why was Philippi an important city?

[1:1]

The people in the city of Philippi were proud to be citizens of the Roman Empire. The Romans allowed them to do things that other people could not do. There were not very many citizens in the places that Rome ruled.

See: [Citizen](#); [Citizen](#)

Who were the overseers and deacons?

[1:1]

Paul wrote to the Christians in Philippi as well as to their leaders. These are two different types of leaders. Elsewhere, Paul wrote that “overseers” must be able to teach others. However, he did not write the same thing about “deacons” (see: 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1).

See: [Deacon](#); [Deacon](#)

How did Christians greet one another?

[1:2]

The first Christians often greeted each other by saying, “Grace (χάρις/g5485) be to you and peace.” Perhaps this was because God was kind to Christians, and because he gives them peace.

See: [Grace](#)

Why is God called “our father”?

[1:2]

See: [God the Father](#)

1:3-11

How were the Philippians joined together with Paul in the gospel?

[1:5]

Paul thanked the Christians for their “fellowship (κοινωνία/g2842) in the gospel.” They were partners or joined together with Paul because God was kind to both the Philippians and to Paul. This made the Philippians able to do several things:

1. The Philippians believed the same gospel Paul believed. In this way, they joined together with Paul. They also joined together because they both told others about the gospel.
2. The Philippians helped Paul several times with money and other needs that he had (see: 4:14-18). They were also his partners because they helped Paul tell others about the good news. Paul could not do the things that he did without the Philippians helping him.
3. The Philippians honored God because they lived in the right way. Paul also did this. This was how all people should live, if they believe the gospel. This shows everyone that God has changed their lives because they believed in Jesus.
4. The Philippians suffered because they believed in Jesus. They suffered as Paul suffered because he preached the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What is the day of the Lord?

[1:6]

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

How did Paul defend and confirm of the gospel?

[1:7]

Paul was in prison because he taught people about Jesus and the gospel. He defended (ἀπολογία/g627), that is, explained the gospel when they asked him. He also confirmed (βεβαίωσις/g951) the gospel came from God. Paul did not only tell people about Jesus. He also encouraged them to believe in Jesus and to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Gospel](#)

What did Paul pray that God would do?

[1:9, 1:10, 1:11]

Paul prayed three things for the Christians in Philippi:

1. He prayed that they would love other people and they would love other people more and more.
2. Paul prayed that they would learn more about how God wanted them to live. They should do this in order to honor God. .
3. Paul prayed that the Philippian believers would be full of “the fruit of righteousness.” The phrase “fruit of righteousness” probably means that Paul wanted the Christians in Philippi to act more like Jesus and to continue to do good things.

See: Galatians 5:22-23

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul pray?

[1:9, 1:10, 1:11]

Paul prayed this prayer for three reasons:

1. He wanted the Christians in Philippi to live rightly because they loved God and each other.
2. Paul wanted them to be sincere(εὐλικρινής/g1506) or honest. He also wanted them to be “without offense” (ἀπρόσκοπος/g677), that is, no one could accuse them of doing wrong when Jesus returns to the earth. These Greek words want to say similar things. Paul wanted them to do right things because they loved God and because they loved each other.
3. What Paul wanted most was that everyone would honor God as God deserved. Christians should honor God because he has made them into new people by changing their hearts. He has also done many, many other things for them.

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

1:12-18

Paul was in prison. How did this help him serve Jesus?

[1:12, 1:13]

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. However, he still rejoiced. He wrote that he was able to teach more people about Jesus because he was in prison than when he had been free. Paul was able to teach the other prisoners and the guards about Jesus. Also, Paul continued to teach without fearing anyone. This is why other Christians had courage to teach people about Jesus. So many people heard about Jesus because Paul was in prison.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

Why did some people preach Jesus from envy and rivalry?

[1:15, 1:17]

In many ways, the Jews lived differently than the Greeks, Romans, and other non-Jews. Many of the Jews who believed in Jesus thought that non-Jews had to live like Jews if they wanted to believe in Jesus, too. They thought that these new Christians had to be circumcised and had to obey the Law of Moses.

Almost all of the first Christians were Jews. Most of them thought that Jesus died for the Jews and for anyone else who became a Jew. That is why these Jews were shocked when Paul taught non-Jews that they could believe in Jesus and follow him without becoming Jews. Some of these Jewish Christians taught that Paul was teaching people wrong things. Also, Paul persuaded many non-Jews to believe in Jesus. This made those Jewish Christians angry, because they did not think Paul was teaching the truth about Jesus.

But they were not able to trouble Paul. Paul rejoiced because they were teaching other people about Jesus.

See: [Judaizer](#)

1:19-26

What deliverance did Paul speak about?

[1:19]

Perhaps Paul wanted to say that God would set him free from prison. Or perhaps he wanted to say that God would not punish him for his sins, even if he would die in prison. Perhaps Paul was thinking about both of these things. This is because he said that he might die in prison (see: 1:20-21). Even if he died there, he was certain that he would be with the Christians in Philippi again in heaven (see: 1:25-26).

See: Job 13:13-18

See: [Heaven](#)

Why was Paul confident that he would not be disappointed?

[1:20]

Paul hoped that he would never be afraid to tell others about Jesus or to praise Jesus. He would be “ashamed” if that happened.

This is because Paul wanted to live rightly so that others would praise Jesus. He knew that he could still do this, even if he was in prison (see: 1:20).

It did not matter if he continued to live or if he died. If he continued to live, Paul would continue to work for Jesus. He would continue to teach others about Jesus and teach other Christians how to honor God (see: 1:22 and 1:25). If Paul died, he would be with Jesus and worship him in heaven (see: 1:23).

See: Psalms 34:3-5 and Psalms 35:26-27

See: [Hope](#); [Hope](#)

Why does Paul speak about producing fruit?

[1:22]

When Christians do good things that honor God, Scripture often describes them as “producing fruit.” When the things Paul did helped other Christians to do good things, he spoke about this as his “fruit of labor.”

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

1:27-30

How were the Christians to conduct themselves in a way that was worthy of the gospel?

[1:27]

Paul told the Philippian believers to “conduct themselves in a manner worthy (ἀξίως/g516) of the gospel of Jesus,” that is, he wanted them to live in a way that honored God. Paul used the Greek word “live as a citizen (πολιτεύομαι/g4176),” which usually meant for a free person in a city to do everything he should do.

However, Paul wanted to say that Christians are citizens of heaven (see: 3:20). That is, their true home is in heaven. That is where they belong. Others will honor them because of that. Even better, God approves of them, and he approves of what they do that shows they belong to him.

Paul wrote about two things that they should do because they were citizens of heaven: (1) they should be united together, at peace with one another, and (2) they should obey Jesus, their king, even if other people tried to stop them from obeying him.

See: [Citizen](#); [Citizen](#)

How were the Philippians to stand firm in one spirit and to struggle together with one mind?

[1:27]

Paul told the Philippian believers to “stand firm (στήκω/g4739) in one spirit (πνεῦμα/g4151)” and to working hard together with one “mind (ψυχή/g5590).” When someone “stands firm,” he is working hard to do something. He does not give up, even if people try to stop him. The Christians were to keep teaching others about Jesus, even if other people tried to stop them.

Paul wanted Christians to work hard together in order to honor Jesus. The Christians in Philippi were to do these things in “one spirit” and in “one mind.” In other words, they were to be united or at peace with one another and to work together to accomplish the same task. Paul wanted for the Philippian believers to act more like Jesus did. He wanted them to live rightly so they could honor him. He wanted them to work together so they could honor him.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); Mind

What was the sign of destruction and salvation?

[1:28]

Paul wrote that the believers should work hard and work together. He knew that other people would try to stop them. However, Paul said that when the Christians do these things, they were a “sign,” that is they showed or proved that God would destroy the unbelievers and save the believers.

See: [Sign](#)

How is suffering a gift?

[1:29]

Paul wrote that Christians in Philippi suffered for God. This was a “gift” that God gave to them. In other words, God allowed them to suffer for him because he loved them.

However, Paul did not want to say that it is good to suffer hardship or pain if nothing good happens after that. Scholars think that if God makes his children suffer, he does something good for them. This is because a person who is suffering usually allows God to help him more than if he were not suffering. He becomes closer to God (see: 1:7 and 1:12-14). In other words, he loves God more.

God helps Christians more because they believe in him. When God allows them to suffer for him, and when he helps him, this shows that he is doing things for them.

See: [Grace](#)

Chapter 2

¹ If there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort provided by love, if there is any fellowship in the Spirit, if there are any tender mercies and compassions, ² then make my joy full by being of the same mind, having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. ³ Do nothing out of ambition or empty conceit. Instead with humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind in yourselves which also was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not consider his equality with God as something to hold on to.

⁷ Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant,
and he was born in the likeness of men.

And being found in the form of a man,

⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore also God highly exalted him
and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹² So then, my beloved, as you always obey, not only in my presence but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is God who is working in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. ¹⁴ Do all things without complaining or arguing ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without blemish in the middle of a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine as lights in the world. ¹⁶ Hold on to the word of life so that on the day of Christ I may boast that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out as an offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ In the same manner you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

¹⁹ But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may also be encouraged when I know the things about you. ²⁰ For I have no one else like him, who is truly concerned for you. ²¹ For they all seek their own interests, not the things of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know his proven worth, because as a son with his father, so he served with me in the gospel. ²³ So I hope to send him as soon as I see how things will go with me. ²⁴ But I am confident in the Lord that I myself will also come soon. ²⁵ But I think it is necessary to send Epaphroditus back to you. He is my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and servant for my needs. ²⁶ For he was very distressed, and he longed to be with you all, because you heard that he was sick. ²⁷ For indeed he was so sick that he almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but also on me, so that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ So it is all the more eagerly that I am sending him, so that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I can have less sorrow. ²⁹ Therefore, welcome him in the Lord with all joy. Honor people like him. ³⁰ For it was for the work of Christ that he came near death. He risked his life so that he could bring to completion what was lacking in your service to me.

Philippians 2

2:1-11

Why did Paul say "if"?

[2:1]

Paul wanted to tell the Christians what they would do if they were at peace with each other. This is why he wrote the word “if.” If they were at peace, they would do these things:

1. They would encourage one another.
2. They would love each other, so they would comfort each other. Or perhaps, Paul wanted to say that God would comfort them.
3. They would all try to do the things that God wants them to do. Or perhaps Paul wanted to say that they all would have the Holy Spirit come to live in them when they believed in Jesus.
4. They would love and forgive one another, since God loved them and forgave them.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did Paul say that the Philippians gave him joy?

[2:2]

Paul spoke as if the Christians in Philippi could make his joy full or complete. This was a way of telling them what he wanted very much, that is, he wanted them to be at peace with one another and to all do what God wanted them to do.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

How did Paul say he wanted the Philippians to serve others?

[2:3, 2:4]

Paul made a very strong statement to the Philippian Christians that he wanted them to serve God by serving other people. In (2:3) Paul first wrote what he did not want them to do, and then what he did want them to do. He wrote again in this way in (see: 2:4).

Advice to translators: In this passage, Jesus and God the Son can be used in the same way. In English, it is common to call Jesus, “Jesus” after he came to the earth and call him “God the Son” before he came to the earth. However, you may translate Jesus as “Jesus” or “God the Son” in this note.

How was Jesus in the form of God?

[2:6]

In 2:6, Paul said that Jesus was in the “form (μορφή/g3444)” of God. Some scholars think that Paul wanted to say that Jesus did not have a physical body in the same way that God the Father does not have a physical body. More scholars think that Paul wanted to say that Jesus was like God in every way before he came to earth. When Jesus came to the earth, he did not “hold on to” or “keep” this form. Instead, he came to the earth as a human being with a body. When he lived on the earth, he was not like God in every way. When he returned to heaven, he was like God in every way again. This is why Paul wrote that Christ Jesus “emptied (κενόω/g2758)” himself.

Advice to translators: It is important to say that Jesus (God the Son) remained God when he was on earth. He stopped being like God in certain ways, but he was still fully or completely God.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

What is the name that is above every name?

[2:9]

Jesus was the greatest person who ever lived. This is what Paul wanted to say when he wrote this Jesus’ name was above every other name.

See: [Name](#)

What did Paul want to say when he said every knee will bend?

[2:10]

When someone kneels or bows, it means that he is submitting to a king or someone like a king. In 2:10, Paul prophesied about a time when Jesus will return. When Jesus returns, all people will know that he is God. They will all submit to him, because he is God and the king of all kings.

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

2:12-13

How does someone work out their salvation?

[2:12]

Paul said that when someone is saved, this person must “work out (κατεργάζομαι/g2716)” something. When he said this, he wanted to say that Christian must continue to do something until the day they when they be with God in heaven. He did not want to say that Christians can save themselves. However, scholars do not agree about what else Paul wanted to say.

Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that God had saved the Christians, so they should know that God wanted them to obey him. However, other scholars think that Paul was telling the Christians to obey God so they could save themselves from this world.

Paul wrote that the Christians must do this with fear and shaking because they were afraid. However, Paul did not want them to be so scared of God that they were shaking. Perhaps Paul wanted to say that Christians should try hard to live rightly. If they do this, this can help them know that they will one day live with God.

However, some people think that Christians cannot “work out” that they were saved if God does not help them. Still other people think that Paul told the Christians to honor God. If they honor God, they will want to obey him.

See: Isaiah 19:16

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How does God work in you?

[2:13]

In 2:13, Paul said that God was working in the Christians. God does this through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps the Christian to live in a way that honors God. So Christians must obey God. God is pleased with Christians when they do this.

2:14-18

How is someone blameless, honest, and without blemish?

[2:15]

Paul wanted the Christians to be “blameless (ἄμειπτος/g273),” “honest or innocent”(ἀκέραιος/g185),” and “without blemish” (ἄμωμος/g299). They were to do this by being at peace with one another.

These things were the opposite of how the rest of the world lived. Paul said the rest of the world lived in a crooked way. He said that they lived in a way that was perverse, that is, not how God wanted them to live. In Scripture, writers often say this world is dark, because the people in this world sin. In Scripture, those who honor God are living in the light. This is because Jesus is the light of the world (see: John 8:12)

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

How are Christians children of God?

[2:15]

All Christians are children of God. However, God did not give birth to give birth to them as a mother gives birth to her children. Instead, God has caused Christians to be born a second time. John wrote about this more than Paul. John wrote that they are born “of” or “from” God (see: 1 John 2:29). When John wrote about God, he showed that a person must be born a second time (see: John 3). If a person is not born a second time, that person is a child of the devil (see: 1 John 3:10). But if God causes a person to be born a second time, that person is at peace with God. He is a friend of God.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#) ; [Children of God](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

What is the word of life?

[2:16]

The “word of life,” that is, the message about life, is the gospel. This is because it is the message that says that those who believe in Jesus will live forever. Not only do Christians live forever with God, but they also live in a new way.

How was Paul poured out as an offering?

[2:17]

Paul said that his life could be “poured out” like a drink offering. In the Law of Moses, the drink offering was said to make a smell that God liked (see: Numbers 15:7). By saying this, Paul was really saying that if he died serving the Lord, then the Lord would be happy because Paul had obeyed him.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

How are Christians running?

[2:16]

Paul often said that Christians should try hard to obey God. He wrote about Christians as if they were running a race. That is why he wrote that he was running.

See: [Metaphor](#)

2:19-24

How does Paul speak About Timothy?

[2:19, 2:20]

Paul trained Timothy, that is, he taught him to serve God and be a leader in the church. Because Paul could not visit the Christians in Philippi, he sent Timothy instead. He was sure that Timothy would serve Jesus well.

In this passage, Paul wrote many things about Timothy so that the Christians in Philippi would trust and Timothy and obey him.

2:25-30

Who was Epaphroditus?

[2:25]

Paul wrote about this man only here and in 4:18. People today do not know very much about Epaphroditus. This man did help Paul, and Paul loved him. He almost died while serving God. Perhaps this was when he was bringing to Paul the gift that the Philippians had sent to Paul. Paul even said that Epaphroditus did this for the Philippians, who could not do it themselves. Because of this, Paul wanted the Philippians to treat him well when he came with Timothy.

Chapter 3

¹ Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write these same things again to you is no trouble for me, and it keeps you safe. ² Watch out for the dogs. Watch out for those evil workers. Watch out for the mutilation. ³ For it is we who are the circumcision—the ones who worship by the Spirit of God, and take pride in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. ⁴ Even so, I myself could have confidence in the flesh. If anyone thinks he has confidence in the flesh, I could have even more. ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with regard to the law, a Pharisee. ⁶ As for zeal, I persecuted the church; as for righteousness under the law, I was blameless. ⁷ But whatever things were a profit for me, I have considered them as loss because of Christ. ⁸ In fact, now I count all things to be loss because of the surpassing value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For him I have given up all things—and I consider them rubbish—so that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God that is by faith. ¹⁰ So now I want to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ so somehow I may experience the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already obtained these things, or am already perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which I was taken hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³ Brothers, I do not think that I myself have yet taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining forward to what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal with a view to the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ All of us who are mature, let us think this way; and if you think differently about anything, God will also reveal that to you. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, let us live up to what we have already attained.

¹⁷ Be imitators of me, brothers. Closely watch those who are walking by the example that you have in us.

¹⁸ Many are walking—those about whom I have often told you, and now I am telling you with tears—as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction. For their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. They think about earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ He will transform our lowly bodies into bodies formed like his glorious body, formed by the might of his power to subject all things to himself.

Philippians 3

3:1-6

How did Paul keep the Philippian Christians safe?

[3:1]

Paul wrote the same things that he had written earlier in the letter. However, he now wrote them again in a shorter way. Paul wanted to write these things again so the Christians in Philippi would remember what he wrote and to do the things that he wanted them to do. In this way, he kept them “safe,” that is, he helped them know how to trust God and live rightly.

Who were the dogs Paul talked About?

[3:2]

Paul warned the Philippian Christians about certain false teachers. He called those teachers dogs. Paul was talking about wild dogs. The Jews hated the Gentiles and called them “dogs.” The Jews thought that God would not approve of either Gentiles or dogs.

See: [Gentile;Gentile](#)

What is circumcision?

[3:3, 3:5]

When someone was circumcised, some of the skin at the end of his penis was cut off. Jewish men were circumcised to show that they belonged to God's people, that is Israel, and that they obeyed the Law of Moses.

However, Paul said that it was the Christians who truly worshiped God. They did so by the power of the Holy Spirit, and because they honored Jesus. They knew that Jesus had saved them. They knew this because they trusted in him. Being circumcised could not help them.

This is why Paul said that Christians who became circumcised were mutilating or cutting into pieces their own body, that is, they were injuring themselves for nothing.

Christians who are not circumcised can still obey God and have peace with him. This is because they honor Jesus.

Many Jews and Jewish Christians were shocked because Paul taught this. They thought that he was insulting God, because it was God who had given the law to Israel.

See: Genesis 18

See: [Mutilate](#); [People of God](#); [Israel](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Mutilate](#);

How does someone have peace with God?

Many Jews believed that God was pleased with them because they were born Jews and because they tried to obey the Law of Moses. But Paul showed them that they were wrong. He himself had tried as much as he could to keep the law.

1. He was circumcised when he was eight days old. His parents obeyed the Law of Moses (see: Leviticus 12:3). He came from a family that honored God.
2. Paul belonged to the nation of Israel, that is, he was born to Jews. He may have lived in Israel when he was young.
3. He was from the tribe of Benjamin. Paul was not just from the nation of Israel, he was Jewish. He was from one of Israel's two tribes of the southern kingdom of Judah that continued to honor God instead of rebelling against him.
4. He was a "Hebrew of Hebrews." All of Paul's ancestors had been Jewish.
5. He was a Pharisee. The Pharisees were religious leaders during the time when Paul lived. They taught people and helped them to obey the Law of Moses. The Pharisees were the great religious leaders.
6. Paul persecuted the church. He thought he was a good Jew. Because of this, Paul worked hard to stop the Christians. However, the Jews were not supposed to work hard to stop the Christians. At this time, Paul and the Jews believed that the Christians were false teachers who needed to stop teaching.
7. He obeyed the Law of Moses. He did this as well as anyone could.

Paul said he was all of these things, but he was never at peace with God because of them.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Israel](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Judah \(Southern Kingdom\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Pharisees](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See: Deuteronomy 33:12

3:7-11

Why does someone need to believe in Jesus?

If being a Jew could have saved Paul, then he would live together with God in heaven forever. However, it could not save Paul. Therefore, Paul knew that it was better to believe in Jesus than to follow the Law of Moses or to have people think that he was a very good Jew. Paul said that everything was worthless if he

did not believe in Jesus. He was willing to lose everything if he could “gain” Jesus, that is, so that Jesus would save him.

In this passage, Paul wrote many different metaphors in order to tell people that he wanted people to believe in Jesus more than anything else.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What is righteousness?

[3:9]

When a person has “righteousness (δικαιοσύνη/g1343)”, “he is at peace with God and friends with God. Paul wanted to say that this could not happen by trying to obey the Law of Moses. He also wanted to say that a person can only be at peace with God and friends with God by believing in Jesus. When someone believes in Jesus, it is God who does these things for that person.

See: [Law of Moses](#)); [Law of Moses](#)

How does someone know Jesus?

[3:10]

He wanted to know Jesus through the “power of Jesus’ resurrection.” Paul was speaking about the power with which God raised Jesus from the dead. Perhaps that is also the power that God gives to Christians so that they can obey him.

Paul wanted to know Jesus through the “fellowship (κοινωνία/g2842)” of suffering, that is, sharing of Jesus’ suffering. In ancient Israel, many people believed that God caused people to suffer when they disobeyed him. Therefore, if someone suffered, this showed that God was displeased with him. This is what people thought.

Paul also wanted to know Jesus by “transformed (συνμορφίζω/g4833)” to be like Jesus, when Jesus died. Perhaps Paul wanted unbelievers to kill him because he believed in Jesus. Or perhaps he wanted only the things that Jesus wanted.

See: [Suffer](#); [Fellowship](#); [Suffer](#)

Do the dead come back to life?

[3:11]

Paul spoke about a time when he would rise from the dead, that is, come from being dead to being alive. Perhaps Paul was thinking of when he would die and go to Jesus in heaven. Some scholars think this. But other scholars think that Paul was writing about when Jesus returns to the earth. At that time, the believers will rise to live forever with Jesus (See 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Revelation 20:1-9). This is when Jesus will reward the Christians for how well they obeyed God and honored Jesus.

[Reward](#); [Heaven](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Reward](#)

3:12-16

What is the goal and prize?

[3:14]

Paul compared a Christian’s life to a race. In this race, people work for a prize. Paul taught that:

1. He had not yet received his prize. The prize will be life together with God forever in heaven. This will be a gift from God. However, Paul knew he would have to struggle to always honor God and obey him, and to always trust in Jesus.
2. No one can reach the goal while they are here on the earth. This is because Christians will never be as perfect as Jesus is perfect until they reach heaven.

3. Jesus saved all Christians so that they could all work towards the goal of honoring God in the way that they live. This is also the same goal that Paul talked about in 3:16. They were to keep doing the same thing that he had already taught them.

4. Paul did not want to compare himself to other people. He only wanted to compare himself to Jesus.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Heaven; Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

3:17-21

How did Paul speak about living as a Christian?

[3:17]

Paul wrote the metaphor of walking to talk about the way a Christian should live. Many people lived in the wrong way, that is, they disobey Jesus. This made Paul very sad.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who were the enemies of Jesus?

[3:18]

Paul did not say who the enemies of Jesus were. However, he said some things:

1. They opposed Jesus and his death. Perhaps they were these same false teachers who tried to force Christians to obey the Law of Moses. If this is true, they did not understand why Jesus died. Jesus died so that Christians could live forever with God in heaven. Therefore, these false teachers did not believe that Jesus died for everyone.
2. God will punish all enemies of Jesus. They will die and be apart from him forever.
3. They want nothing except to sin, to do what they themselves want to do.
4. They think that people will honor them because they sin, but people will shame them instead.
5. They do evil things. In Scripture, the writers often say that the world is evil, that is, the people in the world.

See: False Teacher; Law of Moses; Atonement (Atonement); Hell; Sin (Ashamed); World

How are Christians citizens of heaven?

[3:20]

Paul told the Philippian believers to live in a way that was “worthy of (ἀξίως/g516)” the gospel of Jesus (see: 1:27). Paul used the Greek word “live as a citizen (πολιτεύομαι/g4176),” which usually meant for a free person in a city to do everything he should do.

However, Paul wanted to say that Christians are citizens of heaven. That is, their true home is in heaven. That is where they belong. Others will honor them because of that. Even better, God approves of them, and he approves of what they do that shows they belong to him.

Paul wrote about two things that they should do because they were citizens of heaven: (1) they should be united together, at peace with one another, and (2) they should obey Jesus, their king, even if other people tried to stop them from obeying him.

See: [Heaven; Citizen](#); [Heaven](#)

How is Jesus savior?

[3:20]

In 3:20, Paul called Jesus “savior.” Paul knew that Jesus died to save people from their sins. Because Jesus died, God does not punish Christians for having sinned. Jesus also saves or rescues Christians from the power of sin. That is, Christians are able to do what God wants them to do.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Therefore, my beloved brothers whom I long for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, beloved friends.

² I am pleading with Euodia, and I am pleading with Syntyche, be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, I ask you, my true companion, to help these women who labored with me in spreading the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to all people. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in everything by prayer and earnest appeal with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God, ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is anything excellent, if there is anything to be praised, think about these things. ⁹ The things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰ I greatly rejoice in the Lord because now at last you have renewed your concern for me. You had indeed been concerned for me before, but there was no opportunity for you to help. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need. For I have learned to be content in all circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be poor, and I also know what it is to have plenty. In every way and in all things I have learned the secret of how to be well fed or to be hungry, and how to have an abundance or to be in need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ However, you did well to share with me in my difficulties. ¹⁵ You Philippians know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church supported me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone. ¹⁶ Even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent help for my needs more than once. ¹⁷ It is not that I seek the gift. Instead, I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸ I have received everything in full, and even more. I have been well supplied now that I have received from Epaphroditus the things you sent. They are a sweet-smelling aroma, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ My God will meet all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹ Greet all God's holy people in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²² All God's holy people who are here greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. ^[1]

Footnotes

4:23 ^[1]Some ancient and important Greek copies add,

Philippians 4

4:1-9

What are Paul's joy and crown?

[4:1]

When the Christians in Philippi obeyed God, it made Paul happy or proud. He compared them to wreath of leaves that athletes won in sport contests. Paul was happy because he had taught them to obey God and honor him.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How do Christians stand firm?

[4:1]

Paul talked about standing firm “in” or “for” Jesus, that is, he wanted to encourage the Philippian Christians to work hard to obey Jesus. He spoke the metaphor of “standing,” because he wanted to say that they should never “run away” from Jesus, that is, they should not sin.

See: [Sin;Metaphor](#); [Sin](#)

Who are Euodia and Syntyche?

[4:2]

Euodia and Syntyche were two Christian women in Philippi who argued with one another. Paul wrote nothing else about them except what he wrote here. Paul cared about these women because they had helped him. He wanted them to live at peace with one another.

What is the book of life?

[4:3]

In the Ancient Near East, people in cities often wrote down the names of all their citizens, that is, of the men who owned property in the city. In the same way, Paul wanted to say that God had written down the names of all the people who belonged to him. Paul called this the “book of life.”

How is the Lord near?

[4:5]

When Paul said that the lord is “near,” he was talking about Jesus. Jesus was not on the earth. Paul wanted to say that Jesus would come back to the earth soon. Because of this, he wanted Christians in Philippi to live as if they would see Jesus very soon. He knew that Jesus would ask them why they did what they did on earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How does peace surpass all understanding?

[4:7]

Paul spoke about peace that surpasses or is greater than anything that can be known.” Perhaps Paul wanted to say that God is wiser than anyone else. Or perhaps Paul wanted to say that people cannot fully understand how great the peace that God give is.

How does someone guard their hearts and thoughts?

[4:7]

Paul wanted to say that the peace that God gives to Christians would help them not to be anxious.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How does Paul use the words “In Christ”?

[4:7]

See: [In Christ](#)

How did Paul say for Christians to think about these things?

[4:8]

Paul wrote down many different things beginning with the words “whatever is” or “everything that is.” Paul wanted the Christians in Philippi to “dwell (λογίζομαι/g3049)” on these things, that is, to think about these things a lot. After they thought about these things, Paul wanted them to do these things. If they did these things, then God would give them peace.

4:10-23

Why were the Philippians Christians concerned again about Paul?

[4:10]

In the past, the Philippians sent Paul a gift of money to help him. They did not send him money again, but that was because they were not able to do so. Paul was not angry with the Philippians. Instead, he was happy that they wanted to help him again. So he thanked them for helping him in the past.

Paul also wanted to teach the Philippians. He knew that God would give him what he needed to live. He did not need anything more than this because he had peace with God. He also wanted to say that God made him able to obey him in every way that God wanted.

Paul told the Philippians that their gift was not only for him. Their gift was also a way for them to worship God. He compared their gift to a sacrifice of food. Both of these things, Paul said, produce smells that made God happy. That is, God accepted both as sacrifices to himself.

See: [Sacrifice](#)

How are Christians to be happy?

[4:11, 4:12]

Paul talked about being “content.” When someone is content, he is happy, even if he is suffering hardship. Paul was like this himself. He was happy, even though he was in prison because he had preached about Jesus. In 4:13, he said that he could be happy any time because God gave him the strength to endure any hardship.

How did Paul end this letter?

In 4:20-23, Paul ended this letter as other people ended letters in his time. He gave honor to God and prayed that God would be kind to the Christians in Philippi.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

Who are Caesar’s household?

[4:22]

Paul greeted the believers in Philippi for the people who were with him. He called some of the people with him “people from Caesar's house.” Caesar was the title of the emperor, the leader of the whole Roman Empire. Some scholars think that his house was a way of talking about people who were in Caesar's family. However, more scholars think that it was a way of talking about people who served Caesar in his palace. Perhaps they were servants or soldiers.

See: [Rome \(Roman Empire, Caesar\)](#)

What is your spirit?

[4:23]

When Paul talked about a person’s “spirit (πνεῦμα/g4151),” he was not talking about the Holy Spirit. Instead, he was talking about the believers’ minds and hearts.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Mind](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Book: Colossians

Introduction to Colossians

Overview

Paul wrote many letters to churches in Asia. Colossians is one of those letters. In these letters, Paul often wrote to help each church with a certain problem they were having. However, local churches also had the same types of problems. So, these churches passed Paul's letters to the other churches near them. Also, they made certain to keep these letters and often made copies of these letters.

In this letter, Paul taught things about Jesus that Christians really need to know. He taught about how God can save people from their sins and about how Christians can live in a way that honors God. Paul also encouraged the Christians in Colossae to trust in Jesus and to ignore false teachers.

Paul wrote other letters that can help readers to understand this letter. In Romans, he explained more about how God saves people from their sins. Many scholars think what Paul wrote in Romans is what he taught people in each of the churches he founded. In Acts, Luke wrote down several speeches Paul gave. These speeches can also help readers to understand what he wrote in this letter. In Ephesians, Paul wrote about many of the same things he wrote about in Colossians. Scholars think Paul wrote Ephesians and Colossians at the same time.

See: [Church](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)
See Map: Asia; Colossae

Who wrote this letter?

Paul of Tarsus wrote the letter to the Colossians. Timothy helped Paul write it (see: 1:1).

Scholars think Paul wrote this letter about 25 years after Jesus died. Some scholars think he wrote when he was in Ephesus. Some other scholars think Paul wrote the letter near the time of a major earthquake which devastated Colossae and several other cities near it. Scholars think this earthquake happened about 30 years after Jesus died.

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)
See Map: Tarsus; Ephesus; Colossae

Who was Paul?

Paul was an apostle. He started many churches. Acts records many things about Paul's life and how he served God (see: Acts 7:54-28:31). His letters provide more information about him. Thirteen of the letters he wrote are in the Bible: 1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus.

Paul was born in Tarsus (see: Acts 22:3). This was an area where Gentiles live. However, Paul was a Jew. Many of the earliest Christians were Jewish. He was from the tribe of Benjamin (see: Philippians 3:5-6). He was a Pharisee (see: Acts 22:3; Galatians 1:14; Philippians 3:5-6). Pharisees believed they could earn God's favor by obeying the Law of Moses and the rules of certain Jewish teachers. Gamaliel taught Paul (see: Acts 22:3; 5:34). Gamaliel was a Jewish teacher and people thought he was the best teacher. Paul was also taught by Gentile teachers (see: Acts 26:4). Paul was zealous (see: Galatians 1:14; Acts 22:3). That is, he worked very hard to please God. He persecuted Christians (see: Acts 7:58-8:3; 9:1-2) until he met and believed in Jesus (see: Acts 9:3-19). After this, he became a great Christian teacher.

See: [Apostle](#); [Pharisees](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Gentile](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)
See Map: Tarsus

Who was Timothy?

Timothy was a man who worked with Paul. He was younger than Paul. Paul said Timothy helped him to write Colossians (see: 1:1). He also helped Paul write many other letters.

Timothy was from Lystra. Lystra is a city located roughly midway between Tarsus and Colossae. Lystra was a place where many Roman soldiers lived. They guarded this city for the Roman Empire. His father was a Gentile. His mother and grandmother were Jewish and Christians (see: Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 1:5).

Paul met Timothy in Lystra on his second missionary journey. Timothy was already a Christian. Paul asked Timothy to travel with him (see: Acts 16:1-5). The two men became very close friends (see: 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:2). Timothy led the church Paul founded in Ephesus (see: 1 Timothy 1:3). Paul wrote 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy to him during that time.

See: [Gentile; Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

See Map: Lystra; Ephesus

Who did Paul write this letter to?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Colossae.

See Map: Colossae

What were some important things about Colossae?

Many people in Colossae had a lot of money. Many soldiers lived in Colossae. They guarded the city because many people went to Colossae to trade with one another. People came to Colossae from many places. Large numbers of Greeks, Romans, and Jews lived there. People in Colossae worshipped gods from many different places around the world.

See: [False gods](#)

What was the history of the church there?

Scholars think Epaphras started the Colossian church. He believed in Jesus because of what Paul taught (see: Colossians 1:7-8; 4:12-13; Philemon 23). They think this happened while Paul was at Ephesus. Paul taught in Ephesus for several years (see: Acts 18:19-21, 19:1-41, 20:31). Epaphras then went back to his hometown of Colossae, as well as Laodicea and Hierapolis. He taught people there about Jesus. Scholars do not think Paul went to Colossae (see: Colossians 2:1, 2:5). He heard from other people about how the Colossian Christians believed in Jesus (see: 1:4, 1:9). Epaphras was one person who told Paul about this (see: Colossians 1:8).

See Map: Colossae; Ephesus; Laodicea; Hierapolis

What did Paul write about in this letter?

Paul wrote this letter to tell Christians several important things.

He wrote to tell Christians not to believe what certain false teachers said. He wrote about what Christians should think about Jesus. Jesus is God. He wanted everyone to know true things about God. He wrote about how people can be saved from their sins. He wrote that God saves people from their sins when they believe in Jesus. He wanted Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\); False Teacher; Jesus is God; Atonement](#)

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote this letter to tell people not to believe some things that false teachers were teaching in Colossae.

Paul did not want people to stop trusting in Jesus because of the things these false teachers said.

Paul taught that Jesus is more powerful than anyone, except for God the Father. This was true when Jesus lived on the earth. Jesus created all things and all things are subject to him (see: 1:15-17). He also leads the church. He made peace between God and humans when he was crucified.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\); Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Outline of Colossians

1. Paul greeted the Colossian Christians (1:1-2)
2. Paul prayed for the Christians in Colossae (1:3-14)
3. Jesus Christ is the Greatest (1:15-23)
4. How Paul Taught the Gentiles (1:24-2:7)
5. How Christians Should Think (2:8-3:4)
6. How Christians Should Live (3:5-4:6)
7. People Who Worked with Paul (4:7-17)
8. Paul said goodbye (4:18)

Colossians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

² to God's holy people and faithful brothers in Christ who are at Colossae. May grace be to you, and peace from God our Father. ^[1]

³ We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we always pray for you. ⁴ We have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all God's holy people, ⁵ because of the hope reserved for you in heaven, which you heard about in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ which has come to you. In the same way this gospel is bearing fruit and is growing in all the world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth. ⁷ This is the gospel as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf. ^[2]⁸ Epaphras has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹ Because of this love, from the day we heard this we have not stopped praying for you. We pray that you will be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord and that pleases him in every way: by bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ by being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, so that you may have great endurance and patience, and by joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who made you able ^[3] to have a share in the inheritance of God's holy people in light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ^[4]¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created, those in the heavens and those on the earth, the visible and the invisible things. Whether thrones or dominions or governments or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so he has first place among all things. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son, ²⁰ and through the Son to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, whether things on earth or things in heaven. ²¹ At one time you also were alienated and hostile in mind and in evil deeds. ²² But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through death to present you holy, blameless, and above accusation before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, established and firm, not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which was proclaimed to every person created under heaven. This is the gospel of which I, Paul, became a servant.

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ It is of this church that I am a servant, according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God. ²⁶ This is the mystery that was hidden for ages and for generations but now has been revealed to God's holy people. ²⁷ It is to them that God wanted to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim him, warning every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I labor and strive according to his energy that is at work in me in power.

Footnotes

- 1:2 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies add,
1:7 ^[2]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,
1:12 ^[3]Some ancient Greek copies read,
1:14 ^[4]Some ancient Greek copies read,
-

Colossians 1 Commentary

1:1-2

Who was Paul?

[1:1]

Paul wrote this letter. (See: Introduction to Colossians).

What is an "apostle"?

[1:1]

See: [Apostle](#)

Who was Timothy?

[1:1]

Timothy was a young man who worked with Paul. He helped Paul write this letter. (See: Introduction to Colossians).

Who are God's holy people?

[1:2]

See: [Holy Ones](#)

What did Paul write in verse 2?

[1:2]

Some ancient copies of the New Testament have the words "the Lord Jesus Christ." More and older copies of the New Testament do not have these words. Scholars do not think Paul wrote these words. Who were the "faithful brothers"?

When Paul wrote "faithful brothers," he was writing about the Christians in Colossae. He called them this because they believed in Jesus. Because of this, they were God's children. So, they were also Paul's brothers and sisters in some way. When Paul used the word "brothers," he was speaking about both men and women.

See: [Family of God](#) See Map: Colossae

What is "grace"?

[1:2]

In ancient times, people often greeted each other by saying "grace." Greek people and people who spoke Greek used it. They wanted people to get favor. Paul always wrote this in his letters. This was because many of his readers were Greek. He also wanted the Christians to remember that God gave favor to them. God forgives the sins of all people who believe in Jesus (See: Romans 3:24, 4:16).

See: [Grace](#)

What is "peace"?

[1:2]

In ancient times, Jews often greeted one another by saying "peace" (See: Genesis 43:23).

1:3-8

Why did Paul call God the father of Jesus?

[1:3]

Paul called God the father of Jesus. Paul wanted people to know that God is the father of Jesus and that Jesus is God. He wrote more about this in the rest of this letter. Scholars think the some Christians in Colossae did not believe that Jesus is God. Paul wrote this letter to help them to know true things about Jesus. Paul wanted people to know that Jesus is greater than everyone except God the Father.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Trinity](#); [Jesus is God](#)

What is the "certain hope reserved for you in heaven"?

[1:5]

When Paul wrote "certain hope reserved for you in heaven", he wanted his readers to know that the "hope" he wrote about is a promise from God. God promises that people who believe in Jesus will live with him forever in heaven. Christians can be certain God has "reserved" places in heaven for them.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What is the "gospel"?

[1:5]

See: [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write "bearing fruit"?

[1:6]

Paul wrote "bearing fruit" to speak about how the Colossians lived. "Bearing fruit" is a metaphor for the way the Jesus changed the people who believed in him. The Colossians traded fruits for other goods. They understood the value of a tree that made a lot of fruit. Paul wrote "bearing fruit" to get them to think that they were valuable to God because of the things they did to serve and honor God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What did Paul write in verse 7?

[1:7]

Some ancient copies of the New Testament have the words "on our behalf." More and older copies of the New Testament have the words "on your behalf." Scholars think Paul wrote "on our behalf." Who was Epaphras?

Epaphras was the person who started the church at Colossae. Scholars think Paul told Epaphras about Jesus. After Epaphras believed in Jesus, Paul trained him so he could lead a church. Scholars believe Epaphras came from Colossae (see: 4:12).

See: [Church](#)

Why did Paul write "love in the Spirit"?

[1:8]

Paul wrote "love in the Spirit" to tell the Christians in Colossae that he knew how much they cared about him. He knew this because of what Epaphras told him.

Scholars disagree about why Paul wrote "in the Spirit." Some scholars think he wanted to speak about the Holy Spirit. That is to say, in some way, the Holy Spirit caused the Colossian Christians to love Paul. Other scholars think that Paul spoke about their human spirits. That is, God helped them to love Paul.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

1:9-14

Why did Paul write "knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"?

[1:9]

Paul wrote "knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" to tell the Christians in Colossae something special. Paul prayed that God would give the Colossian Christians "full knowledge" of God's will, with "wisdom" and "understanding" (σύνεσις/g4907). He wanted them to know the will of God and how to live in a way that honors God. Knowing this was greater than anything the false teachers taught.

See: Will of God; False Teacher

Why did Paul ask God to "fill" the Colossians with all these things?

[1:9]

When Paul asked God to "fill" the Christians in Colossae with these things, it was a metaphor. He spoke about God "filling" them to get them to think about all they thought and all they did. He wanted them to live in a way that would honor God even more. Therefore, he asked God to help them know more of God's will. He asked God to give them a certain type of wisdom and understanding. He did not want them to ask to know more about things that would make them rich. He wanted to say that if God "filled" them with the things, then they would know what God wanted them to do.

See: [Will of God](#); [Filling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Will of God](#)

Why did Paul write "walk worthily of the Lord"?

[1:10]

When Paul wrote "walk worthily of the Lord," this was a metaphor. He wanted people to think about living in ways that honor God. He used the metaphor of "walk" to write about the things they did.

See: [Walk \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is "glory"?

[1:11]

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Paul call God "father"?

[1:12]

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

What did Paul write in verse 12?

[1:12]

Some ancient copies of the New Testament have the words "who made us able." More and older copies of the New Testament have the words "who made you able." Scholars think Paul wrote "who made you able." What is an "inheritance"?

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

Who is "the Son"?

[1:13]

The "Son" is Jesus.

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

What did Paul write in verse 14?

[1:14]

Some ancient copies of the New Testament have the words "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." More and older copies of the New Testament have the words "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Scholars think Paul wrote "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." What is the "dominion of darkness"?

When Paul wrote "dominion of darkness", he wanted readers to think about Satan. He also wanted them to think about how they used to sin before they did believed in Jesus. A "dominion" is an area controlled by a ruler. Paul wanted to say that before they believe in Jesus, people serve Satan. Satan encourages them to sin.

Scholars also think that Paul wrote about "darkness" because he wanted the Colossian Christians to reject the things the false teachers taught. Scholars think they taught about light and darkness. They believed that a person could move from darkness into light by learning certain things. Paul wanted to say that they really were still in darkness because they thought this way. So the Colossian Christians should not listen to them.

See: [False Teacher](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [False Teacher](#)

What is "redemption"?

[1:14]

See: Colossians 1:22; John 3:16; Romans 5:10

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

1:15-23

What is an image?

[1:15]

An image is something that is like a person, an animal, or another thing in some way. Jesus is God's perfect image. That is, Jesus is like God the Father in every way, but he is not God the Father. People know about God the Father because of the things Jesus said and did.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did Paul call Jesus the firstborn (1:15)?

[1:15, 1:18]

Paul called Jesus the "firstborn" to say he has special honor. A first born child is the first child that was born in a family. In ancient times, the firstborn was greater than the family's other children in some way.

The firstborn had a different inheritance than their brothers and sisters. If the firstborn child's parents were a king or a queen, they became the king or queen when their parents died. Paul said Jesus was the first born. This as a metaphor. Jesus deserves to be honored more than any other person. Also, Jesus was the first to come back to life after he died. Because of this, Jesus is the older brother of everyone else who

becomes a child of God (see: Romans 8:29). Jesus was alive before God created the universe. Jesus will rule over everyone and everything forever. He deserves to be greatly honored.

See: [Children of God](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Family of God](#); [Son of God](#); [Children of God](#)

Who made the universe (1:16)?

[1:16]

God made the universe. That is to say, he made everything. However, Paul wrote that God did this by Jesus and through Jesus (See: Proverbs 8:22-31, John 1:3, 1 Corinthians 8:6, and Hebrews 1:2). Scholars do not know how God did this.

See: [Trinity](#); [Son of God](#); [Trinity](#)

Why did Paul write "thrones or dominions or governments or authorities"?

[1:16]

Paul wrote about "thrones or dominions or governments or authorities." He wanted his readers to know nothing could happen unless God gave permission for it to happen. Because of this, no one can say they are as great as or greater than God.

Why did Paul write that in Jesus all things "hold together"?

[1:17]

Paul wrote that in Jesus all things "hold together" so his readers would know that Jesus makes the universe stay together. If he did not do this, there would be nothing in the universe (see: Hebrews 1:3).

How is Jesus "head of" the church?

[1:18]

When Paul wrote that Jesus is "head of" the church, he wanted readers to know that Jesus is the leader of all Christians everywhere.

See: [Church](#)

Why did Paul write "all his fullness"?

[1:19]

When Paul wrote "all his fullness," he wanted readers to know that Jesus is God. That is, Jesus is completely God. There is nothing God has that Jesus does not have. Also, there is nothing of Jesus that is not God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

What is "to reconcile" and "made peace"?

[1:20]

Paul wrote about God reconciling things. When someone is reconciled to someone else, they are brought together after they fought against each other in some way. When Paul wrote this, he wanted people to think about how everyone sins. Because of this, they fight against God in some way. However, God sent Jesus to "reconcile" or "make peace" between God and people. When Jesus died, he made it possible for God to forgive the sins of people who believe in Jesus. These people are at peace with God. God did what was needed so that people could be at peace with him.

See: [Reconcile \(Reconciliation\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atonement](#); [Reconcile \(Reconciliation\)](#)

What is "holy, blameless, and above reproach"?

[1:22]

When Paul wrote "holy, blameless, and above reproach," he wanted readers to think about how Christians should live in a way that honors God. He said that Jesus made it possible for people who believe in him to serve him completely. He also said that these people do not have to sin any longer. And he also said that other people do not think they do evil things.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What is "the faith"?

[1:23]

When Paul wrote "the faith", he wanted to tell readers that they must continue to trust in Jesus. He wanted them to keep trusting Jesus.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What is the gospel?

[1:23]

See: [Gospel](#)

1:24-29

Why did Paul write "I fill up in my flesh" (1:24)?

[1:24]

When Paul wrote "I fill up in my flesh," he wanted his readers to think about how he suffered. He wrote "fill up" as a metaphor to say he accepted whatever happened to him while he preached the gospel.

In another letter, Paul listed the ways he suffered while he traveled to preach and teach (see: 2 Corinthians 11:23-29). In ancient times, it was difficult to travel a long distance. Paul suffered when he traveled to serve God and other Christians. Once he arrived, sometimes people beat him or imprisoned him because they did not like the things he said (see: Acts 16:19-24). Paul wrote this letter while he was in prison (See: Introduction to Colossians).

Paul wrote this so his readers would know that Paul was willing to suffer because he believed in Jesus. He did not try to avoid suffering. He thought it was more important to do what God wanted him to do.

See: [Suffer](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Suffer](#)

Why did Paul write "what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ"?

[1:24]

When Paul wrote "what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ," he wanted people to think that what Paul did was because of what Jesus did. "Afflictions" is another word for suffering.

Paul taught that Jesus died to completely atone for peoples' sins. Paul did not write that he suffered to atone for peoples' sins. Instead, Paul wrote that he suffered so that other people could learn about Jesus. Then they too could believe in Jesus.

See: [Sin](#); [Suffer](#); [Sin](#)

What is "his body"?

[1:24]

When Paul wrote "his body", he used a metaphor. He was writing about the church. In other letters, Paul explained this metaphor (see: Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12). When he wrote the church, he wanted readers to think about all Christians everywhere.

See: [Body of Christ](#); [Body of Christ](#)

Why did Paul write "secret truth"?

[1:26]

When Paul wrote "secret truth," he wanted to speak about something that people can learn about. It is something that was once a secret (see: Ephesians 3:9, Romans 16:25). Now God has revealed it. So it is not a secret now. Instead it is "truth" that people need to know.

See: Colossians 2:2; 4:3; Ephesians 3:3 See: [Mystery](#); [Mystery](#)

What specific "secret truth" did Paul reveal?

[1:26, 1:27]

Some scholars think the "secret truth" Paul revealed was that Gentiles could also become part of the people of God. First, God made the people of Israel his people. Now, anyone who believed in Jesus could also be part of God's people. Other scholars think the "secret truth" Paul wrote about was that Gentiles could be at peace with God. Before, Gentiles needed to do the things the Jews did so they could be at peace with God. Now anyone can be at peace with God because they believe in Jesus.

God had hidden this plan from people for a long time (see: Ephesians 3:9, Romans 16:25). Now, God revealed it to Paul (see: Ephesians 3:3). He wanted Paul to reveal it to Gentiles and other Christians.

See: Romans 11:25, Ephesians 3:6, Acts 22:21, and Acts 28:28. See: [Gentile](#); [People of God](#); [Gentile](#)

What are the "riches" that Paul wrote about?

[1:27]

Paul wrote about "riches." This was a metaphor. He wanted to write that God highly values people who believe in Jesus. That is, God thinks about them the way a rich person thinks about their money. So, when Paul wrote about the "secret truth among the Gentiles," he really wanted the Gentiles to know about Jesus. Paul served God by telling Gentiles about Jesus. This is what God wanted Paul to do.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write "Christ in you"?

[1:27]

When Paul wrote "Christ in you", he wanted people to think that when they believed in Jesus, Jesus became part of them in some way. Paul did not want to say that Jesus is physically inside of Christians. Some scholars think that "Christ in you" is the Holy Spirit. Other scholars think that a person who believes in Jesus can in some way make themselves like Jesus. That is, they can live in a way that honors God.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What is the "hope of glory"?

[1:27]

The hope of glory is something Christians know. They know that they will be with God in heaven. They will be near God who is glorious.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How did Paul present people mature in Christ?

[1:28]

Paul wrote about presenting people mature in Christ. This was a metaphor. He was speaking about making an offering to God of the people who they taught. They wanted to give them to God to show God how they helped these people serve God. Paul wanted to help these people to live in a way that honors God. He did this to honor God.

Chapter 2

¹ For I want you to know how great a struggle I have had for you, for those at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh. ² I work so that their hearts may be encouraged by being brought together in love and into all the riches of full assurance of understanding, into the knowledge of the mystery of God, that is, Christ. ³ In him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. ⁴ I say this so that no one may trick you with persuasive speech. ⁵ Although I am not with you in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit. I rejoice to see your good order and the strength of your faith in Christ.

⁶ As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him. ⁷ Be rooted in him, be built on him, be established in faith just as you were taught, and abound in thanksgiving.

⁸ See that no one captures you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, conforming to the elemental spirits of the world, and not conforming to Christ. ⁹ For in him all the fullness of God lives in bodily form. ¹⁰ You have been filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not done by humans in the removal of the body of flesh, but in the circumcision of Christ. ¹² You were buried with him in baptism, and in him you were raised up through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him and forgave us all of our trespasses. ¹⁴ He blotted out the written record of debts that was hostile to us with its regulations. He took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

¹⁶ So then, let no one judge you in eating or in drinking, or about a festival or a new moon, or about Sabbath days. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance is Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one who wants humility and the worship of angels judge you out of your prize. Such a person enters into the things he has seen and becomes puffed up for no reason by his fleshly thinking. ¹⁹ He does not hold on to the head. It is from the head that the whole body throughout its joints and ligaments is supplied and held together; it grows with the growth given by God.

²⁰ If you died together with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you live as obligated to the world: ²¹ "Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch"? ²² All these things will perish with use, according to the commandments and teachings of men. ²³ These rules have the appearance of wisdom, with their self-made religion and humility and severe treatment of the body. But they have no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Footnotes

2:13 ^[1]Some ancient Greek copies read,

Colossians 2

2:1-5

What was Paul's struggle?

[2:1]

When Paul wrote about his struggle, he wanted people to know how he prayed for them very often. He was in prison. Therefore, he could not be with them. This made him very sad. Scholars also think he wanted them to think that he was in some way wrestling with God. That is, he was fighting with God in some way when he was asking God to help them.

Where was Laodicea?

[2:1]

Laodicea was about 16 kilometers west of Colossae. Christians in the two cities knew each other. Christian leaders sent letters to both of them. They usually shared those letters with each other. Paul prayed for both those churches.

See Map: Colossae; Laodicea

Why did Paul write "have not seen my face in the flesh"?

[2:1]

When Paul wrote "have not seen my face in the flesh," he was writing about people who had not seen Paul. Paul did not start the church in Colossae. Therefore, many people were part of that church who had not met him. He still loved them.

See: [Church](#)

Why did Paul write "hearts"?

[2:2]

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is the "secret truth of God"?

[2:2]

The "secret truth of God" is that Jesus is the Messiah.

See: Colossians 1:26

Why did Paul write "hidden"?

[2:3]

Paul wrote "hidden" to make his people think about God. He wrote that Jesus is God. God is very great, and he can do anything. However, Jesus was also a person. This meant that other people could not see everything he could do because he was God but he was also a man. Therefore, Paul wrote that some of the things Jesus could do were "hidden." That is, people could not see them.

See: [Jesus is God](#)

Why did Paul write "with you in spirit"?

[2:5]

Paul wrote "with you in spirit" to tell people that he knew they believed in Jesus. They believed in Jesus the same way he did. They prayed for the same things (see: Colossians 1:3,9).

Paul also knew that they heard the gospel he taught. He knew this because Epaphras started the church in Colossae. Paul trained Epaphras. So Epaphras taught them what Paul taught Epaphras. Paul wanted to say that in some way it was as if he taught them himself.

See: [Church](#), [Church](#)

Why did Paul write "faith"?

[2:5]

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

2:6-15**Why did Paul write "received Christ the Lord"?**

[2:6]

When Paul wrote "received Christ the Lord", he wanted people to think about when they believed in Jesus, who is the Messiah. He used the metaphor of receiving a gift. This is because when a person believes in Jesus and God saves them from their sins, it is a great gift from God.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#), [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul write "walk in him"?

[2:6]

See: [Walk](#)

Why did Paul write "be rooted in him"?

[2:7]

When Paul wrote "be rooted in him", he used a metaphor to speak about how Christians should follow Jesus. He wanted people to think about how a plant is rooted in the ground. The ground keeps the plant strong. It keeps the plant growing. In some way, when a person believes in Jesus, God keeps that person strong and helps them to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "be built on him"?

[2:7]

When Paul wrote "be built on him", he used a different metaphor to speak about Christians should obey Jesus. He wanted people to think about how a building is built on a foundation. The foundation keeps the building from falling down. In some way, Jesus keeps Christians from falling away from God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "captures you"?

[2:8]

When Paul wrote "captures you", he warned people not to start believing the wrong things. He used the metaphor of a soldier being captured by an enemy in war. That soldier became the slave of the enemy. Paul wanted to say that it is in some way like this if a Christian starts to believe wrong ideas about God or Jesus. That person does the wrong things and they cannot stop doing the wrong things because they believe the wrong things.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is "philosophy and empty deceit"?

[2:8]

Paul wrote "philosophy and empty deceit" to warn people not to believe something other than the gospel.

"Philosophy" is a word for ways of thinking. Paul used it to speak about ideas that people make up. That is to say, they are things people teach that are not from God.

When Paul wrote "empty deceit", he wanted people to know that these ideas are worthless. If people believed them, they did not help them. Also, he wanted them to know that these ideas are lies. That is, other people tell them these things to deceive them.

Advice to translators: An idea is something someone thinks.

See: [Gospel](#)

What are the "elements of the world"?

[2:8]

Scholars disagree about what "elements of the world" are. Some scholars think when Paul wrote "elements of the world," he wanted people to think about spirits that are not from God. These spirits are demons. Other scholars think he wrote this to get people to think about things the world. The ancient Greeks thought that everything in the world was composed of the "elements" of earth, air, fire, and water. Other scholars think Paul wrote about ways the false teachers spoke. These false teachers would speak about ideas as if they were people.

Advice to translators: An idea is something someone thinks.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

What is the "fullness of God"?

[2:9]

When Paul wrote "fullness of God," he wanted people to know that Jesus is God. That is, Jesus is completely God. There is nothing God has that Jesus does not have. Also, there is nothing of Jesus that is not God.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Jesus is God](#)

Why did Paul write "filled in him"?

[2:10]

When Paul wrote "filled in him," he wanted people to know that Jesus in some way completed or perfected them.

See: Colossians 1:9

What is the "circumcision of Christ"?

[2:11]

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

Why did Paul write "you were buried with him in baptism"?

[2:12]

When Paul wrote "you were buried", he used the metaphor of death and burial to speak about what happens when someone believes in Jesus. When a person dies, their body is buried in the ground. That is, people no longer see it. When a person is baptised, it is a symbol of that they no longer have to do the things they used to do. They do not have to sin. They begin a new life. That is, they begin obeying Jesus instead of sinning.

Paul wrote "with him" to make people know that Jesus changes people who believe in him. When a person is baptised, it is also a symbol that the person in some way is joining in Jesus' resurrection.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Sin](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

How are people "raised up" in Christ?

[2:12]

Paul wrote that Christians are "raised up" in Christ. In some way, God gives Christians the benefit of Jesus' resurrection. That is, Christians will be resurrected. However, Paul said that in some way, Christians are changed when they believe in Jesus. In some way, this is like being resurrected, or being given a new life.

Scholars think this was part of the metaphor of baptism. That is, when a person comes up from the water when they are baptised, it is a symbol of their new life. This new life is because of Jesus. [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#) See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

What was Paul writing about being "dead in your trespasses" and "alive together with" Christ?

[2:13]

Paul wrote about being "dead in your trespasses" but now "alive together with" Jesus to get readers to think about how different their lives were before and after they believed in Jesus. Before they believed in Jesus, they sinned against God. In the Bible, people often used the metaphor of being dead to speak about this (see: Romans 5:12-21). But when a person believes in Jesus, God saves them from their sins. Paul wanted people to know that in some way, this is like getting a new life. They now live in some way "with" Jesus, who is the Messiah. Paul said that this new life is in some way like the new life Jesus got when he was resurrected.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Die \(Death\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul write "nailing it to the cross"?

[2:14]

When Paul wrote about peoples' sins being "nailed to the cross", he wanted to say that God cancelled their sins completely. God will no longer judge them or punish them for their sins. Nailing to the cross is a metaphor or symbol for completely ending something.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Cross](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What was Paul saying in 2:15?

[2:15]

In 2:15, Paul was saying that when Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected, he defeated forever all "powers and authorities" that are opposed to God (see: 1:16, 2:10). That is to say, they still exist on earth. But they never can defeat God. Paul used the metaphor of "disarming" them to speak about this. Then he wrote that Jesus "made a public spectacle of them". That is to say, he defeated them in a way that all people can know about it. Also, it was a way that shames them. People may still follow the "powers and authorities". But if they do, they are foolish.

These "powers and authorities" included Satan and demons.

See: [Demon](#); [Cross](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Demon](#)

2:16-23

Why did Paul write "a shadow of the things to come"?

[2:17]

When Paul wrote "a shadow of the things to come," he wanted people to know that any religious rules or laws are less important than eternal life.

Some teachers wanted the Christians in Colossae to go back to obeying the Law of Moses. They taught that people are saved from their sins by following the Law of Moses.

However, Paul said these things were only a "shadow." That is they were not as great as something that happened later. He wanted people to believe in Jesus and obey the things Jesus taught. This is how people are at peace with God.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What is "humility"?

[2:18]

In 2:18, Paul used the word "humility" differently than he did in the rest of the New Testament. He used it to speak about certain things people did to please God. These were things such as fasting, that a person did to make other people think he was serving God. This is different than other places the word "humility" is used in the New Testament (see: 3:12; Acts 20:19; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:3). In those places, it is written to say that a person knows they are not greater than God or other people. The person is not proud.

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

What is "the worship of angels"?

[2:18]

Scholars disagree over "the worship of angels." Some scholars think he was speaking about people worshipping angels instead of worshipping God. Other scholars think he was speaking about people worshipping God the way the angels worship God.

Paul wanted his readers to reject both of these things. He wanted them to worship God through Jesus, who is the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Angel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is "fleshly thinking"?

[2:18]

"Fleshly thinking" is when a person thinks too much about their body and what they feel. Paul warned his people that this way of thinking was not what God wants. God wants people to think about other things. He wanted them to think about serving God and helping other people.

What is the "head"?

[2:19]

When Paul wrote about the "head", he used a metaphor to speak about Jesus. Paul wanted people to know that Jesus is the leader of all Christians. The head is the part of a person that determines what the body will do. That is to say, in some way the head leads the body.

See: [Church](#); [Body of Christ](#); [Church](#)

What is the "body" that Paul wrote about?

[2:19]

The "body" that Paul wrote about is a metaphor for the church.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

What did Paul write about in 2:20-23?

In 2:20-23, Paul wrote again that a person should not think that they will be saved from their sins if they follow certain rules. Paul said that these are part of "the world", that is to say of things that are opposed to God. These rules were part of the wrong things that false teachers taught in Colossae. Paul said that Christians need to believe in Jesus and obey the things Jesus taught.

See: [World](#); [Law of Moses](#); [World](#)

How can a person "die together with Christ"?

[2:20]

When Paul wrote that a person "die together with Christ," he used the metaphor of dying to speak about a person believing in Jesus and being saved from their sins.

See: Colossians 2:13, 15 See: [Die \(Death\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Die \(Death\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ If then God has raised you with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. ² Think about the things above, not about the things on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ appears, who is your life, then you will also appear with him in glory. ^[1]

⁵ Put to death, then, the members that are on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ^[2]⁷ It is in these things that you also once walked when you lived in them. ⁸ But now you must get rid of all these things—wrath, anger, evil intentions, slander, and obscene speech from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have taken off the old man with its practices, ¹⁰ and you have put on the new man that is being made new in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it, ¹¹ where there is no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all, and is in all.

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, put on a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another. Be gracious to each other. If someone has a complaint against someone else, forgive in the same way that the Lord has forgiven you. ¹⁴ Above all these things, have love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. It was for this peace that you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ live in you richly, teaching and instructing one another with all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him.

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as it is appropriate in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be bitter against them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is pleasing in the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they will not be discouraged. ²² Slaves, obey your masters according to the flesh in all things, not with eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with a sincere heart. Fear the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work from the soul as to the Lord and not as to people. ²⁴ You know that you will receive from the Lord the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. ²⁵ For anyone who does unrighteousness will receive the penalty for the unrighteousness that he did, and there is no partiality.

Footnotes

3:4 ^[1]Some ancient Greek copies, and some ancient translations read,

3:6 ^[2]Some ancient Greek copies read,

Colossians 3

3:1-4

How are people "raised with Christ"?

[3:1]

See: Colossians 2:12, 2:13 See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What are "things above"?

[3:1]

"Things above" are things about heaven. When Paul wrote this, he wanted people to think about the kingdom of God. He did not want them to keep thinking about things on earth. He wanted them to think about serving God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did Paul write "you have died"?

[3:3]

Paul wrote "you have died." This is a metaphor (see: Colossians 2:13, 20). He wanted them to repent of their sins completely.

See: [Sin Offering](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sin Offering](#)

Why did Paul write "your life is hidden with Christ"?

[3:3]

When Paul wrote "your life is hidden with Christ", he wanted people to think about the way God changed them when they believed in Jesus. He used the metaphor of hiding. He wanted them to know that because they believed in Jesus, they could honor and serve God. And because they honored and served God, they did not serve other gods. It was as if they were hidden from the gods they used to worship.

See: [False gods](#); [Metaphor](#); [False gods](#)

When will Christ "appear"?

[3:4]

Nobody knows when the messiah will "appear" again. That is, no one knows when Jesus will return to the earth. Paul wrote this so his readers would think about Jesus returning to the earth.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did Paul write "you will also appear with him in glory"?

[3:4]

Paul wrote "you will also appear with him in glory" because he wanted people to think about eternal life with God.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

3:5-17

Why did Paul write "put to death"?

[3:5]

When Paul wrote "put to death," it was a metaphor. He wanted Christians to completely removing certain things from their lives. That is, he wanted them to completely stop doing these evil things. When a person dies, he cannot affect the people who know him any more. In the same way, when a Christian completely stops doing certain things, those things no longer affect him any more.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "members"?

[3:5]

Paul wrote "members." This was a metaphor. He was writing about anything a person desires that is wrong.

Who are the "sons of disobedience"?

[3:6]

The "sons of disobedience" are people who do not honor God. They do wrong things. They do not follow what Paul and Epaphras taught the Christians in Colossae.

Why did Paul write "walked"?

[3:7]

See: [Walk;Walk](#)

Who is the "old man with its practices"?

[3:9]

The "old man with its practices" is a way of speaking about how people are before they believe in Jesus. That is, how they live before they become Christians. Paul often wrote about believing in Jesus as if it is the beginning of a new life. So, he also wrote about a person before they believe in Jesus as the "old man".

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Who is the "new man"?

[3:10]

The "new man" is a way of speaking about people after they believe in Jesus. Paul often wrote this way as a metaphor. That is, he wrote about believing in Jesus as if it is the beginning of a new life. That is, as if the person becomes a "new man" when they believe in Jesus. He is different than he was before he believed in Jesus.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

How does a person "put on the new man"?

[3:10]

When Paul wrote that a person should "put on the new man." It was a metaphor. He wrote about putting on clothes. That is, a person chooses to put clothes on. Sometimes, the person chooses which clothes to put on. So Paul wrote this to get people to think that a Christian needs to choose to live a certain way. That is, Christians are to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is the "image of the one who created it"?

[3:10]

When Paul wrote the "image of the one who created it," he spoke about God. He wanted people to remember that they were created in God's image (see: Genesis 1:26-27). He also wanted people to think about how God forgives their sins when they believe in Jesus. When God does this, it is as if he creates them as new people (see: Colossians 3:10).

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

What did Paul want readers to think when he wrote 3:11?

[3:11]

When Paul wrote 3:11, he wanted to say that God cares whether someone believes in Jesus. God will forgive the sins of anyone who believes in Jesus. However, God does not care where someone was born. He does not care if someone is rich or poor. He does not care who someone worshipped before they believed in Jesus. God wants people to believe in Jesus.

See: John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:11-22 See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What is to "put on a heart"?

[3:12]

When someone "put on a heart," they choose to live in a certain way. Paul continued to use the metaphor of a person putting on clothes (see: Colossians 3:10). He did this to tell people that they should choose to live in a way that honors God. He wanted to say that Christians need to choose this every day.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is "bear with"?

[3:13]

When someone "bear with" someone, they are patient. That is, they do not get angry or upset with someone else.

Why did Paul write "bond of perfection"?

[3:14]

Paul wrote "bond of perfection" to get people to think that if they love each other, God will keep them together. "Bond" is a metaphor for joining things together forever. So Paul wrote this to write about God joining people together who are different. God does this because they all believe in Jesus. So, they love each other. The bond "of perfection" was a way of saying that this is the best way for people to live.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is "peace" ?

[3:15]

"Peace" is when someone is calm does not often get upset.

Why did Paul write "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts"?

Paul wrote "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" to tell people to keep obeying Jesus. He used the metaphor of a person ruling other people. He wanted to say that Christians need to remember that Jesus is their king. That is, they need to do things he said to do.

If they do this, then God will give them peace that is better than any peace they can have without Jesus. That is why Paul wrote peace "of Christ."

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What is to be "called in one body"?

[3:15]

Paul wrote about all Christians when he wrote "called in one body." In the Bible, the church is spoken about as if it is a body. Paul wanted people to think that God called them to be part of his church. That is, God did certain things so they could believe in Jesus. When they do this, it makes them part of the church.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Church](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

What is the "word of Christ"?

[3:16]

The "word of Christ" is the gospel about Jesus. It is also all the things that Jesus taught while he was on the earth.

See: [Gospel](#)

How can the word of Christ "live in you richly"?

[3:16]

When Paul wrote about the word of Christ living in you richly, he wanted people to keep learning about Jesus and thinking about what Jesus taught people to do. If someone does this, they will do things that honor God. This will help other people to know that this person believes in Jesus.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

3:18-25

Why did Paul write "masters according to the flesh"?

[3:22]

Paul wrote "masters according to the flesh" to get people to think about people who owned slaves. He wrote "according to the flesh" to say that a person was only a slave while they were living on earth. That is, people were not slaves because God wanted them to be slaves. It was only because of what other people did.

What is "eyeservice"?

[3:22]

"Eyeservice" was when a slave obeyed his master only when the master watched him. Paul told people that this was wrong. They should obey all the time.

What are "people pleasers"?

[3:22]

"People pleasers" are men or women who do things just to get other people to think they were good people. Paul told people that this was wrong. They should think about pleasing God.

What is working "as to the Lord and not as to people"?

[3:23]

Working "as to the Lord and not as to people" is another way of saying what Paul wrote in 3:22. That is, he wanted people to always do things that honor God. He wanted people not to do things because of what other people will think.

What is "the inheritance"?

[3:24]

See: Colossians 1:9 See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What is "favoritism"?

[3:25]

"Favoritism" is when one person or group of people receives a gift or favor just because of who they are. That is, it is not because they have done something to deserve the gift. Paul told people that God does not do this. He loves all people (see: John 3:16). He forgives the sins of everyone who believes in Jesus.

See: [Atone\(Atonement\);Atone\(Atonement\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Masters, give to slaves what is right and fair, knowing you also have a Master in heaven.

² Continue steadfastly in prayer, staying alert in it in thanksgiving, ³ praying together for us also, that God would open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which also I have been in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak. ⁵ Walk in wisdom toward those outside, and redeem the time. ⁶ Let your words always be with grace. Let them be seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

⁷ As for all the things concerning me, Tychicus will make them known to you. He is a beloved brother, a faithful servant, and fellow slave in the Lord. ⁸ I have sent him to you for this, that you might know the matters about us, and so that he may encourage your hearts. ^[1]⁹ I have sent him together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you everything that has happened here.

¹⁰ Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, as well as Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received orders; if he comes to you, receive him), ¹¹ and also Jesus who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcision are my fellow workers for the kingdom of God. They have been a comfort to me. ¹² Epaphras greets you. He is one of you and a slave of Christ Jesus. He always strives for you in prayer, so that you may stand complete and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³ For I can testify that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. ¹⁵ Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nympha, and the church that is in her house. ¹⁶ When this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷ Say to Archippus, "Look to the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you should fulfill it."

¹⁸ This greeting is with my own hand—Paul. Remember my chains. May grace be with you.

Footnotes

4:8 ^[1]There are some important and ancient Greek copies, along with some ancient translations of the Greek that read,

Colossians 4

4:1-6

Who is the "master in heaven"?

[4:1]

When Paul wrote "master in heaven," he wanted people to think about Jesus. Jesus is the master who all Christians serve. He is in heaven now. That is, he went to heaven after he was resurrected. He will be in heaven until he returns to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is "thanksgiving"?

[4:2]

See: [Thanksgiving](#)

Why did Paul write "open a door for the word"?

[4:3]

Paul wrote "open a door." This was a metaphor. He was writing about being able to tell other people about Jesus. Opening a door allows a person go into another room. So Paul wanted people to know that he asked God to allow him in some way to tell people around him about Jesus.

Paul wrote "the word" because he wanted people to think about the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Door \(Metaphor\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What is the "mystery of Christ"?

[4:3]

See: [Mystery](#)

Why was Paul "chained up"?

[4:3]

Paul was "chained up" because the Romans had arrested him. He was a Roman citizen. Because of this, he wanted the Roman emperor to judge him (see: Acts 25). While he waited to see the emperor, the Romans kept him chained up so he could not escape.

See: [Citizen](#)

Why did Paul write "seasoned with salt"?

[4:6]

Paul wrote "seasoned with salt." This is a metaphor about the gospel. Salt makes food taste better. That is, salt makes the food seem better to people. In some way, Paul wanted readers to explain the gospel to people so that it would seem better to them.

Jesus also used the metaphor of salt to speak about how Christians should speak to other people and live (see: Matthew 5:13).

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

4:7-9

What were the "things concerning me" and "matters about us"?

[4:7]

When Paul wrote "things concerning me" and "matters about us," he wanted people to think about what they heard was happening to him. They heard about him from the people who brought this letter to them.

Who was Tychicus?

[4:7]

Tychicus was a man who traveled with Paul. He went with Paul to Jerusalem (see: Acts 20:4). He was with Paul in Rome. He took this letter to the Christians in Colossae.

See Map: Jerusalem; Rome

Who was Onesimus?

[4:9]

Onesimus was a man who met Paul when Paul went to Rome. Before this, Onesimus was a slave. In fact, he was a slave in Colossae. He believed in Jesus, so he was a Christian.

Onesimus became a Christian after he escaped from slavery. Paul wrote a letter to Onesimus's owner (see: Philemon). In that letter, Paul asked Philemon not to punish Onesimus. Instead, Paul wanted Philemon to treat Onesimus in the same way he treated other Christians.

Now, Onesimus was with Paul while Paul was in prison at Rome. Paul sent him to Colossae with Tychicus. He wanted the Christians in Colossae to know that Onesimus was also a Christian. That is, he wrote about Onesimus so the Christians in Colossae would treat Onesimus in the same way they treated each other.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#) See Map: Rome; Jerusalem

4:10-18

Who was Aristarchus?

[4:10]

Aristarchus was a man who traveled with Paul (see: Acts 20:1-6). He came from Thessalonica.

Scholars disagree about why Paul wrote that Aristarchus was Paul's "fellow prisoner." Some scholars think the Romans kept him in prison with Paul. That is, they arrested Aristarchus for being a Christian. Other scholars think Paul used "prisoner" as a metaphor. He was writing about Aristarchus being a fellow Christian who was there to help Paul while in prison.

See Map: Thessalonica

Who was Mark?

[4:10]

Mark was a man who traveled with Paul (see: Acts 12:12, 12:25, 15:37-39, 2 Timothy 4:11). He was also called John Mark. He wrote the gospel of Mark.

See: [Gospel](#)

Who was Barnabas?

[4:10]

Barnabas was a man who traveled with Paul (see: Acts 11-15).

Who was "Jesus called Justus"?

[4:11]

"Jesus called Justus" was a man who traveled with Paul. He is not Jesus who is the messiah. Scholars do not know much about this man. He was a Jew who believed in Jesus the messiah, so he became a Christian. Some scholars think he worked with Christians who were born Jews and also Christians who were born Gentiles. They think this because "Jesus" is a Jewish name, but "Justus" is a Latin name.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write "of the circumcision"?

[4:11]

When Paul wrote "of the circumcision," he wanted people to know that three of the men he wrote about were Jewish. Jewish people circumcised their boys when they were 8 days old. At this time, the Gentiles did not do this. Therefore, people knew a man was Jewish if he was circumcised.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

Who was Epaphras?

[4:12]

See Colossians 1:7-8

Why did Paul write "slave of Christ Jesus"?

[4:12]

Paul wrote "slave of Christ Jesus." This is a metaphor. Some scholars think he was writing about someone who believes in Jesus and obeys Jesus. That is, he obeys Jesus in the same way a slave obeys his master. (See: Colossians 3:11, 3:22).

Other scholars think Paul wrote about someone who chose to serve Jesus. Christians choose to serve Jesus. They did this because they love him.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "strives for you in prayer" ?

[4:12]

Paul wrote "strives for you in prayer" to speak about how hard Epaphras prayed for the Christians in Colossae. When someone strives for something, they work very hard to do it. Therefore, Paul wanted to say that Epaphras prayed especially hard for the Colossian Christians.

Where was Laodicea?

[4:13]

See: Colossians 2:1.

Where was Hierapolis?

4:13]

See Map: Hierapolis

Who was "Luke the beloved physician"?

[4:14]

He was a "physician." A "physician" was someone who healed people who were sick or injured.

Paul said Luke was "beloved" because they were close friends. He loved Luke. Also, many other Christians knew and loved Luke.

See: [New Testament](#); [Gospel](#); [New Testament](#)

Who was Demas?

[4:14]

Demas was a man who traveled with Paul. However, scholars believe he stopped working with Paul (see: 2 Timothy 4:10). Some scholars think this is because he stopped believing in Jesus. Other scholars do not think this is why he stopped working with Paul

Who was Nympha?

[4:15]

Nympha was a Christian who lived near Colossae. Scholars do not know if Nympha was a man or a woman. More scholars think Nympha was a woman.

Why did Paul write "the church that meets in her house"?

[4:15]

Paul wrote "the church that meets in her house." He was writing about Christians who met at Nympha's house. That is, they worshipped God together in Nympha's house. Scholars think they did this because they were too far from Colossae to meet with the Christians in the city. Nympha's house may have been in Laodicea. Or it may have been somewhere in between Colossae and Laodicea.

See Map: Colossae; Laodicea

Who was Archippus?

[4:17]

Archippus was a Christian man in Colossae. Scholars think he was a leader in the church there. However, they do not know what he did in the church. Scholars think he could have been part of Philemon's family (see: Philemon 2). Perhaps he was Philemon's son.

Scholars disagree about why Paul wrote "Look to the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you should fulfill it." Some scholars think Paul said this to encourage Archippus. That is, Paul wanted Archippus to keep doing the things he was doing. Other scholars think Paul said this because Archippus was no longer serving the church for some reason. So Paul wrote it to warn Archippus to go back to serving God in this way.

See: [Church](#)

Why did Paul write "this greeting is with my own hand"?

[4:18]

When Paul wrote "this greeting is with my own hand," he wanted people to know that he really sent the letter. Often Paul spoke words and one of his companions wrote them down as a letter. But he wrote these last words himself. This way, readers could see that the handwriting was his own. Therefore, they would know the things in this letter were what Paul taught.

See: [Ancient Letters](#)

Book: 1 Thessalonians

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Overview

The apostle Paul wrote two letters to the Christians in Thessalonica. Scholars think these letters are some of the first letters that Paul wrote to other Christians. Thessalonica was the Roman capital of Macedonia. Thessalonica was a large city. The church in Thessalonica included both Jewish Christian and Gentile Christians. Paul started the church in Thessalonica. Therefore, he knew the Christians in Thessalonica well. He wrote to them the way someone writes to a friend. Paul wrote about several things. He wanted to help the Christians in Thessalonica to know about the second coming of Jesus. So Paul spoke about this at the end of every chapter of this letter. Paul also wanted to encourage the Thessalonian Christians. He also wanted them to do the things that honored God.

See: [Apostle](#); [Church](#); [Gentile](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#) See Map: Thessalonica; Macedonia

Who wrote this letter?

Paul, the apostle, wrote this letter. He said that he wrote this letter when he was with Silvanus and Timothy (1:1). Also, many early Christian leaders wrote that he was the author. Some people have wondered why Paul did not say he was an apostle. Paul wrote that he was an apostle in most of his letters. Many scholars say that Paul did not have to say he was an apostle in this letter because the readers knew him. Some scholars think Paul did not write about his title because Paul felt great affection for these readers. So he did not speak using his formal title.

See: [Apostle](#)

Who did Paul write to?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. He met them when he was in Thessalonica (see: Acts 17). He wrote this letter to them between AD 49 - 54 while he was in Corinth. Paul wrote about several things in this letter:

1. He wrote to teach new Christians things that are true so they would believe them. Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians not to listen to people who taught the wrong things. He wanted them to remember what he taught them when he was in Thessalonica. He also wanted them not to worry when they suffered for being Christians.
2. He wrote to remind readers about the gospel. Paul wanted them to remember that Jesus saved them from their sins. He did not want them to worry about what they might hear from other teachers.
3. He wrote to answer false things that other people said about him. People told Paul about what the people who taught falsely were telling the Thessalonians. So he wrote this letter to tell them what was true about how he taught and lived.
4. He wrote to encourage the Christians in Thessalonica to do the things that honor God. He wanted them to believe in Jesus. He also wanted them to help other people to believe in Jesus because of the things they did to honor God.
5. He wrote to help Christians know what to think about what happens after someone dies. Paul wanted his readers to know that when people who believe in Jesus die, they will be different than the people who do not believe in Jesus. (See: 2 Thessalonians; 1 Corinthians 15.)

See: [Gospel](#) See Map: Thessalonica; Corinth

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote this letter to encourage his readers. He wrote to teach them the things they needed to do. He wrote say something about the false things other people said about him. He wrote to make known what he taught when he was in Thessalonica. He wrote to teach what happens to a Christian after death.

Outline of 1 Thessalonians

1. Thanking God for the Christians in Thessalonica (1:1-10)
2. What Paul taught and how he lived (2:1-3:10)
3. Prayer for holiness (3:11-13)
4. The things Christians needed to do (4:1-12)
5. Jesus' Return to Earth (4:13-5:11)
6. What Christians should do always (5:12-22)
7. Final prayer and greetings (5:23-28)

1 Thessalonians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May grace and peace be to you. ^[1]

² We always give thanks to God for all of you as we mention you continually in our prayers. ³ We remember before our God and Father your work of faith, labor of love, and patient endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ Brothers loved by God, we know he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance. In the same way, you also know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord when you received the word in much tribulation with joy from the Holy Spirit. ⁷ As a result, you became an example to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has rung out, and not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone out everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it. ⁹ For they themselves report concerning us what kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from the idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

Footnotes

1:1 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 Thessalonians 1 Commentary

1:1

Was this book written as a letter?

[1:]

See: [Ancient Letters](#)

Why did Paul write about Silvanus and Timothy?

[1:1]

1. Paul wrote about Silvanus and Timothy when he greeted the Christians at Thessalonica for several reasons:
2. He reminded the Christians in Thessalonica that Silvanus and Timothy were with him when he started the church at Thessalonica.
3. He wanted the Christians in Thessalonica to know that Silvanus and Timothy returned to Paul. They were safe. That is, they were not hurt or put into prison. He wanted the Christians in Thessalonica to be happy to hear about this.

4. He wanted the Christians in Thessalonica to know that he had heard about them from people they could trust.
5. Paul wanted people to know that he who wrote his letters. Sometimes people said that Paul did not really write a letter. But the Thessalonian Christians knew Silvanus and Timothy worked with him. So, he wrote about Silvanus and Timothy so the Thessalonians would know that he really wrote this letter.

See: [Church](#)

See Map: Thessalonica

1:3

Why did Paul write "we remember" you?

[1:3]

When Paul wrote "we remember" you, he wanted the Christians in Thessalonica to know that he often prayed for them. He gave thanks to God for the way they believed in Jesus. He gave thanks to God for how they did things for God. He also thanked God because they continued to trust God. All of this honored God. So Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know that he honored them when he prayed.

See: [Hope](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Hope](#)

Why did Paul write "our God and Father"?

[1:3]

When Paul wrote "our God and Father", he wanted his readers to think about God. He was not writing about two separate people or beings. Instead, he wanted to say that the Father is God.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

1:4

Why did Paul write that God "chose" them?

[1:4]

When Paul wrote that God "chose" the Christians in Thessalonica, he wanted the Christians in Thessalonica to know that God planned in some way that they would believe in him. God planned for people everywhere to believe in him before he created the world.

Some scholars believe that God chose certain people to be Christians. Other scholars believe that God knew which people would believe in him before the person chose to believe.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

1:5

Why did Paul write "our gospel"?

[1:5]

When Paul wrote "our gospel," he wanted the Thessalonian Christians to remember what he taught them. He taught them about Jesus when Paul lived in Thessalonica. He taught them right things about Jesus. He wanted them to remember these things and to not think about the wrong things that other people said.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Teacher](#)

1:6

Why did Paul write "imitators of us and of the Lord"?

[1:6]

Paul wrote that the Thessalonians were "imitators of us and of the Lord," He said this to say that the Christians in Thessalonica honored God. They did good things. They did the things they saw Paul do. When Paul lived in Thessalonica, they saw him do good things that honored God. They also heard him teach about Jesus. So they knew about the good things that Jesus did. Because they did things in the same way that Paul and Jesus did things, they honored God.

Why did Paul write "received the word with much joy"?

[1:6]

When Paul wrote that the Thessalonian Christians "received the word with much", he wrote about how they learned from him. When he was in Thessalonica, he taught them the "word,"; that is, the gospel about Jesus. They had "much joy." That is, they were very happy because of Jesus. Scholars believe that some people in Thessalonica persecuted the Christians there. However, Paul told them that their joy was greater than this persecution.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

See: Map: Thessalonica; Corinth; Macedonia; Achaia

1:8-10

What did Paul want to say in 1:8-10?

{1:8, 1:9, 1:10}

In 1:8-10, Paul wanted to tell the Christians in Thessalonica that many people knew how they believed in God. People in other places knew the Thessalonians worshipped idols in the past. Those people heard that the Thessalonian Christians stopped worshipping idols. So those people knew that now the Thessalonian Christians worshipped the true God.

See: [Worship](#)

Why did Paul write "has rung out" in 1:8?

[1:8]

When Paul wrote that "from you the word of the Lord has rung out," he said that he knew the Christians in Thessalonica talked about Jesus to other people. He used the metaphor of a bell. A bell "rings out" so it is heard far away. People far away heard about the way the Thessalonian Christians talked about Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write "waiting for his Son from heaven" in 1:10?

[1:10]

Paul wrote "waiting for his Son from heaven" because he wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know that Jesus will come to earth again. After he was killed and was made alive again, he returned to heaven. He will come back someday. However, only God the Father knows exactly when he will return (see: Acts 1:9-11). Paul also said Christians should "wait" patiently until Jesus returns.

See: [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Paul write about "wrath" in 1:10?

[1:10]

Paul wrote about "wrath" to get his readers to think about how God will judge people because they sin. When someone has "wrath," they are very angry. God is very angry about people doing wrong things. So, someday he will judge and punish people who have sinned. However, Paul also wrote that Jesus "frees us from the wrath to come." He wanted his readers to remember that if they believe in Jesus, he will protect them from God's judgement. Some scholars think Paul also wanted people to know Jesus helps people who believe in him not to do wrong things that make God angry. Some scholars think Paul wanted to say that the antichrist will not affect people who believe in Jesus.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

Chapter 2

¹ For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not useless. ² Rather, as you know, though we previously suffered and were shamefully treated at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggling. ³ For our exhortation was not from error, nor from uncleanness, nor from deceit. ⁴ Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be trusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but God. He is the one who examines our hearts. ⁵ For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext to cover up greed—God is our witness. ⁶ Nor did we seek glory from people, either from you or from others. ⁷ We could have claimed privileges as apostles of Christ. ^[1] Instead, we were as gentle among you as a mother comforting her own children. ^[2]⁸ In this way we had affection for you. We were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives. For you had become very dear to us. ⁹ For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil. Night and day we were working so that we might not be a burden to any of you as we preached to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God also, how holy, righteous, and blameless was our behavior toward you who believe. ¹¹ In the same way you know how we were with each one of you, as a father with his own children, ¹² exhorting you and comforting you and urging you to walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

¹³ For this reason we also thank God constantly, that when you received God's message that you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of man, but just as it truly is, the word of God, which is also at work in you who believe. ¹⁴ For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God that are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, as they did from the Jews ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and who drove us out. They do not please God. Instead, they are hostile to all people. ¹⁶ They forbid us to speak to the Gentiles for them to be saved. The result is that they always fill up their sins to the limit. But wrath will overtake them in the end.

¹⁷ But we, brothers, were separated from you for a short time, in person not in heart. We were especially eager, with great desire, to see your faces. ¹⁸ For we wished to come to you—indeed I, Paul, once and again—but Satan stopped us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

Footnotes

2:7 ^[1] Many copies include this sentence in verse 6.

2:7 ^[2] Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 Thessalonians 2

2:1-12

What did Paul write to his readers in 2:1-12?

In 2:1-12, Paul wrote to his readers and told them to do things in the same way that Paul, and those who worked with him, did things. While he lived in Thessalonica, Paul told people that they needed to honor God and he taught them how to honor God. Paul did the things that honored God. So he told the Thessalonians to do the things that honored God also. In the same way a father tells his children the things to do, so Paul told the Thessalonians what to do to honor God.

See: Acts 16:19-24, 35-39

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write 2:3-7?

Paul wanted his readers to know the differences between what he taught and what other people taught about Jesus. So Paul wrote about how he taught and the things that he did. He did not write about the

false teachers. However, he wanted his readers to think about the things that he did differently than the things that the false teachers did.

Paul used the metaphor of a parent who loves his child. He taught the Thessalonian Christians in the same way a parent teaches their child. So he wanted them to treat each other in the same way that he treated them.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write that God examines "the heart"?

[2:4]

Paul wrote that God looks into "the heart." He wanted his readers to know that God knows everything that people think and feel. He was not writing about the actual, physical heart in our body. Instead, the word heart is often used to talk about how a person feels and thinks. Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know that God completely knows them. God knows about even things that a person thinks but does not talk about (See: Hebrews 4:12-13).

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul write about "flattery"?

[2:5]

Paul wrote about "flattery." This is when someone says something to someone to gain favor with them. They may not believe the things they say. Paul said this because he wanted to talk about people who said good things about other people that were not true. They did this to make other people feel honored. They did this so those people might do something for the them. People often used flattery to try to get things from other people.

Paul wanted his readers to know that he did not flatter them. He was different than people who used flattery. He spoke truth because he wanted to honor God. Saying false things about other people did not honor God even if it was good things. Who did Paul write about in 2:6?

In 2:6, Paul wrote about himself. He wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know that he did not want to be honored. The Jewish religious leaders and the false teachers wanted to be honored because of the things they taught. He wanted Christians to know that people who "seek glory" do not honor God. Paul wanted people to know that he did not want to be honored.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Paul write "walk in a manner worthy of God"?

[2:12]

Paul used a metaphor when he wrote that Christians needed to "walk in a manner worthy of God." He wanted Christians to know that they needed to honor God by the things that they did, said, and thought.

See: [Walk](#)

2:13-16

Why did Paul write "for this reason"?

[2:13]

When Paul wrote "for this reason," he wanted his readers to know that what he wrote in 2:3-12 was why he wrote 2:13-16. In 2:3-12, he wrote about how he loved the Thessalonian Christians. So, in 2:13-16, he wrote that he thanked God because they did the things that honored God in the way he taught them to honor God.

What was the difference between the "word of man" and the "word of God"?

[2:13]

Paul talked about the "word of man." When people taught "word of man," they can be wrong. Paul taught the "word of God." The things he taught are true and they come from God.

Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know there was a difference between what he taught and what the false teachers taught. Paul wanted them to know that God gave him the words to say. It was as true as though God spoke it himself. (See: 1 Corinthians 14:37).

Why did Paul write about the Jews killing Jesus?

[2:15]

When Paul wrote about "the Jews" killing Jesus, he wanted his readers to know that some Jewish leaders wanted Jesus to die and helped the Roman government kill him. They planned with the Romans to have the Romans kill Jesus. They did this because they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah (See: John 11:45-53).

Some Jewish leaders did not want people to do the things Paul taught. They did not believe he taught things from God. So, they treated him the way they treated Jesus.

See: Acts 17:5, Matthew 23:31-36

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What were the Jewish leaders trying to prevent?

[2:15, 2:16]

The Jewish leaders tried to prevent Paul from preaching and teaching about Jesus. They did not want him to preach to other Jews. They also did not want him to preach to Gentiles. They were afraid that this would weaken the Jewish religion. So, these leaders tried to stop Paul from preaching.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write "they always fill up their own sins"?

[2:16]

When Paul wrote that "they always fill up their own sins," he wanted to talk about how the Jewish leaders did very bad things. They did not want other people to hear about Jesus. So they tried to stop Paul and others from teaching the gospel. Paul wanted his readers to know that this was the worst thing these people could do against God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

2:17-20

What did Paul want his readers to know about Satan?

[2:18]

Paul wanted his readers to know that Satan is a real (See: Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Corinthians 2:11, 11:13-15). He also wanted them to know that Satan wants to stop people from hearing about Jesus. Paul taught people about Jesus, so Satan did things to try to stop him.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Paul write about Jesus "at his coming"?

[2:19]

When Paul wrote about Jesus "at his coming," he wanted his readers to know that Jesus will come to earth again. Scholars call this the "second coming" of Jesus.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul write that the Thessalonians were his "glory and joy"?

[2:20]

When Paul wrote that the Thessalonian Christians were his "glory and joy," he wanted them to know he was very proud of them. He had lived with them. He taught them about Jesus. He knew they believed in Jesus. He knew they worked to serve God. All these things made Paul proud of them. They made him very happy.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Therefore, when we could no longer bear it, we thought it was good to be left behind at Athens alone. ² We sent Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and comfort you regarding your faith, ^[1]³ so that no one would be shaken by these tribulations. For you yourselves know that for this we have been appointed. ⁴ Truly, when we were with you, we told you in advance that we were about to suffer affliction, and it happened just so, as you know. ⁵ For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent that I might know about your faith. Perhaps the tempter had somehow tempted you, and our labor was in vain. ⁶ But Timothy came to us from you and brought us the good news of your faith and love. He told us that you always have good memories of us, and that you long to see us just as we also long to see you. ⁷ Because of this, brothers, we were comforted by you because of your faith, in all our distress and affliction. ⁸ For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanks can we give to God for you, for all the joy that we have before our God over you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray very hard that we may see your face and provide what is lacking in your faith.

¹¹ May our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you. ¹² May the Lord make you increase and abound in love one for another and toward all people, as we also do for you. ¹³ May he strengthen your hearts so that they will be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy people.

Footnotes

3:2 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 Thessalonians 3

3:1-5

Why did Paul write 3:1-5?

Paul wrote 3:1-5 because he was worried about the Christians in Thessalonica. They were being persecuted. So he wanted to know more about what was happening to the Thessalonian Christians. He also wanted to comfort them and wanted them to be ready if they were persecuted again in the future.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#))

Why did Paul write that "it was good to be left behind"?

[3:1]

Paul wrote that "it was good to be left behind" to say two things: He needed to stay in Athens to serve God there. This was good. He was "left behind" when he sent Timothy to Thessalonica (3:2). He did this so that Timothy could discover what happened to the Thessalonian Christians. Therefore, Timothy could encourage them. This was also good.

Why did Paul write that he was "appointed" for "sufferings" and that he "suffered afflictions"?

[3:3, 3:4]

Paul wrote that he was "appointed" for "sufferings" and that he "suffered afflictions" because he wanted his readers to know that they might be persecuted. Jesus said people would persecute his followers (see: Mark 13:9-11). Therefore, Paul wrote that he was appointed for sufferings, or chosen to suffer, because he followed Jesus.

Some scholars think Paul wanted his readers to think that Christians suffered to fulfill prophecies. The first Christians thought Jesus was coming to earth again very soon. They also thought Christians would

have to suffer before this happened. So Paul wrote about being "appointed" so his readers would think about these prophecies.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul write "perhaps the tempter had somehow tempted you"?

[3:5]

Paul wrote "perhaps the tempter had somehow tempted you" so his readers would think about Satan. One of the things Satan does is to try to tempt Christians to stop believing in Jesus. He can do this when people persecute Christians. Satan can try to make them think that if they stop believing in Jesus, they will not suffer any longer. So Paul was afraid that the Thessalonian Christians might stop believing in Jesus.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

3:6-10

What did Paul want to write in 3:6-10?

In 3:6-10, Paul wanted to write that Timothy returned to him. Timothy told Paul that the Thessalonian Christians continued to follow Jesus. This encouraged Paul and comforted him.

Why did Paul write "for now we live"?

[3:8]

Paul wrote "for now we live" to tell the Thessalonian Christians that he was encouraged by what Timothy told him. He wrote "for" so they would know that this was because of what he wrote before this. He wrote "now we live" to say that he was very strongly encouraged. He used a metaphor of life and death to write about how much he cared for the Thessalonian Christians.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "stand firm"?

[3:8]

Paul wrote "stand firm" to tell the Thessalonian Christians to keep believing in Jesus. He did not want to write that people should stop moving physically. Instead, he used a metaphor to write about following Jesus. He wanted to be sure the Thessalonian Christians did not stop believing in Jesus because they suffered. He wanted to know they did not follow people who taught the wrong things. He wanted his readers to know they could endure any sufferings.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write "provide what is lacking in your faith"?

[3:10]

Paul wrote that he would "provide what is lacking in your faith" to write the Thessalonian Christians that he wanted to continue to teach them about God. Some scholars think he wrote about "what is lacking" to write that they still needed to learn more about God. Just before this, he wrote that he wanted to return to Thessalonica. Then, Paul could teach them more.

Other scholars think that Paul wanted to say what they believed about Jesus was not complete. That is, they needed to learn more about how to follow Jesus.

3:11-13

Why did Paul write "direct our way to you"?

[3:11]

Paul wrote "direct our way to you" to say that he prayed for God to make it possible for him to return to Thessalonica.

Why did Paul write "blameless in holiness"?

[3:13]

Paul wrote "blameless in holiness" to make the Thessalonian Christians know that they needed to follow Jesus completely. The word "blameless" means that nobody can say that a person did something wrong. That is, they cannot do things perfectly. Paul wrote "in holiness" to write that doing the right things should be because a person is following Jesus. That is, Christians should be "blameless" because they know they belong to God. So, they do no sin.

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write "at the coming of our Lord Jesus"?

[3:13]

Paul wrote "at the coming of our Lord Jesus" so his readers would think about when Jesus returns.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul write "with all his holy people"?

[3:13]

Paul wrote "with all his holy people" to write that Jesus would not return alone. Scholars think different things about who are these "saints": Some scholars think the "holy people" in 3:13 are angels (see: Zechariah 14:5, 2 Thessalonians 1:7). Other scholars think Paul wrote about Christians (see: Romans 8:19). Some of these scholars think they are Christians who died. Other scholars think they are Christians that God will take to heaven before they die. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote "with all his holy people" to write that he prayed for God to "strengthen" the Thessalonian Christians the way he strengthens all Christians.

See: [Angel](#); [Heaven](#); [Angel](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Finally, brothers, we earnestly appeal to you and exhort you in the Lord Jesus. As you received instructions from us about how you must walk and please God, also in this way walk, so that you do so even more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you avoid sexual immorality, ⁴ that each of you knows how to possess his own vessel in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust (as the Gentiles who do not know God). ⁶ Let no man transgress and wrong his brother in this matter. For the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we forewarned you and testified. ⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but to holiness. ⁸ Therefore, he who rejects this rejects not people, but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

⁹ Regarding brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. ¹⁰ Indeed, you do this for all the brothers who are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brothers, to do this even more. ¹¹ We also exhort you to aspire to live quietly, take care of your own responsibilities, and labor with your hands, just as we commanded you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and not be in any need.

¹³ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who sleep, so that you do not grieve like the rest, who do not have hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left at the coming of the Lord, will surely not go before those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven. He will come with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. In this way we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4

4:1-8

Why did Paul write that the Thessalonian Christians must "walk and please God"?

[4:1]

When Paul wrote that the Thessalonian Christians must "walk and please God," he used a metaphor. He used this metaphor to speak about the things they needed to do. He wanted them to do the things that honored God.

Paul taught them to do these things when he lived in Thessalonica. He did not want them to stop doing these things because of false teachers.

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

Why did Paul write about teaching people "through the Lord Jesus"?

[4:2]

When Paul wrote about teaching people "through the Lord Jesus," he wanted the Thessalonian Christians to know that the things he taught them came from the Lord himself. Paul did not invent them. Nor did other humans invent them.

What did Paul want to write the Thessalonian Christians in verses 4:3-8?

In 4:3-8, Paul wanted to write the Thessalonian Christians that when a person believes in Jesus, it will cause them to do things differently in their lives. He did not want them to do the same things that those who do not believe in Jesus do. They also needed to do sexual things differently. Because they believed in Jesus, they needed to be sexually pure.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did Paul write "your sanctification"?

[4:3]

When Paul wrote "your sanctification," he wanted to write that God wants Christians to be holy people (see: Romans 1:7, 1 Peter 1:16). That is, he wanted them to do things that honor God. Paul did not want to tell readers that they can make themselves holy. Instead, he wanted them to ask God to make them holy. God can help them to want to do things that honor him.

Some scholars think that God sanctifies Christians during a long period of time. Other scholars think that God can sanctify Christians completely at one time when those Christians give themselves completely to Jesus. Still other scholars think that both of these things are true.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

Why did Paul write "possess his own vessel"?

[4:4]

Paul used a metaphor when he wrote "possess his own vessel." This metaphor was used to tell the Thessalonian Christians that they needed to control the things that they did. He wrote "vessel" to get them to think about their bodies. He wrote "possess" to say that God wants Christians to choose to do the things that honor God.

Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to control certain things. He did not want them to sin sexually. He especially wanted the men not to do this.

Advice to translators: The word "vessel" can be translated as wife or male organ. Some scholars think that Paul wanted to say that Christian men need to marry a wife. More scholars think Paul wrote about people controlling the things that they did as well as the things they did sexually.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did Paul write that "the Lord is an avenger in all these things"?

[4:6]

Paul wrote that "the Lord is an avenger in all these things." He wanted to write the Thessalonian Christians so they would know how important were the things he wrote in 4:1-5. If a person were to harm another Christian in some way, Paul wrote them that God sees these things and will avenge the wrong thing that was done (see: Psalm 94:1). This is because Christians are also God's family members. This was most important for how Christians act sexually.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did Paul write "holiness"?

[4:7]

Paul wrote "holiness" so the Thessalonian Christians would think about God. God is holy. God wants Christians to become holy. God can make Christians holy. This is the opposite of "uncleanness".

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

4:9-12**Who were "all the brothers who are in all Macedonia"?**

[4:10]

The "brothers who are in all Macedonia" were Christians who lived north of Greece. Macedonia is a place north of Greece. The Christians who lived there were very poor. The Thessalonian Christians sent them money to help them.

See: [Family of God](#)

See Map: Greece and surrounding regions

Why did Paul write that Christians should "walk properly before outsiders"?

[4:12]

Paul used a metaphor when he wrote that the Thessalonian Christians must "walk properly before outsiders." He used this to tell them that they needed to do the things that honor God, especially when non-Christians see them. He wanted them to do these things so that those who do not believe in Jesus would know about the things that they did. Then those people would think about God. They might believe in Jesus and change the things that they did.

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

4:13-18

Why did Paul write "those who sleep" and "those who have fallen asleep"?

[4:13, 4:14, 4:15]

Paul wrote "those who sleep" (4:13) and "those who have fallen asleep" (4:14,15) This was a metaphor. It was used to talk about people who had died. He wrote "sleep" and "fallen asleep" to write that Christians who die will be resurrected. God will resurrect them in the same way Jesus was resurrected. He did not want the Thessalonian Christians to worry about people they loved who died.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#) ; [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write "the rest who do not have hope"?

[4:13]

Paul wanted to write about people who did not believe in Jesus when he wrote "the rest who do not have hope." Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to remember that they could know that God would resurrect them. Then they would be with God in heaven forever. This was because Jesus was resurrected, and they believed in him. People who do not believe in Jesus will not live with God forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Paul write "by the word of the Lord"?

[4:15]

When Paul wrote "by the word of the Lord," he wanted to write that he wrote what God told him to write. It was not his own thoughts. He wrote this so the Thessalonian Christians would know what he was saying was very important. Why did Paul write "at the coming of the Lord" (4:15)?

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What is an "archangel"?

[4:16]

An "archangel" is a special kind of angel.

See: [Angel](#)

Why did Paul write "the dead in Christ"?

[4:16] Paul wrote "the dead in Christ" to write about Christians who died. He wrote "in Christ" to say that these people believed in Jesus before they died.

See: [In Christ](#)

Why did Paul write that the dead in Christ "will rise first" (4:16) and "be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"?

[4:17]

When Paul wrote that the dead in Christ "will rise first" (4:16) and "be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (4:17), he wanted readers to think about how Jesus will return to earth. Some scholars think Paul wrote about things that will actually happen when Jesus returns. Scholars call this "the rapture." Other scholars think Paul used metaphors. They think he was not able to actually write about what would happen. This is because it will not be similar to anything that has happened in the past.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Rapture](#) [Kingdom of God](#); [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Now concerning the times and seasons, brothers, you have no need that anything be written to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night. ³ When they say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction will come on them. It will be like birth pains in a pregnant woman. They will in no way escape. ⁴ But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that the day would overtake you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not sons of the night or the darkness. ⁶ So then, let us not sleep as the rest do. Instead, let us keep watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do so at night, and those who get drunk do so at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, we must stay sober and put on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation for our helmet. ⁹ For God did not appoint us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹ Therefore comfort one another and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

¹² We earnestly appeal to you, brothers, to acknowledge those who labor among you and who rule over you in the Lord and who instruct you, ¹³ and to esteem them highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ We exhort you, brothers: Warn those who are lazy, encourage the discouraged, help the weak, and be patient toward all. ¹⁵ See that no one pays back evil for evil to anyone. Instead, pursue what is good for one another and for all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always. ¹⁷ Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸ In everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things. Hold firmly to what is good. ²² Keep away from every kind of evil.

²³ May the God of peace sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Faithful is he who calls you, the one who will also do it.

²⁵ Brothers, pray also for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I command you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1 Thessalonians 5

5:1-11

Why did Paul write "times and seasons"?

[5:1]

When Paul wrote "times and seasons," he wanted his readers to think about when the end of the world would come. This was a common way of saying 'some time in the future.'

See: 1 Thessalonians 5

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul write "the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night"?

[5:2]

When Paul wrote "the day of the Lord," he wanted his readers to think about the end of the world. That is, he wrote about when Jesus would return to earth at the end of the world.

Paul used the metaphor "coming like a thief in the night" to write that no one but God knows the exact time when this will happen. Thieves come so quietly that no one sees them. So Paul wanted to write that Jesus would return quietly. Nobody will know in advance when he is coming.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Day of the Lord](#); [Rapture](#) [Kingdom of God](#)

What did Paul want his readers to know in 5:3?

[5:3]

In 5:3, Paul wanted his readers to know that the end of the world will come suddenly, without anyone knowing that it is coming. Everyone will see God's power. Paul used the metaphor of a pregnant woman ready to have her baby. She will have pain when the baby is born. She does not know when the pains will start. The day of the Lord will be similar to this. No one knows when this will happen. There will be pain. Also, when it starts, people will not be able to get away from it.

See: [Day of the Lord](#); [Last Days](#); [Day of the Lord](#)

Who were the "sons of the light and sons of the day"?

[5:5]

"Sons of the light and sons of the day" are people who do the things that God wants them to do. They believe in God. They follow God's will. Light and day are two metaphors. They are for believing in God and doing the things that honor God.

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

Who were the "sons of the night or the darkness"?

[5:5]

"Sons of the night or the darkness" are people who do evil things. They do not believe in God. Often, evil happens at night or in the darkness. So Paul wrote about night and darkness as two metaphors for people doing evil.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul write "let us not sleep as the rest do"?

[5:6]

Paul wrote the metaphor "let us not sleep" to write about people who are not looking for Jesus' return. He wanted readers to think about non-Christians who do not care about God. He wanted readers not to be like those people.

Advice to translators: This is a metaphor using the word "sleep." But it is a different metaphor than Paul used in 4:13-15. In those verses, he wrote "sleep" to speak about death. In 5:6, he wrote "sleep" to speak about people not seeing or understanding something that is happening.

See: [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#); [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why did Paul write "we belong to the day"?

[5:8]

Paul wrote "we belong to the day." This was the same metaphor as in 5:5.

Why did Paul write about a "breastplate" and "helmet"?

[5:8]

Paul used the metaphors "breastplate" and "helmet" to talk about how Christians need to defend themselves from Satan. A breastplate was a piece of heavy metal armor that soldiers wore so their chest and stomach would not be harmed during battle. A helmet was a metal covering that was placed on top of the head. It stopped the head from being harmed during a battle. So Paul wanted readers to keep believing in Jesus to defend themselves against wrong thoughts or false teaching. He also wanted them to keep trusting God in order to defend themselves.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did Paul write about people "appointed to...wrath"?

[5:9]

Paul wanted readers to think about people who refuse to believe in Jesus when he wrote about people "appointed to...wrath." God does not save these people from their sins. This is because they do not believe in him. That is, he will treat them with "wrath" or punish them. This will happen when God judges all people.

Some scholars think that Paul wanted to write that God chose which people he would save and which he would not save before he created the world when he wrote "appointed." Other scholars think he wanted to write that God decided that he would save all people who believe in Jesus. But these scholars do not think God chose the specific people who would or would not believe in Jesus. Still other scholars think that God decides to save people when they choose to believe in Jesus. But these scholars do not think that God chose those people before he created the world.

See: [Sin](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Wrath](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#)

5:12-28

What did Paul write about in 5:12-28?

In 5:12-28, Paul wrote about the things Christians need to do. Paul often ended his letters by telling Christians what they needed to do. Who did Paul write about in 5:12-13? In 5:12-13, Paul wrote about church leaders. He told readers to honor their church leaders.

Why did Paul write that Christians should "not quench the Spirit"?

[5:19]

Paul wanted Christians to know that they could disappoint God when he wrote that Christians should "not quench the Spirit." They do this by disobeying God and not doing the things he has commanded. Paul did not want anyone to stop the work of the Spirit in Thessalonica.

He also wanted them to know that there are false teachers. The Spirit could also be quenched if Christians believed what the false teachers taught.

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul write?

[5:21]

In 5:21, Paul wrote "test all things." He wanted to write the Thessalonian Christians that they needed to know what is true or false. Christians needed to read Scripture to know whether or not the things people tell them are true or not. If not, the Christian needed to not listen to what they heard. Paul wrote "hold onto what is good" to write that Christians needed to always do the things that are in the Bible.

5:23

Who is the "God of peace"?

[5:23]

The "God of peace" is God. Paul wrote "God of peace" to tell readers that God wants them not to be worried. Paul was not writing about a different God.

Why did Paul write "make you completely holy"?

[5:23]

Paul wanted his readers to know that God will completely sanctify Christians when he wrote "make you completely holy." Some scholars think Paul wrote about God doing this after the Christian dies. God will make Christians holy so they can live together with God forever in heaven. Other scholars think Paul wrote about God doing this while the person is alive. This happens when Christians try to completely serve God. Then the Christian will not want to sin. They will also be holy so they can live together with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Paul write "be preserved without blame"?

[5:23] Paul wanted readers not to sin when he wrote "be preserved without blame." Sin brings "blame" and guilt. But God wants Christians to continue to be blameless. They do this by not sinning. They do this by honoring God instead of sinning.

See: [Sin](#)

What is "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

[5:23]

"The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" is the time when Jesus will return to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was a "holy kiss"?

[5:26]

A "holy kiss" was the way Christians often greeted each other when Paul was alive. Many people would greet family members or close friends with a light kiss on the mouth. Christians often did this to greet other Christians. This was not the same way a husband and wife kiss.

Book: 2 Thessalonians

Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Overview

The apostle Paul wrote two letters to the Christians in Thessalonica. Scholars think these letters are some of the first letters that Paul wrote to other Christians.

Thessalonica was the Roman capital of Macedonia. Thessalonica was a large place of business. The church in Thessalonica was made of both Christian Jews and Christian Gentiles.

Paul started the church in Thessalonica. So he knew the Christians in Thessalonica. He wrote to them the way a friend writes.

Paul wrote Second Thessalonians shortly after First Thessalonians. Scholars think Paul wrote Second Thessalonians to answer questions that readers had about what he wrote in First Thessalonians. Timothy told Paul about these questions. So Paul wrote the second letter to explain these things.

See: [Gentile](#); [Israel](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Thessalonica; Macedonia

Who wrote this letter?

The apostle Paul wrote this letter.

Scholars do not know why Paul did not write that he was an apostle. Paul wrote that he was an Apostle in his letters. Some scholars think Paul did not have to write he was an apostle in this letter because the readers knew him. Other scholars think Paul did not write this because Paul wanted to speak in a certain way to the Thessalian Christians. He wanted to write to them as a brother, not as a leader commanding them what to do.

See: [Apostle](#)

Who did Paul write to?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. He met them when he was in Thessalonica (see: Acts 17). He wrote this letter while he was in Corinth.

Paul wrote this second letter to the Thessalonian church after Timothy returned to Paul in Corinth. Timothy gave the first letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. Then he returned to Paul in Corinth. Then Paul wrote the second letter to say more about what he wrote in the first letter.

See Map: Paul's missionary journeys

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

What did Paul write about in this letter?

Paul wrote about several things in this letter:

1. He wrote to teach new Christians things that are true about Jesus. Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians not to listen to people who taught the wrong things about Jesus. He wanted them to remember what he taught them when he was in Thessalonica. That is, he wrote more in Second Thessalonians what he wrote in First Thessalonians.
2. He wrote to encourage the Christians in Thessalonica to do the things that honor God. He wanted them to trust in Jesus. He did not want them only to believe what was true about Jesus. He also wanted them to do the things both did and taught about how to honor God. Paul also taught them these things.
3. He wrote to help Christians know what to think about death. Paul wanted his readers to know that when people who believe in Jesus die, they will be different than the people who do not believe in Jesus. He wrote about this in First Thessalonians. He wrote more about it in Second Thessalonians

4. He wrote to tell Christians that God will judge all people. Some of the Christians in Thessalonica were confused about who God will judge. So Paul wrote more about this.
5. He wrote to tell Christians about Jesus' return to earth. Some people said that Jesus had already returned. So some of the Christians in Thessalonica worried that they had missed Jesus' return. Paul wrote them that Jesus had not yet returned. So they had not missed it.
6. He wrote to teach about Satan. He heard that some Christians in Thessalonica were confused about what Satan did on earth.
7. He wrote to tell Christians to work. Some Christians in Thessalonica thought they did not need to work. They thought this because they believed Jesus would return very soon. Paul taught them this is wrong.
8. He wrote to remind his readers that God loves them. God gives them strength. Even when they are persecuted, God is there. They need to continue doing things that honor God even if they are suffering.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did Paul write this letter?

Paul wrote this letter to encourage the Thessalonian Christians. He wrote to teach them the things they needed to do. He wrote to say something about the wrong things other people said about him. He wrote to say more about what he taught when he was in Thessalonica. He wanted them to be brave when people persecuted them. He wrote to teach what happens to a Christian after he or she dies.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Outline of 2 Thessalonians

1. Thanking God for the Christians in Thessalonica (1:1-12)
2. Jesus' Return to Earth (2:1-17)
3. Asking for Prayer (3:1-5)
4. How Christians Need to Work (3:6-15)
5. Final Prayer and Greetings (3:16-18)

2 Thessalonians

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ We should always give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is appropriate, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love each of you has for one another increases. ⁴ So we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions, and in the tribulations that you are enduring. ⁵ This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. ⁶ For indeed, it is righteous for God to return affliction to those who afflict you, ⁷ and relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. ¹⁰ He will do this when he comes on that day to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at by all those who believed, because our testimony to you was believed. ¹¹ Because of this we also pray continually for you, that our God may consider you worthy of your calling and with his power he may fulfill every good purpose and every work of faith. ¹² We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1 Commentary

1:1-2

Who were Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy?

[1:1]

Silvanus and Timothy traveled with Paul often. Silvanus was also known as Silas. Silas often wrote the things Paul said in letters to be sent to the churches. Paul taught Timothy and they were good friends.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

See Map: Thessalonica and Greece

1:3-10

Why did Paul write that he and the people travelling with him "should always give thanks"?

[1:3]

Paul wrote that he and the people travelling with him "should always give thanks" for the Thessalonian Christians. He wrote this for several reasons:

1. Paul was thankful all the time for love and gifts that the church in Thessalonica sent to him. He thanked God that they loved God more and more. He thanked God that they loved each other more and more.
2. Paul also wanted them to give thanks even when other people persecuted them.
3. People told Paul good news about the things being done by the Thessalonian Christians. So Paul was very happy when he wrote this. He wanted to encourage them to continue to do good things.
4. Paul usually started his letters by giving thanks to God. He wanted to start this letter that way also.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What are "persecutions" and "afflictions"?

[1:4]

"Persecutions" and "afflictions" are two words that mean to harm someone in some way for believing in certain things. Paul told his readers that they will be persecuted and will suffer because they believed in Jesus. However, he wanted them to know that God would bless them because they were persecuted and suffered because they obeyed God (see: 1:5, 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7, 2:20).

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

What is "the appearing of the Lord Jesus from heaven"?

[1:7]

Paul wrote "the appearing of the Lord Jesus from heaven" because he wanted his readers to think about when Jesus will return to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What are "the angels of his power"?

[1:7]

Paul wrote "the angels of his power" because he wanted his readers to think about Jesus, who is the king of the universe (see: Philippians 2:11; Revelation 1:5-8). He has angels serving him because he is the king of the universe. They will come with him when he returns to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who did Paul write about in 1:8-9?

[1:8, 1:9]

In 1:8-9, Paul wrote about the people who persecuted Christians (1:6). Paul wrote the Thessalonian Christians that God knew what happened to them and will severely punish the people who persecuted them.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did Paul write "glory" and "glorified"?

[1:9, 1:10]

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

1:11-12

Why did Paul write about "calling"?

[1:11]

Paul wrote about "calling" to write about what God wanted for the Thessalonian Christians. Paul wanted them to do the things that honored God. He wanted them to do these things because God saved them. God did this because they believed in Jesus. All of this is how God called the Thessalonian Christians to himself. He also calls all Christians this way.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did Paul write "glorified"?

[1:12]

In 1:12, Paul wrote the word "glorified" to say two things: 1. He wanted Christians to honor Jesus by doing the right things. 1. He wanted to say that Jesus will share his love and righteousness with Christians. He does this because of how God loves Christians. Most scholars think Paul wanted to write about Jesus doing this after he returns to earth. Some scholars think that Jesus also shares these things with Christians before then.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Now about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to be with him, we earnestly appeal to you, brothers, ² that you not be easily disturbed or troubled, either by a spirit or by a message, or by a letter that seems to be coming from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For it will not come until after the falling away comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. ^[1]⁴ This is he who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped. As a result, he sits in the temple of God and exhibits himself as God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was with you I told you these things? ⁶ Now you know what restrains him, so that he will be revealed only at the right time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only there is someone who restrains him now until he is taken out of the way. ⁸ Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring him to nothing by the revelation of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be due to the work of Satan with all power, signs, and false wonders, ¹⁰ and with every kind of evil that deceives those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God is sending them a powerful delusion so that they will believe a lie ¹² and so that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but instead took pleasure in unrighteousness.

¹³ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved through the sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ^[2]¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, so that you might obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers, stand firm and hold tightly to the traditions that you were taught, whether by word or by our letter.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷ comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

Footnotes

2:3 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

2:13 ^[2]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

2 Thessalonians 2

2:1-3a

Why did Paul write "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

[2:1]

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul write the Christians in Thessalonica not to be "disturbed" and "troubled"?

[2:2]

Paul wrote the Christians in Thessalonica not to be "disturbed" and "troubled" because he did not want them to be afraid. To be disturbed or troubled is to worry and fear in some way. Paul heard that the Thessalonian Christians feared that Jesus had returned already and did not take them with him. They did not understand because some people taught them the wrong things. So Paul wrote them that Jesus had not yet returned. So they did not need to fear.

It was not strange that they were disturbed and troubled. Many difficult things were happening to them. These things seemed to be the things in which Jesus talked about would happen at the end of the world. However, these things were not the end of the world. So Paul did not want the Thessalonians to fear or doubt Jesus' return.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

2:3b-6

Why did Paul write "the falling away"?

[2:3]

Some scholars think Paul wrote "the falling away" because he wanted his readers not to stop believing in Jesus. Scholars call it "apostasy" when someone stops believing in Jesus. Other scholars think Paul was speaking about people who stopped obeying God. Paul used the metaphor of falling to talk about this. He wanted his readers to think about believing in Jesus or obeying Jesus as if they had reached a high place. It would be as if they fell from that high place to a lower place if they stopped believing in or obeying Jesus.

Still other scholars think that Paul was speaking about a time when most people would do evil things. They rejected God by rejecting all of the people God gave permission to rule over them (see: Romans 13:1-7).

See: [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#); [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#)

Who was the person Paul told the Thessalonians to avoid?

[2:3, 2:4, 2:5, 2:6]

Paul told the Thessalonians to avoid "the man of lawlessness" (2:3) (see: Revelation 13; Daniel 7). This is a person who will try to make Christians stop believing in Jesus and will do many evil things. Many people will try to make Christians stop believing in or obeying Jesus. However, this is someone who is more powerful than other people. Paul also called him "the son of destruction" or "the man of sin" (2:3).

Scholars disagree about who is this person. Some scholars think Paul wanted his readers to think about the "antichrist." John wrote about the antichrist (see: 1 John 2, 2 John). Other scholars think Paul wanted his readers to think about the Roman emperor. Some Roman emperors called themselves gods. They wanted Christians to believe in them instead of Jesus. Other scholars think that Paul wrote about a bad person who is written about in Jewish history. Still other scholars think Paul wanted to use a metaphor of a person to talk about a way of thinking in wrong ways.

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

2:7-12

What was "the mystery of lawlessness"?

[2:7]

Paul wrote "the mystery of lawlessness" because he wanted to write about evil in the world. He wrote "lawlessness" so his readers would think about sin. He also wanted them to think about rebellion against God. Many people in the world sin and rebel against God.

Paul wrote "mystery" to speak about things that are hard to understand. But Christians can understand these things because they believe in Jesus. He did not write "mystery" to speak about something secret or hidden.

So Paul wrote about people sinning and rebelling against God for reasons that they did not understand when he wrote about "the mystery of lawlessness." However, Christians could understand them.

Some scholars think Paul also wanted to write about the "man of lawlessness" (see: 2:3). These scholars think that this man caused people to sin and rebel against God. That is, he caused the "lawlessness." These scholars think Paul wrote "mystery" to say that Christians could understand that this man caused the lawlessness.

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

See: [Mystery](#); [Mystery](#)

Who was "someone who restrains him"?

[2:7]

Paul wrote "someone who restrains him" so his readers would know that "lawlessness" did not completely control the world. This is because a powerful person or thing stopped this.

Scholars disagree about who was this person or thing. Some scholars think it was the Holy Spirit. That is, it was God. Some scholars think it was people preaching the gospel about Jesus (see: Mark 13:10). Some scholars think Paul wanted readers to think about the different leaders who helped to rule parts of the world (see: Romans 13:1-7). Some scholars think Paul spoke about angels who serve God.

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

See: [Angel](#); [Gospel](#); [Angel](#)

Why did Paul write "until he is taken out of the way"?

[2:7]

Paul wrote "until he is taken out of the way" to write that at some period of time the "lawlessness" will end. Jesus will end it (see: 2:8-9).

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

Who is "the lawless one"?

[2:8]

Paul wrote "the lawless one" because he wanted to write about a person who did things for Satan on earth (see: 2:9). This person will deceive other people. He will do things that are against God. Some scholars think this is the same person as the "man of lawlessness" (see: 2:3-6), that is, the antichrist. Other scholars think it is a different person doing things for Satan.

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

Why did Paul write "kill him" and "bring him to nothing"?

[2:8]

Paul taught that when Jesus returns to earth, he will kill the lawless one. He will also destroy the power the lawless one uses.

Scholars do not agree how Jesus will kill the lawless one. Some scholars say Jesus will kill the lawless one by the "breath of his mouth." That is, he will kill him by speaking a word. Other scholars think "breath of his mouth" is a metaphor for God's power. These scholars think Paul wanted to write that God's power is much greater than Satan's power. It is so much greater that Jesus can kill this man as easily as a person breathes.

Paul wrote that Jesus will destroy the power the lawless one uses by "the revelation of his coming." That is, Jesus will bring with him all of God's power and glory when he returns to earth. This will be so great

that nobody can fight against it. Even Satan cannot fight against it. So Jesus will defeat Satan and people who served Satan.

Advice to translators: When there is lawlessness, people live as if there are no rules about what to do and what not to do. They do whatever they want to do. This is evil because there are certain things that God tells people not to do.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Paul write "revelation of his coming"?

[2:8]

Paul wrote "revelation of his coming" to make his readers think about Jesus' return to earth. The "revelation" is that everyone will see Jesus when he comes back to earth. Everyone will know that he is rules everything.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who are "those who are perishing"?

[2:10]

"Those who are perishing" are people who do not believe in Jesus. These people will "perish" or die because they "did not receive the love of the truth for them to be saved." That is, they hear the truth about Jesus, but they do not believe in him. Instead, they continue to do wrong things (see: 2:12). God will not save these people from their sins because they do not believe in Jesus (see: 2:12).

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What did Paul want his readers to think when they read 2:11?

[2:11]

Paul wrote 2:11 because he wanted his readers to think about how God will punish people who rebel against him. That is, God will not punish them because he hates them. Instead, he will punish them because they rebel against him. They also rebel against him by doing wrong things and not believing in Jesus (see: 2:12).

2:13-17

Who did Paul write about in 2:13?

[2:13]

Scholars disagree about who Paul wrote about in 2:13. Some scholars think he wrote about the Christians in Thessalonica. He wanted to write that they were the first Christians in Macedonia. Other scholars think he wrote about all the people who believed in Jesus while Paul was alive. So they were the first Christians of all people who have become Christians.

See: Map: Greece and Macedonia

Why did Paul write "firstfruits for salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth"?

[2:13]

Paul wrote "firstfruits for salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth" to write to his readers how much God cared for them.

He wrote "firstfruits" to say that God chose them. Firstfruits were the first harvest of grain or fruit each year. People thought of the firstfruits as the very best. Firstfruits were special. So people wanted to choose them to eat. Often they would use firstfruits as offerings to God. So, Paul wrote about firstfruits in this verse to say that God thinks about Christians as special people. This is because they believe in Jesus.

Paul wrote "for salvation" to write that God chose to save people from their sins. He did this by sending Jesus (see: John 3:16-17). God saves someone from their sins when they believe in Jesus.

Paul wrote "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth" to write that the Holy Spirit helped them not to sin. He also saved them because they believed in Jesus. They did this when they heard the gospel.

Advice to translators: "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth" can also be translated "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth". Use the word in your language that you would use to say that the two things that follow (sanctification and belief) are the methods that God used to do the thing that precedes (salvation).

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What did Paul want to write when he wrote his readers to "stand firm" and "hold tightly"?

[2:15]

Paul used a metaphor when he wrote that his readers should "stand firm" and "hold tightly." He wanted them to keep trusting God and the things he taught them. He told them about Jesus. He taught them the gospel. He taught them other things about God. Now he wrote to teach them more things about Jesus. He used the metaphor of a soldier who stays where he is supposed to stay. The soldier stands in that place and holds onto his weapon. In the same way, Christians need to keep trusting in Jesus and what the Bible says about God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What were the "traditions" that Paul wrote about in 2:15?

[2:15]

Scholars disagree about what were the "traditions" that Paul wrote about (2:15). Some scholars think he wanted to speak about what he taught in Thessalonica and other churches. Some scholars think he wanted readers to think about what the things the apostles taught.

It is clear that there were teachings about which the Thessalonians knew. Paul wanted them to continue to believe them and follow them.

See: [Apostle](#)

Why did Paul write "every good work and word"?

[2:17]

Paul wrote "every good work and word" because he wanted Christians to do things and say things in ways that honor God. He wrote "every good work" to write about doing the things that other people can see. He wrote "and word" to write about what Christians speak that other people can hear.

Chapter 3

¹ Now, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may rush and be glorified, as it also is with you, ² and that we may be delivered from unrighteous and evil people, for not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. ⁴ We have confidence in the Lord about you, that you both do and will continue to do the things that we command. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ.

⁶ Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you avoid every brother who is idle and does not live according to the traditions you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know it is proper for you to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you. ⁸ We did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but we worked night and day in labor and toil, so we might not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this not because we have no authority, but we did this in order to be an example to you, so that you may imitate us. ¹⁰ For when we were with you, we commanded you, "The one who is unwilling to labor must not eat." ¹¹ For we hear that some among you are idle, not busy at labor, but busybodies. ¹² Now such ones we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they should labor with quietness and eat their own bread. ¹³ But you, brothers, do not become tired of doing well. ¹⁴ And if anyone does not obey our word in this letter, take note of him and have no association with him, so that he may be ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not consider him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

¹⁶ Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all. ¹⁷ I, Paul, write this with my own hand, which is the mark on every letter I write. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

2 Thessalonians 3

3:1-5

Who is the "evil one"?

[3:3]

The "evil one" is Satan.

See: John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

3:6-12

Why did Paul write "lazy life"?

[3:6]

Paul wrote "lazy life" to make his readers think of people who cause fights in the church or do things that do not honor God.

Advice to translators: The Greek word can be translated as "lazy" or "idle." However, Paul was writing about more than just a person who does not work. He wrote about a person who causes trouble. They can cause trouble because they are not doing good things such as working.

See: [Church](#)

What were the "traditions" Paul wrote about in 3:6?

[3:6]

Paul wrote about "traditions" in 3:6 because he reminded his readers that he taught them the things Christians needed to do to honor God. He taught them about working. He taught them to serve other

people. He taught them to avoid wrong actions. When Paul was in Thessalonica, he lived this way himself (See: 3:7). He set an example for the Christians there (see: 3:9). These traditions are part of the "traditions" he wrote about in 2:15.

Why did Paul write "not because we have no authority" (3:9)? Paul wrote "not because we have no authority" because he wanted to be sure his readers knew God gave him permission to tell them about the things he wrote to them. He heard that some people said God did not give him permission to say these things. However, God gave him permission as an apostle (see: 1 Corinthians 1:1, Galatians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1). So, he told his readers that the people who said he did not have authority were wrong.

See: [Apostle](#)

Why did Paul write "walk idly"?

[3:11]

Paul wrote "walk idly" because he wanted his readers to think about people who cause trouble or rebel against people who ruled over them. It is similar to what Paul wrote in 3:6.

Why did Paul write "eat their own food"?

[3:12]

Paul wrote "eat their own food" because he wanted to write about people who work to feed themselves. This can be by raising their own food on a farm. Or it can be by working to earn money to buy food. Either way, Paul wanted Christians to work so they could eat. If they were able to work, he wanted them to work. 3:13-15

Why did Paul write "take note of him"?

[3:14]

Paul wrote "take note of him" because he wanted his readers to look for people in their churches like those he wrote about in 3:6-12. If they found people like this, Paul wanted them to not speak to them or do anything with them.

However, Paul did not want his readers to judge too harshly when they did this. So he wrote "do not consider him as an enemy" (3:15). In fact, he wanted readers to "warn him as a brother" (3:15).

See: Ephesians 4:15

See: [Church](#)

3:16-18

Why did Paul write "with my own hand"?

[3:17]

Paul wrote "with my own hand" because he wanted his readers to know that he really wrote and sent this letter. Often Paul spoke words that someone else wrote down for him. However, he wrote the last words himself. He did this so that readers could see that the handwriting was his own.

Book: 1 Timothy

Introduction to 1 Timothy

Overview

Paul wrote Timothy to help him correct the church at Ephesus. Many false teachers were in this church. They caused a lot of problems. Paul knew this would happen. He also told others it would happen when he met with the leaders in the Ephesian church. Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage him to correct the false teachers. He also wrote him to give Timothy an example of how to do the things that honor God. The main purpose of 1 Timothy was to help Timothy to teach and care for the churches.

See Map: Ephesus

Who wrote 1 Timothy?

Paul wrote that he was the author of 1 Timothy. He wrote about how he used to persecute the church. Also, he wrote about how the story of how he started to believe in Jesus was an example of God's grace toward people (1:12-16). He called himself an "apostle" (see: 1:1, 2:7), a "herald," and a teacher of the gentiles (see: 2:7).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Grace](#); [Apostle](#); [Gentile](#); [Herald](#)

When did Paul write 1 Timothy?

1. Some scholars think Paul wrote First Timothy during his third missionary journey. He left Ephesus and went to Macedonia (see: Acts 20:1). Timothy joined him later (see: 20:4).
2. Some scholars think that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment (see: Acts 28:30-31) and then wrote this letter before a second imprisonment in Rome.

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

See Map: Macedonia; Rome

To whom did Paul write First Timothy?

Paul mainly wrote this letter to Timothy. However, he also wrote this letter to the church of which Timothy lead. He did this so they would know that Paul wanted Timothy to lead this church. Paul had Timothy join him while on Paul's second missionary journey (see: Acts 16:1-3). Later, when Paul going into Macedonia, he asked Timothy to stay in Ephesus to help the church there with problems it was having (see: 1:3).

See: [Church](#); [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#)

See Map: Macedonia

Why did Paul write First Timothy?

Paul wrote the letter to give Timothy instructions about helping the church at Ephesus. They needed this help because false teachers had taught the wrong things and caused many Christians to sin. People thought the church in Ephesus did evil things. Paul wanted Timothy to make people to think good things about this church because it did good things. He wanted Timothy to do this by teaching Christians the right things about God. In particular, he wanted families to live in an orderly and godly way (see: 3:4-5, 3:12, 5:4-8, 13-14; 6:1-2).

See: [Church](#); [Sin](#)

What did the false teachers teach other people?

The false teachers taught a different type of Judaism. Teachers in that day used much time arguing about tiny details of the Old Testament (see: 1:3-8; 6:4-5; 6:20). Some of the teachers believed that Gentiles could not be saved (see: 2:4-7). They thought that some things in the world were unclean, such as certain

foods and marriage (4:3-5). Some teachers taught that there would not be a future resurrection of Christians (see: 2 Timothy 2:18). They also did sinful things and love to have a lot of money (see: 4:2; 6:5-9). Paul taught that Satan tries to get people to believe the wrong thing and to do things that do not honor God (see: 4:1; 5:15).

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Marriage](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Outline of 1 Timothy

1. Paul greeted Timothy (1:1-2)
2. Timothy needed to stop false teaching in Ephesus (1:3-20)
3. The Christians in Ephesus must all do the things that Christians should do (2:1-15)
4. Timothy must appoint good leaders for the church (3:1-13)
5. Timothy must be a good leader (3:14-4:16)
6. The Christians in Ephesus must all do the things that Christians should do, continued (5:1-6:2)
7. Timothy must warn against false teaching and against greed (6:3-19)
8. Conclusion (6:20-21)

1 Timothy

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope,

² to Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³ As I urged you to do when I was leaving for Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you can command certain people not to teach a different doctrine. ⁴ Neither should they pay attention to stories and endless genealogies. These promote arguments rather than the plan of God, which is by faith. ⁵ Now the goal of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith. ⁶ Some people have gone astray from these things and have turned to worthless talk. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or what they so confidently affirm. ⁸ But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully. ⁹ We know this, that law is not set in place for a righteous man, but for lawless and rebellious people, for ungodly people and sinners, and for those who are unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for sexually immoral people, for those who practice homosexuality, for those who kidnap people for slaves, for liars, for false witnesses, and for whatever else is opposed to truthful teaching. ¹¹ This instruction is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. He strengthened me, for he considered me faithful, and he appointed me to service. ¹³ I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴ And the grace of our Lord overflowed with the faith and the love that is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ This message is reliable and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. ¹⁶ But for this reason I was given mercy, so that in me, the chief, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all patience. He did this as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ Now to the king of the ages, the immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁸ I am placing this command before you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that you might fight the good fight, ¹⁹ holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have shipwrecked their faith. ²⁰ Such are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered over to Satan so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

1 TIMOTHY 1 Commentary

1:1-2

How is “Christ Jesus our hope”?

[1:1]

Christians have hope because of Jesus. That is, they are confident about something because of Jesus. He gives them this now and in the future. Because Jesus died on the cross and was made alive again, anyone who believes in Jesus can have peace with God now and in the future (see: Romans 5:1-2; Colossians 1:19-22). They will live forever with him in heaven after they die (see: 1 John 3:2-3) Jesus also gives confidence to Christians because he sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives inside of Christians. He gives them power, and he caused them to be sanctified. (see: Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:4-6).

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

Why did Paul call Timothy his “true son in the faith”?

[1:2]

Paul wrote that Timothy was his “true son in the faith.” This is a metaphor. He wanted to write he was Timothy’s spiritual father. That is, he taught Timothy about how to do the things that honor God in the same way a father teaches his child something. Therefore, Paul knew Timothy did the same types of things that Paul did. These things were because they believed in Jesus.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Why did Paul greet the Christians with “grace, mercy, and peace”?

[1:2]

See: [Ancient Letters](#)

1:3-7

Why did Paul leave Timothy in Ephesus?

[1:3]

Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to teach people. He also “commanded”(παράγγελλω/g3853) false teachers not to teach. False teacher taught things that Paul and the other Apostles did not teach. Paul wanted Timothy to stop people from teaching things that he did not teach.

See Map: Ephesus

What were “endless genealogies”?

[1:4]

Some false teachers wanted other people to know their genealogies. That is, they wanted people to know their ancestors were greatly honored. They thought having honored ancestors was better than the gospel (see: Titus 3:9). Scholars think these teachers wanted other people to know that their ancestors were in honored the Old Testament.

See: 6:3-5; 2nd Timothy 2:16-18

See: [Gospel](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What was “the commandment” about which Paul wrote?

[1:5]

Some scholars think Paul told Timothy to “command”(παράγγελλία/g3852) false teachers to stop teaching things Paul did not teach. Other scholars think Paul told Timothy to teach the gospel with love. This fulfilled all of God’s law (see: Romans 13:10).

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What did in mean to have a “pure heart”?

[1:5]

A person with a pure heart does things and thinks things that honor God (see: 2 Timothy 2:22).

How did a person have a “good conscience”?

[1:5]

A person has a good conscience by believing in the gospel and doing the things that Jesus said to do (see: 3:9). They also do not think about things that do not honor God (see: Titus 1:15).

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was “sincere faith”?

[1:5]

A person with “sincere faith” completely trusts in God. Paul wrote that teachers with sincere faith did the things that honor God, and they do not do the things that honor themselves.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:3-12

See: [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write “miss the mark”?

[1:6]

Scholars think Paul spoke about people those who believed in the gospel then later did not believe in the gospel (see 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:4).

What was “foolish talk”?

[1:6]

Some scholars think “foolish talk” is something said that has no meaning. That is, someone said things that did not help Christians honor God.

1:8-11

Why did Paul write, “the law is good”?

[1:8]

Paul wrote that the law is good because God tells people what he wants them to do through the law of Moses(see: Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:12). God made people know their sin and their need to be saved from it through the law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Why did Paul write that the, “law is not made for the righteous man”?

[1:9]

Some scholars think Paul wanted to write that the law of Moses was made so that those who were sinning will know that the things they did were wrong. They think it was not made for the people who already do

the things that honor God. Other scholars think Paul wrote to the people who did good things, but they did not do them to honor God. Instead, they did these good things so other people would think they were righteous, but they were not righteous. They think Paul wanted them to know that the law of Moses was not given to make people righteous, but it was given so that people would know that the things they were doing did not honor God (see: 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

See: 2 Timothy 3:1-5

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

How were people “godless and profane” in the days of Paul?

[1:9]

A “godless” person did not want to honor God in any way. A profane person knew what God wanted them to do, but they continued to sin anyway because they wanted to sin more than they wanted to honor God.

See: [Sin](#)

What was “faithful instruction”?

[1:10]

Faithful instruction taught the things God wanted people to do to honor him with their lives. It taught them what they needed to know about God the Father and Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Faithful instruction helped Christians to do more things that honor God.

See: Titus 1:9

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

What was the “glorious gospel” about which Paul spoke?

[1:11]

Some scholars think the “glorious gospel” was when people told the story of the glory of the “blessed God.” That is, God is “blessed” because he is perfect. He lives in perfect joy. He is the one who gives all blessings.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy Joyful\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Rejoice \(Joy Joyful\)](#)

1:12-17

Why was Paul considered to be “faithful”?

[1:12]

Some scholars think Jesus did not choose Paul to be an apostle because he was already a “faithful”(πιστός/g4103) man. They think Jesus chose Paul because he knew Paul would be faithful in the future (see: Acts 9:1-16). Other scholars think Christ considered Paul to be faithful because of what God graciously did in Paul’s life. That is, his grace allowed Paul to repent from sinning and allowed Paul to do the things that honored and served God.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Grace](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What was a “blasphemer” and “persecutor”?

[1:13]

Paul wrote he used to be a “blasphemer” and a “persecutor.” A blasphemer was a person who insulted God by saying things that were not true about God. They spoke evil about Jesus. They even cursed him. Paul also wrote he used to be a “persecutor”(διώκτης/g1376). He harmed Christians (see: Acts 8:3; 22:4).

See: [Curse](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Curse](#)

How did Paul “act ignorantly in unbelief”?

[1:13]

Paul wrote he was ignorant in unbelief. Paul persecuted Christians. But he did not know this was wrong. He thought this was right. Paul believed in God. But, he did not believe that Jesus was the messiah. Paul thought he honored God when he persecuted Christians.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What was the “faith and love” about which Paul spoke?

[1:14]

See: [Love](#); [Love](#)

How was what Paul taught “reliable and worthy of all acceptance”?

[1:15]

Paul knew what he taught was “reliable”(πιστός/g4103) and true. He knew all people needed to trust the things he taught. What he wrote was spoken by Jesus himself (see: Matthew 9:13; Luke 19:9-10).

Why did Paul write, “I am the worst” of sinners?

[1:15]

Paul wrote he was the worst of sinners. He persecuted Christians. He knew he sinned against God himself. Paul knew God forgave him, but this did not make him forget his sinning.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write, “demonstrate all patience”?

[1:16]

Jesus demonstrated with all patience by using Paul as an example. Paul was an example of how God has great patience for sinners. God wanted people to know that he forgives even the greatest sinner if the sinner repents (see: 2 Peter 3:9). Advice to translators: Someone who waits for something when they should wait, they are patient. They are only patient if they are peace with waiting.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

1:18-20

What were the “prophecies previously made” about Timothy?

[1:18]

Many scholars think Paul wrote about a time when the church leaders prayed for Timothy. They trusted him to always serve the church in the way God wanted him to serve (see: 4:14-16).

See: [Church](#) ; [Church](#)

Why did Paul say, “some have shipwrecked their faith”?

[1:19]

Paul used a metaphor. In the same way a ship can be damaged too badly to be used anymore, so can false teachers damage a Christian. That is, these Christians do not know the truth and do not trust God.

See: [Church](#)

What is “blasphemy”?

[1:20]

See: [BlaspHEME \(Blasphemy\)](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Therefore, first of all, I urge that humble requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ² for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and acceptable before God our Savior. ⁴ He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator for God and man, the man Christ Jesus. ⁶ He gave himself as a ransom for all, as the testimony at the right time. ⁷ For this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸ Therefore, I want men in every place to pray and to lift up holy hands without anger or arguing. ⁹ In the same way, the women are to dress with proper clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothing, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who proclaim godliness through good works. ¹¹ A woman should learn in silence and with all submission. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to live in quietness. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ However, she will be saved through bearing children, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

1 Timothy 2

2:1-4

What was an “intercession”?

[2:1]

An intercession was a prayer. This was a prayer made to God for a specific person or was asking God to help because a specific thing that was happening to a person.

How did a person live a “peaceful and quiet” life?

[2:2]

Scholars think someone had a “peaceful” life when they were at peace. They were at peace with themselves or had peace inside of themselves. These scholars think someone had a “quiet” life when they were at peace with others. The government did not cause them problems.

What was godliness?

[2:2]

See: [Godly \(Godliness\)](#)

How did a person live with “dignity”?

[2:2]

A person lived with “dignity”(σεμνότης/g4587) when they lived in a way that others respected. That is, Christians and non-Christians thought the things they did were good for everyone.

Why did Paul write that he “desires all people to be saved”?

[2:4]

Many people in Ephesus thought that only the Jewish people were saved from sinning. Certain people taught only the most spiritual people could be saved from sinning. This is not true. Paul wanted Timothy to know God did not save only certain groups of people. God wants all people to be saved from sinning. However, not every person wants to be saved from sinning.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

How did a person “come to the knowledge of the truth”?

[2:4]

The truth about which Paul wrote was the gospel. People who “came to the knowledge of the truth” were people who believed in the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#)

2:5-7

Why did Paul write, “there is one God”?

[2:5]

People thought there were many gods when Paul lived. However, in the Bible there is only “one God.” The Israelites knew there was only one God (see: Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

How is Jesus the “one mediator” between God and humans?

[2:5]

Jesus is the mediator between God and humans because he died for people’s sinning. A “mediator”(μεσίτης/g3316) was a person who helped people with a conflict to be at peace with one another. Because of man’s sinning, God and man were separated. Jesus’ death and resurrection allowed for man to not be separated from God. Jesus was both God and human. This made him the perfect mediator between God and humans.

See: [Atone\(Atonement\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone\(Atonement\)](#)

What did Paul mean that “Jesus...gave himself as a ransom for all”?

[2:6]

Jesus gave himself as a ransom to God to be able to free people from the punishment of sinning (see: Romans 5:12-21). A “ransom”(ἀντίλυτρον/g0487) was a price paid to free someone from slavery. All humans are slaves to sin. That is, they cannot choose not to do the things that do not honor God. God must punish all sin. The price that needed to be paid for sinning was death (see: Romans 6:23). Therefore, Jesus paid this price of sin for every human when he died on the cross.

Why did Paul write, “a testimony at the right time”?

[2:6]

The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus served as a “testimony” that God’s word was true. That is, it proved that what Jesus said about himself was true. Paul said this testimony was given “at the right time.” That meant God made a specific time for the gospel to be made known (see: Galatians 4:4-7).

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was a “herald”?

[2:7]

Often, a ruler used someone to speak for him. This person was a herald. The herod told things to the ruler’s people. Paul wrote that God made Paul speak for God. He told all people the gospel.

What was an “apostle”?

[2:7]

See: [Apostle](#)

Who were the “Gentiles”?

[2:7]

See: [Gentile](#)

Why did Paul write, “in faith and truth”?

[2:7]

Paul wrote “in faith and truth.” Scholars think Paul meant he taught the Gentiles about the faith and the truth. That is, he taught the Gentiles what they needed to know about Jesus and what was true.

2:8-10

What did it mean to “lift up holy hands without anger or arguing”?

[2:8]

Paul said, “lift up holy hands without anger or arguing.” Some scholars think Christians prayed standing with their arms and hands lifted up in front of them. The Jewish people also did this in the synagogues. These scholars think lifting “holy”(ἅγιος/g3741) hands meant Christians’ prayers were committed to God. They think this also meant that Christians were committed to doing the things that honor God. That is, this made their hands holy. Christians also prayed without “anger or arguing.” They did not want to have arguments and thoughts that did not honor God. They wanted to live a holy life. That is, they only wanted to do the things that honored God.

See: [Synagogue](#)

What was “proper clothing”?

[2:9]

Proper clothing meant that a woman wore clothes that were “modest”(αἰδώς/g0127). Paul did not want women to dress in a way that others would be looking at their clothes. For a woman to wear modest clothes meant that she wore things that did not upset other people. Also she wore things that did not make men look at her in a sexual way. A woman using self-control in the things that she wore wanted to do the things that honored God instead of worrying about the things that other people thought about her. Advice to translators: When a man looks at a woman in a sexual way, he thinks about having sex with her and wants to have sex with her.

See: [Self-Control](#)

How did a woman clothe herself with “good works”?

[2:9, 2:10]

Paul used a metaphor. In the same way clothing is seen by other people, so good works are seen by other people also. Paul wanted women to worry about the things they did for God not about the things that they wore.

See: [Metaphor](#)

2:11-15

Why did Paul write for women to, “learn in silence”?

[2:11]

Some scholars think Paul did not allow women to speak when Christians gathered together to worship God. Other scholars think Paul taught women to be quiet while the Bible was being taught. This was so they could listen and learn what was being taught. These scholars think Paul used the word “silence”(ἥσυχία/g2271) in the same way that he used it when he spoke about praying for leaders. That is, so they might live a quiet and peaceful life (see: 2:2).

See: [Worship](#)

How did a woman learn “with all submission”?

[2:11]

Paul wanted women to submit to the teaching elders. These elders taught the truth of the Bible and corrected errors being taught.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

Why was a woman not allowed to “teach or to exercise authority over a man”?

[2:12]

Some scholars think Paul did not allow women to teach men about what the Bible taught while Christians were gathered together. These scholars also think Paul did not allow women to teach men about the things they needed to do to honor God while Christians gathered together. Other scholars think Paul allowed women to teach when Christians gathered together only if they did not try “exercise authority”(αὐθεντέω/g0831) over the men in the gathering. That is, the women did not need to tell the men how to know the scriptures. They did not need to take control of the elders in a gathering.

See: [Elder](#)

Why did Paul write women “will be saved through bearing children”?

[2:15]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about a promise made in Genesis. This was the promise that the a descendant of the woman would defeat Satan (see: Genesis 3:15). This promise was a prophecy of Jesus. Other scholars think the words meant that women, in general, would not die during childbirth. Other scholars think Paul wrote that women preserve humans by having more children.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ This saying is trustworthy: If someone desires to be an overseer, he desires a good work. ² Therefore the overseer must have a good reputation. He must be a husband of one wife. He must be moderate, sensible, orderly, and hospitable. He must be able to teach. ³ He must not be addicted to wine, not a brawler, but instead, gentle, peaceful. He must not be a lover of money. ⁴ He should manage his own household well, and he should make sure his children obey and respect him in every way. ⁵ For if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for a church of God? ⁶ He should not be a new convert, so that he does not swell with pride and might fall into condemnation as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with those outside, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil. ⁸ In the same way, deacons should be dignified, not double-talkers. They should not drink too much wine or be greedy. ⁹ They should keep the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience. ¹⁰ They should also be approved first, and then they should serve because they are blameless. ¹¹ In the same way, their wives should be dignified, not slanderers, but sober and faithful in all things. ¹² Deacons must be husbands of one wife. They must manage well their children and household. ¹³ For those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁴ As I write these things to you, I hope to come to you soon. ¹⁵ But if I delay, I am writing so that you may know how to conduct yourself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. ¹⁶ We all agree that the mystery of godliness is great:

"He was revealed in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was proclaimed among nations,
was believed on in the world,
and was taken up in glory."

1 TIMOTHY 3

3:1-7

What did the word “desires” mean?

[3:1]

Paul used the word “desires” (ὀρέγω/g3713) in two different ways in this passage. First, someone desired to do certain things so that other people would know they wanted to serve God. He also used the word “desires” (ἐπιθυμέω/g1937) when talking about a man wanting to serve God by serving God’s church

What was an “overseer”?

[3:1]

Christians called leaders of the church “overseers” (ἐπίσκοπος/g1985). People use many different English words to translate this Greek word. The word “elder” and overseer mean the same thing (see: 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5-9). The leaders were men who guided the church. They taught Christians about God. They showed Christian how to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

What did it mean to be “above reproach”?

[3:2]

A person who was “above reproach” was not accused of doing any wrong things. Christians and non-Christians respected them.

See: [Blameless](#)

Why did Paul write, “husband of one wife”?

[3:2]

The words “husband of one wife” can also be translated as “a one-woman man.” Some scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must be a married man. Other scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must have only one wife. Other scholars think Paul meant that an overseer must not commit adultery. That is, he will be faithful in his marriage. Advice to Translators: in English, a person cannot “do” adultery. They “commit” adultery.

See: [Adultery](#); [Elder](#); [Adultery](#)

What did the word “moderate” mean?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must be a “moderate”(νηφάλιος/g3524) man. That is, he must be a man who controlled the things that he did and the things that he said.

See: Titus 2:2

How was a man “sensible”?

[3:2]

A sensible man was a man who thought about spiritual matters in life. That is, he thought about how to honor and obey God. It was a man who acted calmly and orderly in every situation.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

How was a man “orderly”?

[3:2]

Someone was orderly when they did things he wanted to do and did not do the things he did not want to do. Other Christians respected an orderly person.

What did it mean to be “hospitable”?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must also be hospitable. That is, he must be willing to have people in his home, whether they were travelling Christians or people going to a church meeting.

See: [Hospitable \(Hospitality\)](#)

How was an overseer supposed to “be able to teach”?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must be “able to teach”(διδασκτικός/g1317) That is, someone must be able to teach others about the Bible. Also, they must be able to teach in a way that was easy for people to understand. Some scholars think Paul wrote about a person who was already teaching the Bible before becoming an overseer. The overseer had to be able to know when someone did not teach the Bible in the right way. He was then able to correct those teaching the wrong thing by speaking the truth.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

What was meant by the words, “addicted to wine”?

[3:3]

Most scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must not be a man who often drank wine to become drunk (see: Titus 1:7). They do not think Paul told people not to drink wine. He wrote that an overseer should not drink too much.

See: [Wine \(Winepress\)](#); [Elder](#); [Wine \(Winepress\)](#)

How was a man a “brawler”?

[3:3]

A “brawler” was someone who often caused arguments and fights. Some scholars think a “brawler” was a person who started physical fights. Other scholars think the fights were more often people arguing and yelling at other people.

What was a “lover of money”?

[3:3]

A “lover of money” was someone who was only interested in getting as much money as they could get. Paul said an overseer must not be a man who is a lover of money (see: Hebrews 13:5; 2 Timothy 3:1-2).

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

Why did Paul write that he needed to, “manage his own household”?

[3:4]

Paul said that an overseer must “manage his own household.” Paul meant that an overseer must be a man that leads his family to do the things that honor God.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

Why did Paul write that an overseer must not be a “new convert”?

[3:6]

A new convert was a person who had only been a Christian for a short period of time. Paul did not want new Christians to lead other Christians because he did not want them to be filled with pride.

See: [Pride](#)

What did Paul mean with the words, “condemnation as the devil”?

[3:6]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about God judging Satan. It was God who judged the devil because he was prideful and deceived others. The people Paul talked about think that in a similar way. God judged overseers who were prideful and deceive others because they lead other Christians.

See: [Pride](#); [Pride](#)

How did a man have a “good reputation with those outside”?

[3:7]

Paul wrote that an overseer must have a “good reputation with those outside.” He wanted to write that non- Christians must think an overseer is honest and does the right types of things. He was a man who was respected, even by those that did not believe in Jesus.

3:8-13

What was a deacon?

[3:8]

Certain people in the church were “deacons”(διάκονος/g1249). They served and helped other Christians (see: 3:10, 13).

See: Philippians 1:1

See: [Deacon](#)

What did it mean to be “dignified”?

[3:8]

People respected a “dignified”(σεμνός/g4586) man. He was respected because of the things he did. This meant that he was wise, did not get angry easily, and did the things that honored God.

What was a “double-talker”?

[3:8]

A “double-talker” was a man who said something to one person and then said something different to another person. They also said things and then did things that were different than what they said. That is, they said good things but then did bad things. A “double-talker” knows the truth, but he says what is not true.

What was the “revealed truth of the faith”?

[3:9]

Paul wrote about the “revealed truth of the faith.” This was the truth about Jesus. The apostles told people about this truth so they could know it (see: Ephesians 3:1-13). They told Christians the things they needed to believe about Christ. They also told them how to do the things that honored God.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

How could someone be “blameless”?

[3:10]

See: 1 Timothy 3:2

Who were the women about whom Paul wrote?

[3:11]

In the Greek language, the word for “women”(γυνή/g1135) can also mean wives. Because of this, some scholars think Paul wrote about the wives of the deacons. That is, they too must live in a way that honors God. Other scholars think Paul wrote about women who served as deaconesses.

See: [Deacon](#)

What did it mean to be “dignified”?

[3:11]

People respected a “dignified”(σεμνός/g4586) woman. People respected her because of the good things that she did. This meant that she was wise, did not get angry easily, and did the things that honored God.

What was a “slanderer”?

[3:11]

Someone who talked about other people in a hurtful way was a “slanderer.” A slanderer did not care whether or not the things they spoke were true.

3:14-16**What was the “household of God”?**

[3:15]

The “household of God” was a metaphor. Paul was talking about a group of Christians. Paul was not writing about a building (see: Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 3:6).

See: [Metaphor](#)

How was the church the “pillar of support of the truth”?

[3:15]

Paul wrote about the church being a “pillar of support of the truth.” This was a metaphor. In the same way a foundation and pillars supported a building, so Christians support the gospel. Paul wrote in other letters that the apostles were like a foundation. Some of the apostles were even called “pillars” in the church (see: Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 2:19-20).

See: [Apostle](#); [Metaphor](#); [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#)

What was the “revealed truth of godliness”?

[3:16]

Paul wrote about the “revealed truth of godliness.” This is this gospel. God revealed this to His people. It was the truth about how people can be at peace with God and doing the things that honored God.

See: [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul say God “appeared in the flesh”?

[3:16]

Paul wrote that God “appeared in the flesh.” Paul meant that God came to earth as a human being (see: John 1:1-4, 14-15; 14:8-13). He did this in Jesus.

How was Christ “justified by the Spirit”?

[3:16]

The Holy Spirit made it clear that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus also said this (see: Romans 1:3-5).

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

How was Jesus “taken up in glory”?

[3:16]

After Jesus suffered on the cross, was crucified, buried, and then made alive again, he returned to heaven (see: Acts 1:9-11).

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Now the Spirit clearly says that in later times some people will leave the faith and pay attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons ² by the hypocrisy of liars, their own consciences having been seared. ³ They will forbid people to marry and require them to abstain from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For every creation of God is good, and nothing received with thanksgiving is to be rejected. ⁵ For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

⁶ If you place these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ. For you are being nourished by the words of faith and by the good teaching that you have followed. ⁷ But reject profane stories loved by old women. Instead, train yourself in godliness. ⁸ For bodily training is a little useful, but godliness is useful for all things. It holds promise for this life now and the life to come. ⁹ This message is trustworthy and worthy of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For it is for this that we labor and struggle. For we hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, but especially of believers. ¹¹ Instruct the people and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example for the believers in speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity. ¹³ Until I come, attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the elders. ¹⁵ Care for these things. Be in them, so that your progress may be evident to all people. ¹⁶ Give careful attention to yourself and to the teaching. Continue in these things. For by doing so, you will save yourself and those who listen to you.

1 TIMOTHY 4

4:1-5

Why did Paul write, “the Spirit clearly says”?

[4:1]

Paul wrote, “the Spirit clearly says.” Some scholars think God gave Paul a prophecy about the future. Other scholars think Paul warned Timothy (see: Acts 20:29-30). Other scholars think Paul wrote about Jesus. This was about the last days (see: Mark 13:5-6, 21-22).

See: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

See: [Last Days](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Last Days](#)

What did “in later times” mean?

[4:1]

The words “in later times” are similar to the words “in the last days” (see: 2 Timothy 3:1). 1. Some scholars think Paul was writing about sometime after Paul wrote the letter to Timothy. 1. Other scholars Paul wanted to say that Jesus is about to return to the earth. 1. Other scholars think Paul wanted to say that the church has been in the last days since Jesus was born. 1. And it will stay in the last days until Jesus returns (see: Acts 2:16-17).

See: 2 Timothy 3:1-9

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

What did it mean “to leave the faith”?

[4:1]

Paul wrote about leaving the faith. Some people who said they were Christians no longer believed in Jesus. They now followed the teachings of demons (see: 2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Someone who

“left”(ἀφίστημι/0868) rebelled against God or rejected God. It was a frequent Jewish and Christian teaching that in the last days many people would reject God.

See: Matthew 24:4-6, 10-12; 2 Peter 2:1-22; 1 John 2:18-19

See: [Last Days](#); [Last Days](#)

Why did Paul write “their own consciences will be branded”?

[4:2]

Paul wrote about false teachers. They taught the wrong things. When Paul wrote about this, he said that it was as if their consciences were burned. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that they could not tell if they were teaching the right things or the wrong things. Some scholars think Satan “branded”(καυστηριάζω/g2743) these teachers. That is, he marked them as his slaves. Other scholars think that Satan “burned” their consciences, leaving them unable to know what God wanted them to do (see: 1:19).

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Conscience](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

What did these false teachers teach?

[4:3]

False teachers taught that people needed to be unmarried to be at peace with God. These teachers also taught that Christians needed to stop eating certain foods. Paul taught someone could be at peace with God if they are married and no matter what they eat. Some scholars think the false teachers taught that the everything on the earth is evil. Therefore, they did not want to touch certain things in the world (see: Colossians 2:16-23). Other scholars think the false teachers taught that Christians were already resurrected and living in a place of peace (see: 2 Timothy 2:18). Therefore, they thought should live as Adam and Eve did, without sex and eating no meat. However, Paul taught that everything God created was good. Nothing God created should be rejected if people thanked God for it.

See: Romans 14:1-15:7

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

4:6-10

Why did Paul write, “place these things before the brothers”?

[4:6]

Paul told Timothy to “place these things before”(ὑποτίθημι/g5294) the people of the church. That is Timothy was to teach the church. Some scholars think “these things” meant everything that Paul wrote and said to Timothy (see: 2 Timothy 2:1-2).

See: [Church](#)

Why did Paul write to be “nourished by the words of faith”?

[4:6]

Paul used the word “nourished”(ἐντρέφω/g1789). This was a metaphor. He wanted Timothy to know the things God said. He wanted him to learn them by studying them. This would train Timothy. Studying the Bible taught Paul to do the things that honored God and how to teach others to do the same.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What were “worldly stories loved by old women”?

[4:7]

Some scholars think Paul used the words “worldly stories” (βέβηλος/g0952) to write about stories that did not need to be told. These stories did not honor God. And they did not teach other people to honor God either.

Advice to Translators: Stories “loved by old women” (γρᾶώδης/g1126) in 4:7 was a common insult when Paul was alive. However, today it could insult women and the elderly. The translator should find a way of writing this idea without needlessly insulting other people.

See: [World](#)

Why did Paul write that “bodily training is a little useful”?

[4:8]

Paul wanted to write that someone training their body benefited them, but only useful while living on earth. However, training to do things that honor God benefited people would last forever.

Advice to translators: Someone who trains does something many times in the same way for a reason. It benefits them. That is, it helps them to be better in some way.

How is God the Savior of all people, but especially of Christians?

[4:10]

Scholars think many different things about what Paul wrote to Timothy about God. 1. Some scholars think Paul meant that God does not save every individual. He saves all kinds of people, for example, gentiles. 2. Some scholars think Paul was not writing of eternal salvation. But, God gives daily blessings to all people in the world. They think Paul wrote about God’s common grace to all people. This was a temporary grace. However, for those who believe in Jesus, God is their Savior. This is eternal grace. 3. Other scholars think God offers to save everyone, but only saves those who have believe in Jesus.

4:11-16

Why did Paul write Timothy, “let no one despise your youth”?

[4:12]

In ancient times, people respected people older person. They did not think younger people did many things, therefore they did not know as much as older people. Timothy was about 30 years old when Paul wrote this letter. However, because Timothy spent many years with Paul, he did many different things and learned how to teach others about God and the gospel. Because of this, Paul gave Timothy permission to teach and wanted other CHristians to do the types of things that Timothy did.

See: [Gospel](#)

How was Timothy to “attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching”?

[4:13]

Paul wanted Timothy “attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching.” Paul meant that Timothy was to read the scriptures to those who believed in Jesus when they gathered together. He encouraged Christians by reading the Bible. Paul also wrote Timothy to carefully “teach” the truth to the church. That is, he wanted him to teach so the church would know the Bible well.

How did God prepare Timothy to serve him?

[4:14]

God gave Timothy a spiritual “gift” (χάρισμα/g5486). That is, he gave him a special ability to serve God. Timothy served God using the gift God gave him. However, he also worked to get better as serving God using gift. The group of “elders” (πρεσβυτέριον/g4244) earlier laid their hands on him. God gave a prophecy about how he wanted Timothy to serve him.

See: 1:18;; 2 Timothy 1:6

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Elder](#); [Laying on of Hands](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “you will save yourself and those who listen to you”?

[4:16]

Paul wrote, “you will save yourself and those who listen to you.” Some scholars think Paul wrote Timothy that as he continued to be a faithful teacher he would see more people believe in Jesus. Also, he himself would know a closer, know Jesus better. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote about God saving Christians and resurrecting their bodies.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:35-54

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Do not rebuke an older man. Instead, exhort him as if he were a father. Exhort younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, in all purity. ³ Honor widows, the real widows. ⁴ But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show honor in their own household. Let them repay their parents, because this is pleasing to God. ⁵ But she who is a real widow, who is left all alone, has set her hope in God and continues in offering earnest appeals and prayers night and day, ⁶ but the woman who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. ⁷ Instruct them in these things as well, so that they may be blameless. ⁸ But if someone does not provide for his own relatives, especially for those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ⁹ Let a woman be enrolled as a widow who is not younger than sixty years old, a wife of one husband. ¹⁰ She must have a reputation for doing good deeds, whether it is that she has cared for children, or has been hospitable to strangers, or has washed the feet of God's holy people, or has relieved the afflicted, or has been devoted to every good work. ¹¹ But as for younger widows, refuse to enroll them in the list. For when they give in to bodily desires against Christ, they want to marry. ¹² In this way they incur condemnation because they set aside their first commitment. ¹³ At the same time, they also learn to be lazy and they go around from house to house. They not only become lazy, but they also talk nonsense and are busybodies, saying things they should not say. ¹⁴ I therefore want younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, and to give no opportunity for the enemy to slander us. ¹⁵ For some have already turned aside after Satan. ¹⁶ If any believing woman has widows, let her help them, so that the church will not be burdened, so that it might help the real widows.

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor with the word and in teaching. ¹⁸ For the scripture says, "You must not put a muzzle on an ox while it threshes the grain" and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." ¹⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses. ²⁰ Correct sinners before all so that the rest may be afraid. ²¹ I solemnly command you, before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels, to keep these commands without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism. ²² Place hands hastily on no one. Do not share in the sins of another person. You should keep yourself pure. ²³ You should no longer drink water. Instead, you should take a little wine for the stomach and your frequent sicknesses. ²⁴ The sins of some people are openly known, and they go before them into judgment. But some sins follow later. ²⁵ In the same way, some good works are openly known, but even the others cannot be hidden.

1 TIMOTHY 5

5:1-2

How was Timothy to treat older people?

[5:1, 5:2]

Paul told Timothy to respect older men and women in the same way he would respect a father or mother. Paul wrote Timothy not to "scold" an older man. That is, Timothy was not to speak harshly or disrespect an older man.

See: Leviticus 19:32

How was Timothy to treat younger people?

[5:1, 5:2]

Paul told Timothy to treat younger people in the same way he treated his own brothers and sister. Particularly, Paul told Timothy to encourage younger women with all "purity." That is, Timothy was to honor and to protect younger women. Also, Timothy was to treat younger women with moral purity. That is, he was not to commit sexual immorality, by thinking or doing the wrong things.

Advice to Translator: in English, a person cannot do sexual immorality, they "commit" sexual immorality.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

5:3-16

What was a “real widow”?

[5:3]

Any woman whose husband died was a “widow.” However, Paul was writing about a widow who did not have anyone to care for her and not a widow whose family was able to help her (see: 5:16). The church was to help only widows who had no one and nothing to help them.

See: Deuteronomy 10:18, 14:29, 24:17-22; Isaiah 1:17; James 1:27

See: [Church](#)

Advice to Translators: Since every woman who has lost a husband is a widow, the translator needs to make a way to say that this is a “widow who is in need of someone to care for her.”

Why did Paul write that families need to care for a widowed mother or grandmother?

[5:4]

Paul wrote that children and grandchildren need to “honor” the widows in their family. Also, they needed to she had food and a place to live. If Christians cared for widows in their family, this was “pleasing to God”.

Advice to translators: A woman whose husband died was “widowed.”

Why did Paul write, “puts her certain hope in God”?

[5:5]

Paul wrote that a widow “puts her certain hope in God.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about a widow who placed her trust in God’s promises. She trusted God, not only for the promise to live with him in heaven forever, but also that God would help her during her life. Other scholars think Paul described a widow as someone who completely depended on God for her needs. For these reasons, a real widow prayed constantly for God to give her what she needed.

See: 1 Timothy 4:10; Isaiah 40:31; Romans 5:5

Why did Paul write, “dead, even though she is still alive”?

[5:6]

Paul wrote about certain widows as women who lived simply for their own “pleasure.” That is, they had a lot of money and did what they thought would make them happy. He said they were “dead, even though they were still alive.” That is, though they had life physically, they did not have spiritual life. That is, they did not worship God or depend on Him for their needs.

See: Ephesians 2:3; James 5:5;

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Why did Paul write, “denied the faith”?

[5:8]

Paul wrote that people “denied the faith.” Scholars think Paul wrote to “deny” the faith to write about people that said they believed in Jesus but they did not do the things that honor God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What did the word, “enrolled” mean?

[5:9]

The word “enrolled”(καταλέγω/g2639) was used to talk about making someone a part of a group. Scholars think two different things about why widows were enrolled in the church. 1. Some scholars think the church made a list of widows (and perhaps also some women who never married). These women did special things for the church. 2. Other scholars think that the list was simply the widows the church supported. These women did not do anything special for the church.

See: [Church](#)**Why did Paul write “wife of one husband”?**

[5:9]

Paul wrote “wife of one husband.” This can also be written “a husband of one wife” (see: 3:2), “a woman of one man” or “of one husband.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about a woman who married only once. Other scholars think Paul wrote about women who remained faithful to their husbands during their marriage.

How did a widow wash the feet of the saints?

[5:10]

In the ancient world, people washed the feet of people who came to their home. This honored the people who came to their home. Usually, slaves or women did this (see: Genesis 18:4; 1 Samuel 25:41; John 13:4-12). Some scholars think Paul wrote about a woman who washed other Christian’s feet. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. They think it was a woman who served other Christians in a humble way.

See: [Metaphor](#)**Why did Paul write not to enroll younger widows on the list?**

[5:11]

Paul wrote not to put the names of younger widows on the list. Some scholars think Paul did not want to help younger widows for a long time. However, they think Paul did want to help younger widows in some way. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote not to give younger widows any help from the church.

Why did Paul write for widows to “revoke their first commitment”?

[5:12]

Paul wrote for widows to “revoke their first commitment.” To “revoke” was used to talk about someone not doing the things they said they would do. “Commitment”(πίστις/g4102) can also be translated as “faith.” Scholars do not agree on why Paul wrote these words. 1. Some scholars think that a widow dishonored her dead husband if she wanted to marry another man. 2. Some scholars think that she had made a “commitment” to the church to remain single so she could serve the church more, but then later did not do this. 3. Some scholars think that she had taken a “vow” of to not have sex again or get married again. Then, she could serve the church greatly. 4. Some scholars think that she no longer served Jesus because she married a man who did not believe in Jesus. In ancient times, a man could decide what god or gods his family worshipped.

See: [Vow](#); [Vow](#)**What was a “busybody”?**

[5:13]

A “busybody” was a person who wanted to know things about other people. These were things they did not need to know about these other people (see: 2 Thessalonians 3:11). This was a sin. It hurt the church.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why did Paul write, “some have already turned aside to Satan”?

[5:15]

Someone “turned aside”(ἐκτρέπω/g1624) by no longer doing the things that honored God. Satan always tried to get Christians to do the things he wanted them to do (see: 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:26). 1. Some scholars think Paul wrote about widows who lived in a way that dishonors God or married someone who did not believe in Jesus. 2. Others scholars think some widows were doing things with magic. 3. Other scholars think some widows began to do the things demons wanted them to do (see: 4:1)

See: Genesis 3:1, 13; Acts 5:3; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

5:17-25

What was an elder?

[5:17]

See: 3:1-7

See: [Elder](#)

Why did Paul write, “you shall not muzzle an ox”?

[5:18]

Paul said the same things as Deuteronomy 25:4. On a farm, an ox walked around in a circle to crush grain. It was allowed to eat some of that grain. Paul wrote that an ox is fed with the grain on which he works. Therefore, it is also right to give the elders of the church things so they can live because they serve other Christians in a special way (see: 1 Corinthians 9:7-11).

See: [Elder](#); [Grain \(Grain Offering\)](#); [Elder](#)

Where did someone write, “The laborer is worthy of his wages”?

[5:18]

See: Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7

Why did Paul write about “two or three witnesses”?

[5:19]

Paul said the same thing as Deuteronomy 19:15. This verse spoke about evil things such as murder. In order to punish a person, at least two or three people needed to see the person who did the evil thing. In the same way, saying that an elder sinned is a serious thing. It must be seen by people who have seen the sin.

See: Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

Who were the “chosen angels”?

[5:21]

Paul wrote about the “chosen angels.” Some scholars think the “chosen angels” were those angels God made to care for the church. They think Paul wrote about God, Jesus, and the angels so they would know that the command Paul gave Timothy was serious. Other scholars think Paul wrote about certain angels who are near God in heaven.

See: Revelation 4-5

See: [Heaven](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Church](#); [Heaven](#)

What did Paul write to Timothy to “keep these commands without partiality”?

[5:21]

Paul wrote Timothy not to give “partiality” when judging something. That is, when he judged something for the elders. Paul wrote Timothy to treat every elder in the same way. In the same way, Timothy was not to favor a certain elder for any reason.

Advice to translators: Timothy helped the elders to know what to do when they did not know what to do. This is how he judged something.

See: Galatians 2:6; James 2:1-13

See: [Elder](#)

Why did Paul warn Timothy not to lay hands on anyone too “hastily”?

[5:22] When the church made someone a new leader, the current elders laid their hands on them and prayed with them. Paul wanted Timothy to know for sure whether or not someone needed to be a leader before he made them into one. He did not need to make people into leaders too quickly.

See: 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6

See: [Laying on of Hands](#); [Laying on of Hands](#)

Why did Paul write “share in the sins of another person”?

[5:22]

Paul wanted Timothy to know that Timothy would be guilty if he made someone a leader in the church too quickly. That is, if he made someone a leader that did not need to be one. Perhaps Paul wrote about a leader who continues to sin.

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Paul write Timothy to “take a little wine”?

[5:23]

Paul told Timothy to “take a little wine.” Paul was not writing Timothy to stop drink water. Instead, he wrote him not to drink only water. Paul wrote Timothy to “take a little wine” as well as to drink water. Some scholars think Paul wrote this to Timothy because Timothy had an illnesses. Some people thought this could make someone feel better when they were ill. Other scholars think Paul wrote this to Timothy to because sometimes the water was not good to drink where Timothy was.

What were sins that went before a person “into judgment”?

[5:24]

Paul wrote about sins that went before a person “into judgment.” Some of the people they thought could be church leaders had sinned in a certain way. They sinned in a way where everyone knew they sinned. Because everyone knew about their sins, Timothy and the other leaders judged that they could not serve in this way. However, Paul wrote that there were people who sinned secretly. These sins were sometimes found out at a later time. Therefore, Timothy had to be careful when he chose new leaders for the church.

See: Psalm 90:8; Jeremiah 16:17

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Chapter 6

¹ Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor. They should do this so that the name of God and the teaching might not be blasphemed. ² The slaves who have believing masters should not show them disrespect because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them all the more. For those who receive the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and declare these things.

³ If anyone teaches false doctrine and does not agree with the truthful words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with godly teaching, ⁴ he is proud and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments about words that result in envy, strife, insults, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant conflict between people who have morally corrupt minds. They have lost the truth and they think that godliness is a way to get more money. ^[1]⁶ Now godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ Instead, let us be satisfied with food and clothing. ⁹ Now those who desire to become wealthy fall into temptation, into a trap. They fall into many foolish and harmful desires, and into whatever else sinks people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people who desire it have been misled away from the faith and have pierced themselves with much grief.

¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the everlasting life to which you were called, and about which you gave the good confession before many witnesses. ¹³ I give these orders to you before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate and made the good confession, ¹⁴ to keep the command without spot or blame until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ God will reveal Christ's appearing at the right time—God, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King who reigns and the Lord who rules. ¹⁶ Only he has immortality and dwells in inaccessible light. No man sees him or is able to view him. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷ Instruct the rich in this world not to be proud and not to hope in riches, which are uncertain. Instead, they should hope in God. He offers to us all the true riches to enjoy. ¹⁸ Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In that way they will store up for themselves a good foundation for what is to come, so that they will take hold of real life.

²⁰ Timothy, protect what was given to you. Avoid the profane and empty talk and the conflicting ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. ²¹ Some men proclaim these things and so they have gone astray from the faith. May grace be with you.

Footnotes

6:5 ^[1]Some old copies add the exhortation,

1 TIMOTHY 6

6:1-2

What was a slave?

[6:1]

A “slave” (δοῦλος/g1401) was a person owned by another person. The slave worked for the owner. A slave was not paid for the work they did. However, a “slave” was taken care of by his owner. The owner gave them food to eat, clothes to wear, and a place to live.

See: Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25;

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

What did it mean to be “under the yoke”?

[6:1]

A yoke (ζυγός/g2218) was a piece of wood that was placed around the necks of two large animals to join them together. This allowed them to pull heavy loads. To be “under the yoke” was a metaphor. That is, it was used to talk about how slaves were owned by a master and made to do work.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write, “worthy of all honor”?

[6:1]

Paul wanted Christian slaves to respect their master by obeying him.

How might the “name of God” be blasphemed?

[6:1]

The word “blaspheme” was used to say that someone said something bad about God or another person in some way. Some scholars think Paul wrote about God being spoken against when he wrote Christians not to do things to blaspheme. That is, If slaves were disobedient, it gave reason for non-Christians to speak bad things about God and the things Christians taught.

See: Romans 2:24; Titus 2:9-10

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

6:3-10**What was teaching that did “not agree” with Paul’s message?**

[6:3]

Throughout the book of 1st Timothy, Paul wrote Timothy about how the church was to work together. Paul wanted Timothy to know that anything someone taught that did “not agree”(ἐτεροδιδασκαλέω/g2085) with the things Paul wrote in this letter was false teaching.

See: Galatians 1:6-9

See: [Church](#)

What were “controversies and arguments about words”?

[6:4]

Paul wrote again what he had already written about false teachers. They taught about things that did not matter much. They also taught wrong things about the Old Testament (see: 1:4, 6-7; 4:7). These things caused arguments about things which were not things about which they needed to worry. Paul warned Timothy that false teachers harmed the church.

See: Proverbs 20:3; Titus 3:9

See: [Church](#)

What was a “depraved” person?

[6:5]

Some scholars think a “depraved” person was someone who did not know the truth or they no longer believed the things that were true. Other scholars think a “depraved” person does not know the difference between right and wrong.

Why did Paul write the word “contentment”?

[6:6]

“Contentment” was used to talk about a person who had enough of the things he needed to live. He had no need for help from other people. Also, it was used to talk about a person who did not want anything more in their life. In Paul’s letters, Christians were content because they knew God provided their needs.

See: Matthew 6:25-26; Philippians 4:11-13

See: [Greed \(Covet\)](#)

How were godliness and contentment “great gain”?

[6:6]

Paul wrote that godliness and contentment were “great gain” because doing the things that honored God were good for a person both now and forever.

See: [Godly \(Godliness\)](#)

Why did Paul write “the world”?

[6:7]

In the same way that newborn babies have nothing in this world, people cannot take anything from this world with them when they die.

See: Job 1:21; Matthew 6:33-34

See: [World](#)

What was “the love of money”?

A person with “love of money” only wanted to have much money and things they could buy with it.

How was the love of money “a root of all kinds of evil”?

[6:10]

Paul used the metaphor of a “root.” That is, the love of money causes much evil in the same way a root causes a plant to grow.

See: Ecclesiastes 5:10; Luke 16:13-15

See: [Metaphor](#)

How did people who loved money “pierce themselves with much grief”?

[6:10]

When a person pierced or stabbed themselves with a knife or other sharp thing, it caused pain. Paul used that idea to say that people who have a love for money often times cause themselves to have pain, such as the loss of friendships.

6:11-21

What was a “man of God”?

[6:11]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about Timothy as a man of God because Timothy was a Christian. Also, Timothy wanted to do the things that honored God. Other scholars think Paul wrote “man of God” to write

that Timothy was similar to a prophet. In the Old Testament, the words “man of God” were often used to write about Moses, Samuel and Elijah.

See: 2 Timothy 3:17; Deuteronomy 33:1; 1 Kings 17:18

See: [Prophet](#)

Why did Paul write Timothy to “flee these things”?

[6:11]

Paul told Timothy to “flee” certain things. He wrote this to tell Timothy not do the things that trap people who do these things because they love money. However, Paul wrote Timothy to “pursue” other things. He told him to do the things that make him to live in a way that honors God.

See: 2 Timothy 2:22

What was the “good fight of faith”?

[6:12]

Paul wanted Timothy to know that a Christian will be persecuted by people who do not believe in Jesus.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What was the “good confession” made by Timothy?

[6:12, 6:13]

Some scholars think the “good confession” about which Paul wrote was when Timothy told others that he believed in Jesus. Other scholars think Timothy made the “good confession” when he began preaching the gospel (see: 2 Timothy 1:14).

See: Romans 10:9-10

See: [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Paul write Timothy to “keep the commandment without spot or blame”?

[6:14]

Paul wrote Timothy to obey God’s commandment “without spot.” That is, he needed to obey God perfectly. To be “without blame” meant Timothy was to do things in such a way that no one could accuse him of doing the wrong things.

See: 4:11-16; 2 Peter 3:14

Why did Paul write “reveal Christ’s appearing”?

[6:14]

Paul wrote “reveal Christ’s appearing” to write that God decided when Christ will return. God will cause it to happen (see: Acts 1:6-7). “Appearing” (ἐμφάνεια/g2015) was one of the words used to talk about when Jesus came to earth the first time (see: 2 Timothy 1:10). The same Greek word for “appearing” is also used for the second time Jesus will come in the future (see: 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13).

See: Matthew 16:27; 24:30; Colossians 3:4

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

What was “immortality”?

[6:16]

God has “immortality.” That is, only God has always lived and will live forever and never dies (see: 1:17). God promised Christians that they will live forever with God also (1 Corinthians 15:53-54).

See: [Immortal \(Immortality\)](#)

What was “unapproachable light”?

[6:16]

God’s presence is so bright that people cannot be physically close to him. This was the light of God’s glory at Mount Sinai (see: Exodus 24:16-17).

See: Psalm 104:1-2

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Presence of God](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

See Map: Mount Sinai

How was someone “rich in good works”?

[6:18]

When Paul wrote to Timothy about people being “rich in good works,” he wanted people to do many good things.

See: Acts 9:36; Titus 3:8;

What was a “good foundation”?

[6:19]

Paul wrote about a “good foundation.” This was a metaphor. In the same way cement and large rocks made a foundation to build a solid house, so the things taught in the Bible is the foundation for a Christian to live.

See: Matthew 6:19-21

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write to Timothy to “protect” what was given to him?

[6:20]

Paul told Timothy the truth, and Timothy needed to “protect”(φυλάσσω/g5442) it. Also, Timothy needed to teach Christians the truth in the same way that Paul taught Timothy. Some scholars think that this was all the things Christians taught. Other scholars think that it was only the things Paul wrote Timothy in this letter.

See: 1:11, 18; 2 Timothy 1:14

Why did Paul write some men “missed the faith”?

[6:21]

Some scholars think Paul wrote the words “miss”(ἄστοχέω/g0795) the faith to write about people who did not fully understand the message about believing in Jesus. Therefore, they began to teach false things about what was faith. Fewer scholars think Paul used the words to “miss” the faith to write about people who no longer believed the message of faith.

See: 1:6, 19; 2 Timothy 2:18

Book: 2 Timothy

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Overview

Timothy helped during Paul's second missionary journey. Timothy later worked in Ephesus. In Ephesus, Timothy spoke against false teachers and helped the church to honor God (see: 1 Timothy 1:3). Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy while Timothy was in Ephesus. Paul was a prisoner, probably in Rome, when he wrote this second letter to Timothy. He told Timothy that Timothy needed to serve Jesus in the same way Paul did. That is, he needed to preach the gospel in the right way. Timothy needed to teach the true gospel, reject false teachings, and always be brave and to work hard. Also, he told Timothy that Timothy might have to face persecution for being a Christian in the same way Paul did. Paul said that all of Paul's friends either abandoned him or had left to spread the gospel in other places. He was about to die as a criminal. Paul asked Timothy to leave what he was doing and to join him.

See: [Paul's Missionary Journeys](#); [Church](#); [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See Map: Ephesus; Rome

Who wrote 2 Timothy?

The apostle Paul wrote this letter (see: 1:1, 1:11, 4:17).

See: [Apostle](#)

When did Paul write Second Timothy?

Scholars think Paul wrote Second Timothy when he was about to die. Therefore, Paul wrote this letter at the end of his life.

To whom did Paul write 2 Timothy?

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. Timothy was a good friend of Paul's. He was also preached the gospel with Paul. However, Paul wrote that he wanted all the Christians in Ephesus to hear it read his letter. Scholars think Paul wanted the church to know that when Timothy spoke it was as if Paul spoke to them.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Ephesus

Why did Paul write Second Timothy?

Paul wrote about false teachers who were harming the church in Ephesus. Paul wrote to instruct Timothy to train new teachers. These teachers then needed to teach the same things Paul taught and to train other teachers. Paul really wanted Timothy to serve and obey Jesus in the same way Paul did. He needed to teach the true gospel, to be brave, to work hard, and to be willing to suffer for the gospel. In this letter, Paul also wanted Timothy to join him in Rome before he Paul died.

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#)

See Map: Ephesus; Rome

What was the false teaching about which Paul wrote?

Paul wrote about "false teachers" who fought about words. He also wrote what types of things are evil. Paul also wrote about Hymenaeus and Philetus who taught "that the resurrection had already happened" (see comments on 2 Timothy 2:18).

See: [False Teacher](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Outline of 2 Timothy

1. Paul greeted Timothy (1:1-2)
2. Timothy must serve the gospel in the same way Paul did (1:3-2:13)
3. Timothy must fight against false teaching (2:14-3:9)
4. The Scriptures are the foundation for true teaching (3:10-4:5)
5. Paul wrote about his situation in prison (4:6-18)
6. Final Greetings (4:19-22)

2 Timothy

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

² to Timothy, beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³ I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers, with a clean conscience, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I have been reminded of your genuine faith, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it lives in you also. ⁶ This is the reason I am reminding you to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline. ⁸ So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me, Paul, his prisoner. Instead, share in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us with a holy calling. He did this, not according to our works, but according to his own plan and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before times ever began. ¹⁰ But now God's salvation has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who put an end to death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. ¹¹ Because of this, I was appointed a herald, an apostle, and a teacher. ¹² For this cause I also suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed. I am convinced that he is able to keep that which I have entrusted to him until that day. ¹³ Keep the example of the truthful words that you heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ The good thing that God committed to you, guard it through the Holy Spirit, who lives in us.

¹⁵ You know this, that all who live in Asia turned away from me. In this group are Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain. ¹⁷ Instead, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and he found me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from him on that day. All the ways he served me in Ephesus, you know very well.

Footnotes

1:11 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies add,

2 Timothy 1 Commentary

1:1-2

How was Paul an apostle by “the will of God”?

[1:1]

Paul was an apostle “through the will of God.” He wanted people to know that God chose to make Paul an apostle (see: Galatians 1:15-16). Paul did not choose this for himself.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

Advice to Translators: Another way of saying this is, “God decided to make me an apostle”.

What was the “promise of the life”?

[1:1]

God promised to give Christians life. Some scholars think Paul wrote about the things Christians do while they are living (see: 1 Timothy 4:8). Others scholars think Paul wrote about the life Christians will have after they die and go to heaven (see: 1 Timothy 1:16, 6:19).

See: [Heaven](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#)

1:3-5

How did Paul serve God from his “forefathers”?

[1:3]

In the same way Paul’s “forefathers” or ancestors served God, Paul also served the God of Israel. Scholars think Paul spoke about his ancestors from many generations in the past serving the God of Israel. They served God by obeying the Law of Moses (see: Luke 2:37; Acts 27:23).

See: Acts 24:14

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Advice to Translators: Forefathers refers to many generations of ancestors.

What “tears” did Paul remember?

[1:4]

Paul remembered seeing Timothy weep in sadness when they separated from one another. Some scholars think this was just before Paul went to prison.

See: Acts 20:36-38

Why did Paul say, “I long to see you”?

[1:4]

Paul “longed” to see Timothy again. That is, he really wanted to see Timothy again.

See: 2 Corinthians 9:14; Philippians 1:8, 2:26; 1 Thessalonians 3:6

What did it mean that faith “lived first” in Lois and Eunice”?

[1:5]

“Live in”(ἐνοικέω/g1774) was a word Paul often used to speak of God living in a Christian (see: Romans 8:11; 2 Timothy 1:14). Timothy’s mother and grandmother had faith in God before Timothy did; his father was not a Christian (see: Acts 16:1, 3). Some scholars think Paul wanted to write that Lois and Eunice were Jewish and Christians. Other scholars think Paul wanted to write they were Jewish but not Christians.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

1:6-14

What did it mean for Timothy to “rekindle the gift of God”?

[1:6]

Timothy rekindled the gift of God. The word “rekindle”(was used to talk about a fire burning brightly again. Here Paul used a metaphor to write to Timothy to remember the spiritual gift God gave him and to use his gift completely.

See: Romans 12:6-8; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Peter 4:10-11

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was the “laying on of hands”?

[1:6]

The “laying on of hands” meant that Paul put his hands on Timothy’s head or shoulders and prayed for him. Some scholars think that this happened when Timothy became a Christian. Others scholars think it was when Paul appointed Timothy to preach the gospel.

See: Acts 13:3; 1 Timothy 4:14

See: [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What was a “spirit of fear”?

[1:7]

Paul wrote about a “spirit of fear.” Some scholars think God gave Timothy the special ability to be a leader in the church. However, Timothy was afraid to do the work of a leader. Other scholars think Paul made a distinction between the spirit of man and the Holy Spirit. The spirit of man can fear things, but the Spirit of God helps Christians live like God wants them to without fear.

See: 28:31; Romans 8:15; 1 Corinthians 16:10;

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul tell Timothy not to be “ashamed”?

[1:8]

Even though Paul was put into prison for preaching the gospel, he didn’t want Timothy to be ashamed of the things Paul preached. That is, Paul did not want Timothy to stop learning about Jesus. Paul also did not want Timothy to stop telling other people about Jesus. As well, Paul did not want Timothy to be ashamed of knowing Paul (see: 1:12; 2:15).

See: Psalm 25:2-3; Mark 8:38; Romans 1:16,

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Advice to Translators: For the word “ashamed” choose a word that is similar to fear of being rejected by other people, not a feeling of embarrassment

What was a “holy calling”?

[1:9]

Some scholars think the words “holy calling”were used to write about a calling from God by which a person became a Christian. Other scholars think Paul was writing that because God saved Christians, they must live a life that is holy.

See: Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:12

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What did Paul mean with the words, “not according to our works”?

[1:9]

God did not call people to be Christians, because they did good “works” or good things. Instead, he called them because of his own plan and will.

See: Romans 8:29-30; 9:11-12; Ephesians 1:4, 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

See: [Will of God](#); [Will of God](#)

What did “before times ever began” mean?

[1:9]

When Paul spoke about “before times ever began,” he was speaking about the time before God created the world (see: Genesis 1:1).

See: John 1:1-2, 17:24; Titus 1:2;

Why did Paul write about the “appearing of our Savior”?

[1:10]

When Paul wrote about the “appearing” of our Savior, he wrote about the birth of Jesus. Jesus appeared on the earth exactly how God planned it and at the exact time that God planned. Jesus appeared to save people.

See: Isaiah 7:14

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Savior](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

How did Jesus “put an end to death”?

[1:10]

When Jesus was made alive again he “put an end” to death. That is, he stopped the power of death. This is a metaphor. Christians still die, but they live in heaven after they die. Christians will also be made alive again with a new body when Jesus returns a second time.

See: Isaiah 25:8; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26;

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What was “life that never ends”?

[1:10]

God will resurrect all those who believe in Jesus so that they will have a life that “never ends.” They will live together with God in heaven forever.

See: Daniel 12:2-3; John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:42

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#); [Eternal Life](#)

How was God able to “keep” that which Paul entrusted to God?

[1:12]

Paul wrote that God was able to “keep”(φυλάσσω/g5442) that which Paul had entrusted to God. That is, God would guard the gospel from being harmed. Paul was appointed to preach the gospel, and he trusted God to give him the wisdom to preach about the gospel. Paul himself was careful to “keep” God’s word in the scriptures, and he taught Timothy to do the same (see: 1 Timothy 6:20).

See: [Word of God](#); [Gospel](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Word of God](#)

What was “that day” written by Paul in 1:12 and 1:18?

[1:12, 1:18]

Some scholars think Paul spoke about the Day of the Lord. This is a specific time when Jesus will return to judge all people (see: Joel 2:31; 1 Thessalonians 5:2). Other scholars think Paul simply spoke about the second coming of Jesus.

See: 4:8; Romans 2:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:3

See: [Day of the Lord](#); [Day of the Lord](#)

1:15-18

Who were “all who live in Asia”?

[1:15]

Paul wrote about “all who live in Asia.” When Paul wrote that “all” people abandoned him, he meant to say that all kinds of people abandoned him. This did not mean that everyone had abandoned him. For example, Onesiphorus remained faithful to Paul.

See Map: Asia

What did Paul mean when he said people “turned away” from him?

[1:15]

People “turned away” (ἀποστρέφω/g3654) from following Paul. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Paul spoke about people no longer wanting him to be a leader. Other scholars think Paul wrote about those who stopped listening to the gospel (see: 4:4).

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How was Paul “refreshed” by Onesiphorus?

[1:16]

People in prison needed food and clothing and other help. In ancient times, prisoners were not given food or clothing. Some scholars think Paul wrote about Onesiphorus providing his food and clothing needs while he was in prison.

What were Paul’s “chains”?

[1:16]

During his imprisonment, Paul was chained to his guards. “Chain” was used as a metaphor to say that someone was in prison.

See: Acts 28:20; Ephesians 6:20

See: [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 2

¹ You therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² The things you heard from me among many witnesses, entrust them to faithful people who will be able to teach others also. ³ Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier serves while entangled in the affairs of this life, so that he may please his superior officer. ⁵ Also, if someone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules. ⁶ It is necessary that the hard-working farmer receive his share of the crops first. ⁷ Think about what I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. ⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was raised from the dead. This is according to my gospel message, ⁹ for which I am suffering to the point of being bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a trustworthy saying:

"If we have died with him, we will also live with him.

¹² If we endure, we will also reign with him.

If we deny him, he also will deny us.

¹³ If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

¹⁴ Keep reminding them of these things. Command them before God not to quarrel about words; it is of no value and only ruins those who listen. ^[1]¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a laborer who has no reason to be ashamed, who accurately teaches the word of truth. ¹⁶ Avoid profane and empty talk, which leads to more and more godlessness. ¹⁷ Their talk will spread like cancer. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have gone astray from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already happened, and they destroy the faith of some. ¹⁹ However, the firm foundation of God stands. It has this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his" and "Everyone who names the name of the Lord must depart from unrighteousness." ²⁰ In a wealthy home there are not only containers of gold and silver. There are also containers of wood and clay. Some of these are for honorable use, and some for dishonorable. ²¹ If someone cleans himself from dishonorable use, he is an honorable container. He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work. ²² Flee youthful lusts. Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a clean heart. ²³ But refuse foolish and ignorant questions. You know that they give birth to quarrels. ²⁴ The Lord's servant must not quarrel. Instead he must be gentle toward all, able to teach, and patient, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God may give them repentance for the knowledge of the truth. ²⁶ They may become sober again and leave the devil's trap, after they have been captured by him for his will.

Footnotes

2:14 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

2 Timothy 2

2:1-13

How was Timothy to "be strengthened"?

[2:1]

Paul did not write about physical strength. Paul was encouraging Timothy to trust God. This would make him strong in some way. Paul wanted Timothy to let God strengthen him that he might be courageous and even endure suffering.

See: 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 6:10; 2 Timothy 1:7

Who were the “many witnesses”?

[2:2]

A “witness” was a person who saw or heard something. They could then tell other people about what they saw or heard. These were people who heard Paul teaching at the same time that Timothy heard Paul. They confirmed what Paul said.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:10; 1 Timothy 6:12

See: [Witness \(Martyr\)](#)

What did it mean to “entrust”?

[2:2]

In the ancient world, people “entrusted” their valuable things with a friend so that they could care for them. Paul and others entrusted the things they taught to Timothy (see: 1:13-14; 3:10). He was to teach the same things. He was to teach other people the teachings of Paul so that those people could teach others also.

What did it mean to be “entangled in the affairs of this life”?

[2:4]

Paul used the metaphor of a soldier. He did this to speak about how Timothy must do all things to honor God. Roman soldiers were not allowed to be “entangled” in the things of this life. That is, they were only supposed to do the things that their leaders told them to do. In the same way, Timothy was not to do any other work except serve God as a leader of the church.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How was an athlete “crowned” in Paul’s day?

[2:5]

Paul spoke about a certain crown. This was not the same type of crown that a king wore. When an athlete won something, they were given a crown. That is, a circle made of flowers was put on the head of the person who won something. A crown was the same as a prize or a reward.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:24-25; 2 Timothy 4:7-8; Revelation 2:10

See: [Crown](#)

Why did Paul use the words, “competes by the rules”?

[2:5]

Paul used the metaphor of an athlete who competed “by the rules.” This made Timothy know that the person who served God did the things God wanted him to do. That is, he obeyed God’s commands.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

See: [Metaphor](#)

What was David’s “seed”?

[2:8]

Paul wrote about David’s “seed.” That is, Jesus was a descendent of David. This was especially significant because the Jews knew that the Messiah was going to be someone who was a descendent of David.

See: Matthew 1:1; 22:42; Romans 1:3-4; Revelation 5:5; 22:16

See: [Son of David](#); [Son of David](#)

What did it mean to be “bound with chains as a criminal”?

[2:9]

People in prison had their hands and feet put in a large chain. Paul was chained in prison because he preached the gospel. However, the gospel was not “bound.” That is, the message of the gospel could not be stopped. People would continue to tell other people about the gospel.

See: Acts 28:20; Ephesians 6:18-20

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Who were the “chosen”?

[2:10]

Paul wrote about the people God “chose”(ἐκλεκτός/g1588). These are the people God chose to be his own people.

See: 1 Peter 2:9

See: [People of God](#); [People of God](#)

How did Christians die with Christ?

[2:11]

Paul wrote about Christians dying with Christ. This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Paul wrote that a person who “died”with Jesus stopped doing the bad things they did before they became a Christian. Instead, followed Jesus. Other scholars think Paul wrote about people who actually “died.” In the Bible, dying is being separated from something. When non-Christians die, they die a second time (see: Romans 6:3-5). This is when they are separated from God forever. If those people believed in Jesus, they will live again when Jesus returns at his second coming.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Metaphor](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Paul tell Timothy to “endure”?

[2:11]

The word “endure”(ὑπομένω/g5278) is used to talk about continuing to do something even when it is hard to do it. Christians must continue to do things that honor God throughout their whole lives even if they suffered because of it.

See: Mark 13:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:5;

Why did Paul write that people will “reign” with Christ?

[2:12]

Paul wrote about an event that will happen in the future. Jesus will reign over all creation and Christians will reign with him. People “reign”(συμβασιλεύω/g4821) with Jesus by ruling with him in the kingdom of God.

See: Matthew 19:28; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

How did someone “deny” Jesus?

[2:12]

When someone denied Jesus, they said that they did not know Jesus and were not his followers. They rejected Jesus. If people deny Jesus, then Jesus will deny them on judgment day or the day of final judgment (see: 2 Timothy 4:1).

See: Matthew 10:33; Mark 8:38

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

How was someone “unfaithful”?

[2:13]

Scholars think different things about 2:13. 1. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that some Christians stop obeying the teachings of Jesus in some way. That is they continue to sin. 2. Some scholars think Paul wanted people to know that if a person does not have any faith, they will not be saved. 3. Other scholars think Paul wrote about people who stopped believing in the things Jesus taught.

See: Romans 3:3; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:3

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

2:14-18

Why did Paul write not to “quarrel about words”?

[2:14]

Some scholars think Paul reminded Timothy to tell Christians not to be friends with people who only want to argue about words and their meanings (see: 1 Timothy 6:4). Other scholars think Paul wrote about certain false teachers who argued about old stories and who their ancestors were (see: 1 Timothy 1:4-7; 4:7). Still other scholars think Paul wrote Timothy to tell Christians to not have discussions that were not taught by Jesus or in the Bible.

See: Proverbs 20:3; 1 Timothy 6:20

Why did Paul tell Timothy to “present yourself to God”?

[2:15]

Some scholars think Paul wanted Timothy to “present” himself to God every day. That is, Timothy needed to serve God every day. Other scholars think Paul wrote about Timothy standing in front of God at the time of judgment; Therefore, Timothy must continue to serve God.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 5:21; 6:13-16

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

Why was Timothy not “to be ashamed”?

[1:15]

Paul wanted Timothy to know there was no shame in teaching the gospel because God chose Timothy to do this.

See: Psalm 25:2-3; Romans 1:16

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

How was Timothy to teach the truth “accurately”?

[2:15]

Paul told Timothy to teach the word of truth “accurately” (ὀρθοτομέω/g3718). That is, Timothy needed to teach the gospel correctly.

See: Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Timothy 6:3

See: [Gospel](#)

How did talk “spread like cancer”?

[2:17]

Cancer is a disease that is dangerous and moves quickly throughout the body. Paul used the word “cancer” as a metaphor to write that false teaching was dangerous, and it could spread quickly if it was not corrected.

See: 2 Timothy 4:3

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did people say “the resurrection has already happened”?

[2:18]

Paul wrote about people who said that “the resurrection has already happened.” This was an example of false teaching. Those people taught that the resurrection happened when people believed in Jesus. They believed it was a type of metaphor. In the church at Corinth, there were people who taught there is no resurrection (see: 1 Corinthians 15:12).

See: Acts 23:8;

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

See Map: Corinth

2:19-26

What was the “firm foundation of God”?

[2:19]

A foundation is something on which a building is built. It is the first layer of the building. That is, the first part built on the very bottom. Some scholars think Paul used the word foundation as a metaphor to write about the church (see: 1 Timothy 3:15). Other scholars think Paul wrote about God, Jesus, or maybe the gospel (see: 1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:19-20). Foundations sometimes had an “inscription.” That is, something written on the stones so other people would know who owned the building. In the same way, God has marked his church. This allows other people to know who truly belongs to God (see: Numbers 16:5).

See: Isaiah 28:16

See: [Church](#); [Gospel](#); [Church](#)

What were the “containers” about which Paul spoke?

[2:20]

A container is something used to store things. They were also used for cooking or serving food (see: Romans 9:21). Paul used the word “containers” as a metaphor to write about people who served God.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Paul write about “honorable” and “dishonorable” uses?

[2:20]

Some scholars think Paul used the words “honorable” and “dishonorable” to write about two types of people in the church. Honorable containers in a home were generally made of gold or silver and were only used for special things. In the same way, God thought of those who believe in Jesus as honorable. That is, they were for a special purpose. However, there were also people who did not believe in Jesus. These, God thought of as dishonorable. Paul wrote that people needed to become honorable people. That is, they needed to believe in Jesus and do the things that honored God.

See: 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3

See: [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#)

What were “youthful lusts”?

[2:22]

Paul wrote about “youthful lusts.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about the kinds of things younger people want to do. Other scholars think Paul wrote about people who were young in their faith. That is, they had not been Christians for a long time and they still really wanted to do things that did not honor God. Paul was not writing only about sexual things when he wrote the word “lusts.” Paul also wrote about people wanting money and power. Timothy also needed to not want or do these things.

See: 1 Peter 2:11

What did it mean to “pursue righteousness”?

[2:22]

To “pursue” righteousness was to go toward it. This is, everything Timothy did needed to honor God. Timothy needed to want to do things that honor God.

See: 1 Peter 3:11

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What did it mean to “give birth” to arguments?

[2:23]

Paul wrote Timothy that foolish questions “give birth” to arguments. This was a metaphor. That is, foolish questions make arguments happen.

Why did Paul write to “become sober”?

[2:26]

Paul wrote to become sober. That is, he wanted people to think clearly and correctly about spiritual things.

See: 2 Timothy 4:5; 1 Peter 4:7

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What was the “devil’s trap”?

[2:26]

Paul wrote about the “devil’s trap.” Some scholars think “the devil’s trap” was the same as the devil’s lies (see: Genesis 3:4-6; John 8:44).

See: 1 Timothy 6:9-10; Revelation 12:9

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ But know this: In the last days there will be difficult times. ² For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, and unholy. ³ They will be without natural affection, unable to reconcile, slanderers, without self-control, violent, not lovers of good. ⁴ They will be betrayers, reckless, prideful, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. ⁵ They will have a shape of godliness, but they will deny its power. Turn away from these people. ⁶ For some of them are men who enter into households and captivate foolish women. These are women who are loaded up with sins and are led away by various desires. ⁷ These women are always learning, but they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸ In the same way that Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, these false teachers also stand against the truth. They are men corrupt in mind, and with regard to the faith they are rejected. ⁹ But they will not advance very far. For their foolishness will be obvious to all, just like that of those men. ¹⁰ But as for you, you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, ¹¹ persecutions, sufferings, and what happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. I endured persecutions. Out of them all, the Lord rescued me. ¹² All those who want to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ Evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, leading others astray and being led astray. ¹⁴ But as for you, remain in the things that you have learned and have firmly believed. You know from whom you have learned. ¹⁵ You know that from childhood you have known the sacred writings. These are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture has been inspired by God. It is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness. ¹⁷ This is so that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3

3:1-9

What were the “last days”?

[3:1]

See: [Last Days](#)

How were people “lovers of themselves”?

[3:2]

Paul wrote about people who did not love God when he wrote about people who were “lovers of themselves.” They did not love other people either. People who only loved themselves only cared about himself and did not care for the needs of other people. They loved money. That is, they really wanted to have money because they could use it to get what they wanted (see: Psalm 10:3; Philippians 2:21).

What were “blasphemers”?

[3:2]

A “blasphemer” was someone who spoke blasphemy. They spoke evil things. Some scholars think Paul spoke about people insulting other people (see: Ephesians 4:31). Other scholars think Paul spoke about speaking evil things about God (see: Acts 6:11).

See: 1 Timothy 1: 6:4

See: [Blaspheyme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What did it mean to be “without natural affection”?

[3:3]

A person who was “without natural affection” was a person who was unwilling to be peaceful with anyone. Some scholars think they did not even have love to their own families.

Advice to Translators: Seek a word for “affection” that has to do with emotions, not with sexual attraction

See: Titus 3:3

What did it mean to have a “shape of godliness”?

[3:5]

Paul spoke about people who had a “shape of godliness.” This was a metaphor. Scholars think when Paul wrote about people who did certain things to make other people think they worshipped God. However, they did not believe in Jesus. They only appeared to honor God. They wanted other people to honor them because of the things they did.

See: Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 23:27-28; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15; Titus 1:16

See: [Godly \(Godliness\)](#)

What did Paul mean when he wrote Timothy to “turn away” from certain people?

[3:5]

Paul told Timothy to “turn away”(ἀποτρέπω/g0665) from certain people. Paul wanted Timothy to avoid certain types of people. He did not want Timothy to be friends with these people or to argue with them.

See: 2:23; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10-11

How did false teachers “enter into households”?

[3:6]

Paul wrote about false teachers entering into people’s households. Some scholars think that false teachers got people to trust them. These people then let the false teachers into their homes. In Paul’s day, it was common for a Christians to gather together in someone’s home.

See: Titus 1:10-11; Jude 3-4

See: [False Teacher](#)

How did some men “captivate foolish women”?

[3:6]

Paul said that some men “captivate foolish women.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about certain women who did not know many things taught by the apostles and in the Bible. They would listen to false teachers. They would do whatever the false teachers told them to do. Some scholars think these women stopped thinking for themselves. They believed everything the false teachers told them.

Advice to Translators: This should be translated so people will know that only some women believed false teachers.

See: Titus 2:3-5

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Teacher](#)

Why were those women “never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”?

[3:7]

Paul said that these women were “never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Scholars think that even though those women heard some of the truth, they also heard many lies. They heard so many lies that they were not able to know what was true and what was a lie (see: 2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Who were Jannes and Jambres?

[3:8]

The book of Exodus told how certain Egyptians tried to do the miracles that Moses did (see: Exodus 7-9). Eventually, they were not able to do the same miracles as Moses (see: Exodus 8:7; 9:11). The Jews taught that these Egyptians were named Jannes and Jambres. The Bible does not record their names. Paul said that these false teachers were like these Egyptians. They were the enemies of God even though they seemed to worship God.

Paul wrote that the false teachers did not “advance very far” to write that their teachings would eventually fail in the same way that the Egyptian false teachers failed.

Advice to Translators: In a dynamic translation, this might be rendered “Jannes and Jambres the Egyptian magicians who stood against Moses.”

See: Exodus 7-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:9

See: [Miracle](#)

3:10-17

Where were the cities of Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra?

[3:11]

See Map: Antioch; Iconium; Lystra

What was an “imposter”?

[3:13]

An “imposter” was a person who acted like they were someone else. They did this to deceive others. Jannes and Jambres were also imposters. In this epistle, an imposter was a teacher who only pretended to serve God.

What did Paul consider to be “childhood” for Timothy?

[3:15]

Paul used the word “childhood”(βρέφος/g1025) to talk about when Timothy was a young child. The Jews thought that a child needed to learn about the Bible after age five.

See: Psalm 71:17; Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 1:5

What were the “sacred writings”?

[3:15]

The books of the Old Testament were called the “sacred writings”.

See: Luke 24:27; Romans 1:2

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What did it mean that “all scripture has been inspired by God”?

[3:16]

When Paul said that all scripture was “inspired” by God, he said that God put his words into the minds of men so that they could write the Bible. Therefore, it was as if God wrote the Bible

See: 2 Peter 1:19-21

See: [Inspired](#)

How was scripture “profitable”?

[3:16]

Scripture is “profitable.” That is, Scripture gives knowledge to someone who studied and obeyed it. It helped them and gave them something worth having.

See: Psalm 19:7-11; Romans 15:4

Advice to Translators: “Profitable” can sometimes mean a source of money. It is better to use a word that means helpful.

How were God’s servants “equipped” by the scriptures?

[3:17]

The scriptures “equipped”(ἐξαρτίζω/g1822) Christian by teaching them about what God is like. God’s will and plan for the church were in the scriptures. SStudying the scriptures helped Christian to know how to lead the church and to encourage people who believe in Jesus (see: Ephesians 4:11-13).

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Chapter 4

¹ I give this solemn command before God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because of his appearing and his kingdom: ² Preach the word; be ready when it is convenient and when it is not. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all patience and teaching. ³ For the time will come when people will not endure sound teaching. Instead, they will heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires, who say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their hearing away from the truth, and they will turn aside to myths. ⁵ But you, be sober-minded in all things. Suffer hardship; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry. ⁶ For I am already being poured out. The time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. ⁸ The crown of righteousness has been reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his appearing.

⁹ Do your best to come to me quickly. ¹⁰ For Demas has left me. He loves this present world and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, and Titus went to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you because he is useful to me in the service. ¹² Tychicus I sent to Ephesus. ¹³ The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring it when you come, and the books, especially the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith displayed many evil deeds against me. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds. ¹⁵ You also should guard yourself against him, because he greatly opposed our words. ¹⁶ At my first defense, no one stood with me. Instead, everyone left me. May it not be counted against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me so that, through me, the proclamation of the message might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was rescued out of the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁹ Greet Priscilla, Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus. ²¹ Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers.

²² May the Lord be with your spirit. May grace be with you.

2 Timothy 4

4:1-8

What was a “solemn command before God and Jesus”?

[4:1]

Paul spoke about a “solemn command before God and Jesus.” Scholars think Paul gave Timothy this “command” to warn Timothy about making a promise in the presence of God and Jesus. If someone made this type of promise, they really needed to do what they promised. He wanted Timothy to know that God and Jesus watched him at every moment.

See: Numbers 30:2; 6:13-14

See: [Command \(Commandment\)](#)

Why did Paul write that Jesus will “judge the living and the dead”?

[4:1]

Paul wrote that Jesus will “judge the living and the dead.” Scholars think Paul wrote about Jesus judging people when he returned to the earth. At this time, Jesus will “judge” every person. The living will be judged. That is, those who are alive when Jesus returns to earth. The dead are all those people who died before Jesus returned to earth.

See: Matthew 16:27; Acts 10:42-43; Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 4:3-5

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

Why did Paul write “his appearing and his kingdom”?

[4:1]

In the New Testament, the word “appearing” was the word used to write about the second coming of Christ (see: 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1). That is, the time would Jesus would again appear on the earth. Scholars think Paul not only wrote about judgement at Jesus’ second coming, but also his kingdom when he will rule all people in the world.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Why did Paul write “convenient”?

[4:2]

Paul wrote about preaching the gospel when it was convenient and when it was not convenient. Some scholars think Paul was writing Timothy to preach the gospel whether people wanted to listen to it or not. Other scholars think Paul wrote Timothy to preach the gospel whether he wanted to do it or not. Still other scholars think Paul wrote Timothy to preach the gospel message even if people rejected it.

See: 1 Timothy 4:11-16

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was “sound teaching”?

[4:3]

“Sound” teaching was all the things the apostles taught and accepted (see: Titus 1:9, 2:1).

See: 1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13

See: [Apostle](#)

How did people “heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires”?

[4:3]

Paul said that people “heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires.” The words “heap up” were used to talk about being around many different kinds of teachers (see: Acts 17:18-21). Paul wanted Timothy to know that people will continue to search for teachers who teach the things they want to hear and do.

Why did Paul write “itching ears”?

[4:3]

Paul used the words “itching ears” as a metaphor. It was used to write about people who always wanted to hear new ideas. Scholars think these people only wanted to hear what sounded good to them.

See: Acts 17:21

What were “myths”?

[4:4]

“Myths” were stories about events that did not really happen. Some scholars think Paul wrote about things people believed that went against the things the apostles taught.

See: 1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; 6:3-5; Titus 3:9; 2 Peter 1:16

See: [Apostle](#)

Advice to Translators: Seek a word for “myth” that is not just a story, but a story which all people know but would be bad to actually believe to have happened.

What was the “work of an evangelist”?

[4:5]

An “evangelist”(εὐαγγελιστής/g2099) was a person who told other people about Jesus. They also told people that they needed to believe in Jesus.

See: Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Why did Paul write “I am already being poured out”?

[4:6]

According to the Law of Moses, people often poured wine over an offering just before it was burned up. Paul used the idea of “being poured out” as a metaphor to say that he had offered his life to Jesus. That is, he served Jesus in everything he did. He was now close to finishing his work because he thought he would die soon.

See: Number 15:4-10; Philippians 2:17

See: [Metaphor](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was Paul’s “departure”?

[4:6]

Paul wrote that the end of his life would be soon when he wrote that the time of his “departure” was soon. This is the time when he would leave the earth and go to live with God in heaven forever.

See: Philippians 1:21-24; 2 Peter 1:14-15

See: [Heaven](#)

How did Paul compete in the “good contest” and “finished the race”?

[4:7]

Many times an athlete had difficulties to reach his goal. However, they continued to work hard and never quit. Paul used this idea as a metaphor to write about his work to tell other people about the gospel. Paul, too, faced many difficult times. However, he continued to serve God with everything he had. He worked hard to finish the work God gave him to do (see: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

See: Acts 20:24; 1 Timothy 6:12

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

What was the “crown of righteousness”?

[4:8]

Athletes who won an athletic event received a prize. Often times that prize was a crown of leaves and branches. Here again, Paul used a metaphor to write that God has a crown waiting for Paul in heaven. Some scholars think Paul thought of the crown as a reward for those who did many things that honored God. Other scholars think Paul wrote about a different crown, which someone received when they were at peace with God.

See: 1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 2:5; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10

See: [Reward](#); [Heaven](#); [Reward](#)

4:9-22

How did Demas love “this present world”?

[4:10]

Demas left Paul. Paul wrote that Demas loved the “present” world. That is, he loved the world, which sinned against God. Demas wanted to do the things he wanted to do more than he wanted to do the things that honored God.

See: 1 John 2:15-17

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What was Paul’s “cloak”?

[4:13]

A cloak was an outer garment, a piece of clothing someone wore outside of their other clothes. It was round, with a hole in the middle for the head. It was made of heavy fabric and was used to keep warm. Paul wanted his cloak since winter was coming (see: 4:21).

Advice to translators: A cloak was a type of coat. However, it did not look like the coats that people wear today.

What were Paul’s “books” and “parchments”?

[4:13]

Paul wrote about books and parchments. These were notebooks or scrolls or books. Some scholars think the parchments were Paul’s own writings, perhaps unfinished letters that were not yet sent out to other people.

See: [Scroll](#)

Why did Paul write “the Lord will repay” Alexander?

[4:14]

Alexander did many wrong things against Paul. Instead of taking revenge, Paul wrote that the Lord will “repay” Alexander. That is, he will give Alexander what he deserves. Paul wrote specifically about the punishment Alexander would receive on the day of judgment when God judges the world.

See: Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6, 12:19; Revelation 22:12

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

What was Paul’s “first defense”?

[4:16]

Paul wrote about his “first defense.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about his defending himself during his first imprisonment in Rome (see: Introduction to 2 Timothy). Other scholars think it was used to write about the first part of his trial. That is, the defense he gave at that time.

See: Acts 22:1; 24:10; 25:16

What was the “lion’s mouth”?

[4:17]

The Roman government in Paul’s day sometimes punished people by putting them in a den with lions. The lions attacked and killed the person being punished. Paul used this idea as a metaphor to write that he was about to be punished himself, but the Lord saved him from dying.

Advice to translators: A den is an area with many lions in it. It is close so that no one or no lion can escape.

See: 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was the Lord's "heavenly kingdom"?

[4:18]

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

Book: Titus

Introduction to Titus

Overview

Paul wrote this letter to Titus. Titus worked with Paul. Titus led churches on the island of Crete. Paul told Titus how to select and train church leaders. His letter also talked about how church leaders should live. Church leaders must live in a way that honors God.

Who wrote this letter?

The apostle Paul wrote this book (See: 1:1). This letter contains many of the same words and phrases that Paul used in his other letters.

Who did he write it to?

Paul wrote to Titus. Titus lived on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea. Crete was a large island near Greece. Titus was Greek. He was not circumcised (see: Galatians 2:3). He lived in Antioch and Paul taught him about Jesus before he believed in Jesus (see: 1:4). Titus also traveled with Paul (see: 2 Corinthians 8:23). Titus also helped churches in other cities (see: 2 Corinthians 2:12-13).

The church where Titus served had many new Christians. Many of the things Paul talked about are the things that new Christians should believe and do. They did not have many Christians who really knew how to honor God. Because of this, Timothy needed to help people to honor God and become leaders in the church.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

What did Paul write about in this letter?

Church Leaders

Paul told Titus how to appoint or to choose people to serve as leaders in the church. A church leader needs to be a Christian who honors God. Since the people in this church had not been Christians for a long time, Paul wanted Titus to help the people to become leaders in the church. The people needed to live differently than they had before becoming Christians.

Living in a way that honors God

Christians are to live in a way that honors God. They are to help each other to do this. Paul talked much about the church helping people to become Christians who honor God. Then, they will be able to become leaders in the church. These leaders will help others to live in a way that honors God.

Why Paul wanted to write this letter?

There are many reasons why Paul wrote to Titus:

1. Paul wanted to encourage Titus.
2. Paul wanted to tell Titus what Titus needed to do (see: 1:4).
3. Paul wanted to teach Timothy how to lead the church where he served.
4. Paul wanted Titus to send Zenas and Apollos to Paul.

Outline of Titus

1. Paul told Titus to appoint godly leaders (1:1-16)
 2. Paul told Titus to help people to live in a way that honors God (2:1-3:11)
 3. Paul talked about his plans and sent greetings to different Christians in Crete (3:12-15)
-

Titus

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's chosen people and the knowledge of the truth that agrees with godliness, ² with the hope of everlasting life that God, who does not lie, promised before all the ages of time. ³ At the right time he revealed his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted according to the command of God our Savior.

⁴ To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

⁵ For this purpose I left you in Crete, that you might set in order things not yet complete and ordain elders in every city as I directed you. ⁶ An elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children not accused of being reckless or disobedient. ⁷ It is necessary for the overseer, as a manager of the household of God, to be blameless. He must not be arrogant, not be easily angered, not addicted to wine, not a brawler, and not a greedy man. ⁸ Instead, he should be hospitable, loving goodness, sensible, upright, holy, and self-controlled. ⁹ He should hold tightly to the trustworthy message that was taught, so that he may be able to encourage others with truthful teaching and correct those who oppose him.

¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision. ¹¹ It is necessary to stop them. They are upsetting whole families by teaching for disgraceful profit what they should not teach. ¹² One of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This testimony is true. Therefore, correct them severely, so that they may be truthful in the faith, ¹⁴ not paying any attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of people who turn away from the truth. ¹⁵ To those who are pure, all things are pure. But to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their minds and their consciences have been corrupted. ¹⁶ They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, and worthless for any good work.

Titus 1 Commentary

1:1-4

What is the purpose of 1:1-4?

[1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4]

Titus 1:1-4 is a type of greeting. In the letters of the ancient Near East, this type of greeting was common.

Who are God's Chosen?

[1:1]

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

What time was Paul talking about?

[1:3]

Paul talked about "before all the ages of time," that is, a time before something happened. Some scholars think Paul was talking about the time when the events of the Old Testament occurred. Other scholars think that Paul was talking about the time before he created the earth.

Advice to translators: Some translations may talk about a time that was a long time ago. Other translations may choose to translate this same phrase as "before time began," that is, before God created anything.

What does it mean when Paul calls Titus his true son?

[1:4]

Paul called Titus his “true” son because he taught Titus about Jesus. In Scripture, Christians who teach other Christians and helped them to live in a way that honors God are called “fathers.” They were often older than the people they taught. Those who are taught by other Christians are called “sons.” Paul called Titus a true son because Titus obeyed God.

1:5-9

Who are the elders?

[1:5]

Leaders in the church were called “elders (πρεσβύτερος/g4245)” and “overseers (ἐπίσκοπος/g1985).” They were responsible for leading and guiding the church. In order for a Christian to become an elder or an overseer, he must live in a way that honors God.

Advice to translators: Churches in different places use different names for people who lead the church. Use the name for church leaders that the local church uses.

See: 1 Timothy 3

See: [Overseer](#); [Overseer](#)

What is the Jewish and Cretan background of Paul’s teaching?

[1:5]

Paul described a mature Christian who honored God in the way that they live. Perhaps the way Paul described them was based on the things the Jews believed and in the Law of Moses.

Some scholars also think that Paul used commonly accepted standards or qualifications for a person to be considered honorable or for a person to be worth following.

What is a “one-woman man”?

[1:6]

Paul said that an elder (πρεσβύτερος/g4245) must be a “one-woman man” or “the husband on one wife.” This is because Paul assumed that all elders would be men. In ancient Israel, only men could serve as religious leaders. Some scholars think that an elder must be a man who has never been married or only married once. Other scholars think that the elder must be a man who is only married to one woman at a time. Other scholars think that, today, an elder can be a man or woman who is not married to more than one person.

Advice to translators: This is a potential point of great debate, that is, different groups of Christians have different and often strong opinions about what this means. Because of this, this question could be adapted to meet the needs of the local church.

How does Paul use “without Blame?”

[1:6]

In general, a person who is “without blame (ἀνέγκλητος/g410)” was, in general, innocent and did not do much wrong. The blameless person did not need to be corrected or rebuked. This is because they knew when they did the wrong thing, they would make things right, and they would learn from their mistakes.

What is a child who believes?

[1:6]

Paul said that elders needed to have children who believe something. Many scholars think that Paul taught that elders should have children who believe in Jesus. Other scholars think that Paul taught that elders should have children who obey God.

See: [Elder](#)

Advice to translators: Some translations will use the word faithful, while other believing, when talking about the children of elders.

Does a leader in the church have to be all of the things Paul talked about?

[1:6, 1:7, 1:8, 1:9]

Some scholars think that Paul gave general instructions describing a church leader who honors God. They believe that candidates do not need to meet all of these qualifications. Other scholars think that Paul gave Timothy a list of qualifications. That is, someone who wants to be an elder must consistently meet every item on this list

See: [Elder](#)

What is the difference between elder and overseer?

[1:7]

The words elder and overseer do not mean the same thing, but their meaning is similar. Some scholars think “elders” and “overseers” were leaders who serve the church in the same way.

Other scholars think that the elder and overseer serve the church in different ways. An elder is a church leader who leads other Christians. They also believe that overseer are church leaders who lead other church leaders.

See: [Overseer](#); [Overseer](#)

1:10-16

Who were the people who promoted circumcision?

[1:10]

The “circumcision,” that is, people who wanted people to be circumcised were probably a group of Jewish-Christians who wanted the non-Jewish people who believed in Jesus to follow the Law of Moses. This was common in the early church, but it was clearly rejected by Paul.

See: [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Circumcise \(Circumcision\)](#)

Advice to translators: “Those of the circumcision” were people who wanted Christians to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses. They are often called “Judaizers.”

Chapter 2

¹ But you, speak what fits with truthful instruction. ² Teach older men to be temperate, dignified, sensible, and sound in faith, in love, and in perseverance. ³ In the same way, teach older women to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or being slaves to much wine, but to be teachers of what is good, ⁴ and so train the younger women to love their husbands and to love their children, ⁵ to be sensible, pure, good housekeepers, and to be obedient to their own husbands, so that God's word may not be spoken of as evil. ⁶ In the same way, encourage the younger men to use good sense. ⁷ In all ways present yourself as an example of good works. In your teaching, show integrity, dignity, ⁸ and a truthful message that is above criticism, so that anyone who opposes you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. ⁹ Slaves are to be submissive to their masters in everything, to please them and not argue with them, ¹⁰ to not steal from them, but instead to demonstrate all good faith, so that in every way they may bring credit to the teaching about God our Savior. ¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all people. ¹² It trains us to reject godlessness and worldly desires, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this age, ¹³ while we look forward to receiving our blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ Jesus gave himself for us in order to redeem us from all lawlessness and to make pure for himself a special people who are eager to do good works.

¹⁵ Speak of these things, encourage people to do them, and give correction with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Titus 2

2:1-5

How can someone teach the right things about God?

[2:1]

Paul often selected and trained leaders when he went to a church. He said that church leaders must teach correct or right things about God. This means that they teach things that were the same as everything else taught in Scripture. The things that they teach must be true and not contain any errors.

Why did Paul speak about older men and women?

[2:2, 2:3]

It is possible that Paul spoke to older men and women. However, Paul was probably not addressing these people because of their age. Instead, he was talking about more mature Christians as if they were older men and women. This is because “mature” Christians grow to act more like Jesus.

How did Paul teach these Christians to live?

[2:2, 2:3, 2:4, 2:5]

Paul taught all of the Christians to live in a way that honors God. However, Paul taught different groups of people to act in different ways. The older men were supposed to help the younger men and the older women were supposed to help the younger women.

Are women able to work outside the home?

[2:5]

In ancient Israel, a woman needed to take care of their home and their children. Scholars now disagree about whether this remains true today.

Advice to translators: The role of women in society, and in the home, is different between different groups of people. Often, this topic can be very controversial. Remember that this question and response can be adapted to meet the needs of the local church, or it can be omitted.

2:6-10**What Paul say about people having slaves?**

[2:9]

In 2:9, Paul did not say whether slavery was good or bad. Instead, he taught about how Christians are to live, whether they were slaves or masters. Christian slaves are to honor God by serving their masters as best as they can. Christians serve God in the way they live regardless of their circumstances.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

Advice to translators: In different groups of people, there are many different types of servants and slaves. Here, some translation will use the word “servants” while other translations will use the word “slaves.”

2:11-15**Who did Paul mean by “all people”?**

[2:11]

God saves all men. Some scholars think that God made it so that anyone could live with him in heaven forever. Other scholars think that Paul said that God saves people from every different people group.

How does Paul speak about “in this age”?

[2:12]

In 2:12, Paul told the Christians how to live in this age, that is, while they are alive. Paul often spoke about the present time as evil and corrupt. They are supposed to live in a way that is different than the rest of the world. They should also live with the confidence that, one day, God will deliver this world. He will deliver everything from the curse of sin, that is, the bad things sin caused. This Paul calls the “blessed (μακάριος/g3107) hope or confidence (ἐλπίς/g1680).”

Chapter 3

¹ Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey them, to be ready for every good work, ² to insult no one, to not be eager to fight, and to be gentle, showing all humility toward everyone. ³ For once we ourselves were thoughtless and disobedient. We were led astray and enslaved by various desires and pleasures. We lived in evil and envy. We were detestable and hated one another. ⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, ⁵ it was not by works of righteousness that we did, but by his mercy that he saved us, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom God richly poured on us through our Savior Jesus Christ, ⁷ so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This message is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to engage themselves in good works. These things are good and useful for everyone. ⁹ But avoid foolish debates and genealogies and strife and conflict about the law. Those things are unprofitable and worthless. ¹⁰ Reject anyone who is causing divisions among you, after one or two warnings, ¹¹ knowing that such a person has turned from the right way and is sinning and condemns himself.

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, hurry and come to me at Nicopolis, where I have decided to spend the winter. ¹³ Do everything you can to send on their way Zenias the lawyer and Apollos, so that they lack nothing. ¹⁴ Our people must learn to engage themselves in good works that provide for urgent needs, and so not be unfruitful.

¹⁵ All those who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with all of you.

Titus 3

3:1-11

When are Christians to obey non-Christians leaders?

[3:1]

Paul told Christians to obey leaders in the government, even if they were not Christians. Christians must obey these leaders because they God made them leaders. They serve God, even if they are not aware of it. However, there are times when a Christian must not obey a leader. For example, when a leader tries to get a Christian to do something that is God says not to do in Scripture or would not honor God, then they must not obey these leaders.

Paul does not say when a Christian can disobey a leader in the government. Some scholars think that a Christians must obey leaders in the government, even if it costs them their life. Others scholars think that a Christian can disobey a leader in the government if their life is in danger. Other scholars think that a Christian can disobey a leader in the government if the government does not protect or care for its people.

See: Romans 13:1-7

What did Paul reminding the Cretans about?

[3:3]

In 3:3, Paul told Titus to remind the Cretans about what they were like before they came to believe in Jesus. By remember these things, the Cretans would better understand those who were not Christians and be patient with other people. It also helped them to remember to live in a way that it was different than they used to live.

See: [Cretans](#)

What is the “washing of new birth”?

[3:5]

In general, Paul speaks about baptism as if it is a type of washing. In this passage, Paul talked about a type of washing or baptism. This washing happened when a person believes in Jesus. Because, most scholars think that Paul was talking about spirit baptism and not water baptism.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

How are Christians heirs of eternal life?

[3:7]

Christians are called “heirs with the certain hope eternal life.” Usually, an heir is a person who receives money or land when another person died. The Jews were also heirs of the land promised to Abraham. Because of this, scholars think that Paul was talking about the way God blesses people. This means that God blesses Christians by giving them the confidence that they will one day get to live with him forever. This is what they are to inherit.

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

Advice to translators: Christians will live together with God in heaven. In Scripture, this is spoken about as if it were a thing called “eternal life.” Translate “eternal life” in the way that your local translation does.

How did Paul speak about the Law of Moses?

[3:9]

Paul often spoke about the Law of Moses. However, he did not speak to Titus about whether a Christian needed to obey the Law of Moses. Instead, Paul rejected the common ways teachers used the Law of Moses. In ancient Israel, it was common for people to argue the meaning of the Law of Moses. Most of these arguments were not worth talking about. Some Jewish teachers even believed that knowing their ancestors helped them to know on how to please God.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

3:12-15

How can Christians be “unfruitful” or not productive (ἄκαρπος/#g0175)?

[3:14]

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Book: Philemon

Introduction to Philemon

Who wrote this letter?

Paul wrote the letter to Philemon himself. The letter said Paul is the writer of the letter (see: 1:1,9,19). It is one of the letters Paul wrote while he was in prison. Paul also wrote the books of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians while in prison. In many of Paul's letters he called himself an apostle or an apostle and a servant. However, in Philemon, Paul does not call himself an apostle or servant. This is his only letter that does not say he was an apostle or servant.

See: [Apostle](#)

To Whom did Paul write?

Paul wrote this letter to Philemon. The letter also said that Paul wanted to say some things to Philemon's family and the church that came together in his home. Philemon was a Christian. Perhaps he became a Christian after hearing the gospel and listening to the teachings of Paul. Scholars think Philemon and Paul met in Ephesus. They also think Philemon was a wealthy man. This is because he owned a home large enough for a church to gather inside, and there was at least one slave in his household.

See: [Gospel](#)

What did Paul write about in the Book of Philemon?

Paul wrote that Philemon needed to forgive Onesimus. Onesimus was Philemon's slave, but Onesimus left Philemon and went to Rome. While in Rome, Onesimus met Paul. Soon he became a follower of Jesus because of Paul's teaching. Onesimus stayed in Rome and served Paul while Paul was in prison. Paul knew he needed to return Onesimus to Philemon. It was against the law for a slave to leave his master. Because Onesimus became a Christian, Paul asked Philemon to take Onesimus back into his home, showing mercy to Onesimus. Paul meant for Philemon to take Onesimus back, not only as a slave, but also to welcome him as if he were a brother. This is because scripture speaks about all Christians as if they are brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul told Philemon that Onesimus helped him in the service of the gospel. Also, he wanted to keep Onesimus with him. However, Paul did not want to do anything without Philemon's permission, because Philemon still owned Onesimus.

See: [Mercy](#); [Gospel](#); [Family of God](#)

Outline of Philemon

1. Paul's greeting to Philemon (1-3)
2. Paul's words of thanksgiving and encouragement (4-7)
3. Paul's request of Philemon on behalf of Onesimus (8-21)
4. Paul's hope to visit Philemon (21-22)
5. Paul's closing greetings (23-25)

Philemon

Chapter 1

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and the brother Timothy, to Philemon, our dear friend and fellow worker, ² and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home.

³ May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear about the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and the love you have for all his holy people. ⁶ I pray that the sharing of your faith

may be effective, so you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. ⁷ For I have had much joy and comfort because of your love, because the hearts of God's holy people have been refreshed by you, brother.

⁸ Therefore, although I have all the boldness in Christ to command you to do what you should do, ⁹ yet because of love, I appeal to you instead—I, Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner for Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you concerning my child Onesimus, whom I have fathered in my chains. ¹¹ For he once was useless to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me. ¹² I have sent him back to you, he who is my very heart. ¹³ I wish I could have kept him with me so he could serve me for you while I am in chains for the sake of the gospel. ¹⁴ But I did not want to do anything without your consent. I did not want your good deed to be from necessity but from good will. ¹⁵ Perhaps for this he was separated from you for a time, so that you might have him back forever. ¹⁶ No longer would he be a slave, but better than a slave, a beloved brother. He is beloved especially to me, and much more so to you, in both the flesh and in the Lord. ¹⁷ So if you have me as a partner, receive him as me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, write this with my own hand. I myself will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your own self! ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

²¹ Confident about your obedience, I am writing to you. I know that you will do even more than I ask. ²² At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope that through your prayers I will be returned to you.

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you. ²⁴ So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

²⁵ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Philemon 1 Commentary

1:1-3

Why did Paul say he was a prisoner of Christ Jesus?

[1:1]

When Paul said he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, he wanted to say that he was servant of Jesus. Paul was often locked in prison for speaking publicly about Jesus. Many scholars think Caesar, the ruler of Rome, arrested Paul and placed him in a house to be guarded. However, Paul thought of himself as primarily the prisoner of Christ (see: Acts 28:16-31). He knew that he was in prison as a way to serve Jesus.

How did Paul greet Philemon?

[1:1, 1:2, 1:3]

Paul greeted Philemon, his household, and the “church”(ἐκκλησία/g1577) that gathered in his house. This was how Paul often began his letters. Paul greeted them in the form of a prayer that begins with God’s “favor”(χάρις/g5485). God’s favor speaks about all the gifts God gives his children. That is, he gives favor to all those who believe in him. Paul also greeted Philemon and the church with “peace.” Many scholars think that peace comes from God’s favor. This peace makes God and man friends.

See: [Church](#)

1:4-7

How did Paul pray for Philemon?

[1:4, 1:6]

Paul told Philemon that he thanked God for him. Paul told Philemon that he thanked God for the “love”(ἀγάπη/g0026) Philemon had for others, the love he had for God, and for the “faith”(πίστις/g4102) he had in God.. Others people saw that Philemon had these things.

Paul also prayed that people would serve Jesus because of Philemon’s “participation”(κοινωνία/g2842) in the faith. Some scholars think Paul prayed for Philemon to be effective in his participation, or sharing, about the faith. That is, others were able to understand how to believe in Jesus. Other scholars think Paul prayed for Philemon’s “faith”(πίστις/g4102) to be effective. That is, Paul wanted Philemon to know and use all the good things God gives to Christians for them to follow Jesus.

When he ended his prayer, Paul told Philemon he had much “joy”(χαρά/g5479) because Philemon showed love to the “people who belong to God”(ἅγιος/g0040). Some scholars think Philemon’s love encouraged Paul because he saw Philemon’s faith when he loved others and God. Because of this, Philemon “refreshed”(ἀναπαύω/g0373) the hearts of the Christians. That is, he encouraged them and helped them to want to love other people. It is good for Christians to give new energy, joy, and peace to other Christians in the same way as Philemon.

1:8-11

Why did Paul command Philemon to obey him?

[1:8, 1:9]

Jesus made Paul an apostle and gave him permission to tell Christians what they needed to do to follow Jesus’ commands. Jesus commanded apostles to rule and to teach Christians. For this reason, Paul commanded Philemon.

See: [Apostle](#)

Why did Paul appeal to Philemon?

[1:9]

When Paul made an “appeal”(παρακαλέω/g3870), he made a serious request of Philemon. Paul spoke to Philemon as a brother and not as someone he ruled. Paul wanted Philemon to respond to his request because Philemon loved Paul. For this reason, Paul appealed to Philemon as a trusted brother instead of commanding him.

See: [Family of God](#)

How did Paul talk about himself to Philemon?

[1:9]

Paul said he was an old man locked in prison for Christ Jesus. Some scholars think Paul did not speak about his age in years. They think this was a type of metaphor. He spoke about his experience of living for Christ for a long period of time.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How was Paul the father of Onesimus?

[1:10]

Paul said that while he was a prisoner, he became a father to Onesimus. At the time in which Paul wrote, people called spiritual leaders or teachers a father. Onesimus became Paul’s student. Paul taught him about how to live as a Christian.

See: [Family of God](#)

What does the name Onesimus mean?

[1:10]

The name Onesimus is the Greek word for “useful” (ὠνήσιμος/g3682). Some scholars said that many people in ancient times named their slaves Onesimus. Some scholars think Paul told Philemon that Onesimus was not useful in the work of the gospel when he first met him. But after becoming a Christian he became very useful to both Paul and Philemon. He was useful because he now helped in the work of the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#)

1:12-16

Why did Paul say he was sending his own heart?

[1:12]

Paul told Philemon he was sending his very “heart” (σπλάγχχνον/g4698). That is, Paul called Onesimus his heart because he became a close, personal friend and helper while Paul was in prison. Paul’s love for Onesimus came from deep within his soul and spirit. Paul decided to send Onesimus back to Philemon. But, he told Philemon he wanted to keep Onesimus with him. That is, he wanted his help in sharing the gospel. But, Paul did not want to do anything without Philemon agreeing with it. Paul did not want to force Philemon to allow Onesimus to help him. Paul wanted Philemon to “willingly” (ἐκούσιος/g1595) allow Onesimus to serve him because Philemon felt it was good for both Paul and Onesimus.

See: [Gospel](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Gospel](#)

What reason does Paul suggest for Onesimus’ separation from Philemon?

[1:15]

Some scholars think Paul said that God wanted Onesimus to run away from Philemon. That is, God wanted Onesimus to become a Christian. These scholars think God worked in the same way in the Old Testament with Joseph (see: Genesis 50:20). Paul also said to Philemon that God wanted to give him Onesimus back “forever” (αἰώνιος/g0166). Most scholars think Paul said that Philemon and Onesimus were now brothers in the Lord forever.

See: [Family of God](#)

What did Paul mean by stating “no longer as a slave”?

[1:16]

Paul told Philemon that Onesimus was “no longer a slave” but now a “beloved” (ἀγαπητός/g0027) brother. That is, Philemon needed to accept Onesimus in the same way he accepts a brother. Most scholars think Paul told Philemon that Onesimus was now much more than simply a “slave” (δοῦλος/g1401). They do not think Paul told Philemon to free Onesimus from being his slave. Paul spoke about slaves and masters in other books he wrote (see: Colossians 3:22-4:1; 1 Corinthians 7:22).

See: [Family of God](#)

Why did Paul say that Onesimus was a beloved brother in the flesh and in the Lord?

[1:16]

Paul told Philemon that Onesimus was beloved brother “in the flesh.” That is, Onesimus was now a better servant to Philemon. Paul spoke about Onesimus now being a more responsible servant. While Paul was in prison, Onesimus helped him with the work of the gospel. So, Paul told Philemon to receive Onesimus as a beloved brother in the Lord too.

See: [Family of God](#); [Flesh](#); [Family of God](#)

1:17-21

How were Paul and Philemon partners?

[1:17]

Paul and Philemon were “partners”(κοινωνός/g2844) because of their work together for the gospel. Paul spoke of Philemon as a fellow worker with him. Also, he spoke of him in the same way as his brother (see: 1:7). A “church”(ἐκκλησία/g1577) met in Philemon’s house. Because Onesimus became a partner with Paul in the work of the gospel, Paul asked Philemon to welcome Onesimus back to his home with love and respect. That is, take him back into his house in the same way he took Paul into his home.

See: [Family of God](#);[Family of God](#)

Why was Paul willing to pay to Philemon whatever Onesimus owed Philemon?

[1:18]

Paul was willing to pay Onesimus’ debt to Philemon because he loved and respected both men. They were his friends and brothers in Christ. Some scholars think Philemon owed a debt to Paul, to work in the service of the gospel with him. But, Onesimus served in the place of Philemon (see: 13). They think Paul said that for this reason he now paid any debt Onesimus might owe to Philemon.

Advice to Translators: A debt is an amount of money that someone owes to another person.

See: [Family of God](#)

Why did Paul state that he wrote this letter with his own hand?

[1:19]

Some scholars think Paul wrote this letter himself because it was personal. In some of his letters, Paul only wrote the greetings with his own hands. Someone else wrote the rest of the letter while Paul told them what to write. Other scholars think Paul said that he wrote this letter with his own hand because it made a legal promise to Philemon to repay any debt Onesimus owed Philemon.

Advice to Translators: A debt is an amount of money that someone owes to another person.

Why did Paul say Philemon owed Paul?

[1:19]

Perhaps Philemon owes Paul his very life because Philemon believed in Jesus after he heard Paul teaching about Jesus. Philemon was unable to pay this debt with money. Instead, Paul knew Philemon continued to be a faithful partner in the work of the gospel.

Advice to Translators: A debt is an amount of money that someone owes to another person.

See: [Gospel](#)

In what way did Philemon refresh Paul’s heart?

[1:20]

In the same way Paul gave thanks to Philemon for “refreshing”(ἀναπαύω/g0373) other believers, he asked Philemon to refresh his heart (see: 1:7). Paul said that Philemon was going to refresh Paul’s heart by taking Onesimus back into his home. And, Paul wanted Philemon to take Onesimus back not only as a valuable servant, but as a brother in the Lord.

See: [Family of God](#)

1:21-22

In what way was Paul confident of Philemon’s obedience?

[1:21]

Some scholars think Paul said he was confident Philemon was going to be “obedient”(ὕπακοή/g5218) to what he told Philemon to do. That is, he knew Philemon was going to take Onesimus back as a valued servant and a brother in the Lord. These scholars think Paul also knew that any of Onesimus’ debt to

Philemon was going to be transferred to Paul's account. Other scholars think that Paul was confident in Philemon that Philemon would obey God and that he believed in the gospel (see: Romans 1:5; 16:26). These scholars think Paul spoke good things of Philemon and because of Philemon's faith in the gospel, Paul knows he will do more than what Paul requested. Paul was to be released from prison soon, so he also asked Philemon to make a room for him to stay in (see: Philippians 2:19-24). In stating that he hoped to soon be "given" (χαρίζομαι/g5483) to Philemon, Paul was expressing his confidence in the favor of God to release him from prison.

Advice to Translators: A debt is an amount of money that someone owes to another person.

See: [Family of God](#); [Family of God](#)

1:23-25

In what way was Epaphras Paul's fellow prisoner?

[1:23]

Many scholars think that Epaphras was a prisoner in the same way Paul was a prisoner. That is, he was arrested and placed in prison. However, scholars do not know if Epaphras was in prison at the time Paul wrote the letter to Philemon. Although Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke were called fellow workers, Aristarchus was also called a fellow prisoner in Christ along with Paul (see: Colossians 4:10).

How does Paul end his letter to Philemon?

[1:25]

When Paul ended his letter, he asked God to "favor" (χάρις/g5485) Philemon. He asked that this favor be with Philemon's "spirit" (πνεῦμα/g4151). Most scholars think Paul spoke about the human spirit of Philemon. Paul prayed that Philemon experienced the Lord's favor within himself, his household, and with all the Christians in his home.

Book: Hebrews

Introduction to Hebrews

Overview

There is nothing in the New Testament that is like this book. In many ways, it is like a letter. However, it does not have the typical greeting that most New Testament letters have. The author wrote powerfully about why Jesus, who is the Messiah, is the Lord and ruler of all things. The author also wrote about how followers of Jesus need to think and behave in ways that honor God. They need to do this all the time because they are Christians.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Who wrote this book?

No one knows who wrote this book. Some scholars think the apostle Paul wrote it. More scholars do not think Paul wrote it.

To whom did the author write?

The author wrote to people who were Jewish Christians. They were discouraged because other people were persecuting them. They were tempted to return to their former beliefs and following the Law of Moses.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What the author wrote about in this letter

The author wrote strongly that Jesus is greater than everyone and everything. He did this by comparing Jesus to angels, prophets, and priests. He showed that Jesus is greater than all of them. This is why God made Jesus ruler over all things, especially the better world that God will create in the future.

The author wrote that Jesus changed everything and people should not try to obey the Law of Moses. Jesus taught a new way of thinking and living. Jesus gave Christians a special confidence for how the future will be. So, Christians need to think the way Jesus taught them to think. They need to live in a way that they know God will create this special future world for them.

See: [Angel](#); [Prophet](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why did the author write this letter?

Scholars think the author seemed to know the people to whom he wrote. He was comfortable in challenging them and warning them to live in a way that honors God.

Outline of Hebrews

1. Jesus is greater than God's prophets and angels (1:1-4:13)
2. Jesus is greater than the priests who serve in the temple in Jerusalem (4:14-7:28)
3. Jesus' service and what Jesus taught is greater than the covenant that God made with Moses (8:1-10:39)
4. What faith is like (11:1-40)
5. Encouragement to believe God and follow him (12:1-29)
6. Concluding encouragements and greetings (13:1-25)

See: [Prophet](#); [Angel](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#) ; [Temple](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Hebrews

Chapter 1

¹ Long ago God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in many ways. ² But in these last days, he has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. It is through him that God also made the universe. ³ He is the brightness of God's glory, the exact representation of his being. He even holds everything together by the word of his power. After he had made cleansing for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. ⁴ He has become just as superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than their name. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son,
today I have become your Father"?

Or to which of the angels did God ever say,

"I will be a Father to him,
and he will be a Son to me"?

⁶ But again, when God brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"All God's angels must worship him."

⁷ About the angels he says,

"He is the one who makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire."

⁸ But to the Son he says,

"Your throne, God, is forever and ever.
The scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of joy more than your companions."

¹⁰ "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the earth's foundation.
The heavens are the work of your hands.

¹¹ They will perish, but you will continue.
They will all wear out like a piece of clothing.

¹² You will roll them up like a cloak,
and they will be changed like a piece of clothing.

But you are the same,
and your years do not end."

¹³ But to which of the angels has God said at any time,

"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

¹⁴ Are not all angels spirits who serve, and who are sent to care for those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 1 Commentary

1:1-4

How did God change the way he spoke to people?

[1:1, 1:2]

The author wrote about God and the things God wanted to do as if God was speaking to mankind. Normally, people cannot see or hear God. They could only see God when Jesus came to the earth. However, God sometimes sent messages to prophets using visions, dreams, spoken prophecies, written prophecies, and in many other ways. The prophets told people the things God wanted them to know. However, people did not completely understand when the prophets told them these messages from God.

Therefore, God changed the way he spoke to people by sending his son, Jesus. God came to earth as the man Jesus. He came to tell all people clearly and completely who God is and the things that God wanted them to do. People can now know more about God because of what Jesus said and did. He walked and talked the way other people do. He spoke truth about God in ways that people could understand. He did miracles and healed many people. This showed people that he cared about them.

Then, Jesus died so that people could have peace with God and live together with God in heaven forever. In this way, he saved everyone who will believe in him. This is a type of gift from God. It showed how much God loves all people.

See: [Son of God](#) ; [Prophet](#); [Vision](#); [Miracle](#); [Son of God](#)

What are the last days?

[1:2]

See: [Last Days](#)

How did the author explain why Jesus could speak for God to mankind?

[1:2, 1:3, 1:4]

The author wrote about seven things that showed people that Jesus is the Son of God. This means Jesus could speak for God because he is God. The seven things are: 1. God appointed Jesus heir of all things (See: Psalm 2:7-8). This means that in the end, he will possess and rule the whole world without anyone fighting against him.

1. Jesus created the universe. (See: John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16)

1. The author wrote about Jesus as if he was special light that comes from God. This means that God shows people his power through Jesus. 1. Jesus is the "representation" (χαρακτήρ/g5481) of God's "essence" (ὁπόστασις/g5287). Jesus is God. So, when he came to earth, he showed people who God is. He did not just do the things that God did. He is God. 1. Jesus keeps everything in the world going. Jesus spoke and created the world and everything in it. By his speaking, he enables all things to accomplish his purpose. (See: Colossians 1:17)

1. Jesus made "payment" (καθαρισμός/g2512) for people's sins. This is something the book of Hebrews talks about many times. In the Bible, when someone sins, it makes unclean, that is, they cannot please God. However, Jesus can make people clean, that is, take away their sin. Nobody else could pay for everyone's sins. Only God could do this. 1. The author wrote about Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, that is, on the right side of God in heaven. The people who wrote the Bible often used the metaphor of sitting when they wanted to say someone was ruling like a king or leader rules. Also, they wrote about the right hand when they wanted to talk about using power or giving power. God the Father gave Jesus permission to rule with him. Some scholars also believe that Jesus is seated because he finished doing the things that he wanted to do. He is now resting while he reigns over his new kingdom. (See: Luke 22:69, 1 Corinthians 15:24, and Psalm 110:1)

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

How did the author say that Jesus can speak for God?

[1:1, 1:4]

The author wrote that Jesus could speak for God. He did this by comparing Jesus to others who spoke for God in the past. He could also speak for God because he is God.

How did the author begin to compare Jesus to others?

[1:4]

The author used the word "better" (κρείττων/g2909) many times in this book to compare Jesus to other people. The author said Jesus is better than all other people or creatures. In verses 1-2, the author wanted to say that Jesus was better than any ancestor of the Jews or any prophet. In the rest of Hebrews 1 and 2, the author explained how Jesus is better than the angels.

See: [Angel](#); [Prophet](#); [Angel](#)

1:5-14

How is Jesus better than angels?

[1:5, 1:6, 1:7]

God sent angels to give messages to people. The author talked about five things that proved Jesus is better than angels.

1. Jesus is better than the angels because God says Jesus is his Son. The author wanted to say that God never called any angels his son. However, many times in Hebrews, the author wrote about Jesus, the son of God. In verse 5, the author asked, "When did God ever say angels were God's sons?" (See: Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14). This question expects an answer of "not one angel." The author expected that people reading to know these Scripture verses and understand that he wanted to say that God had never done this.

1. The author wrote that God was talking about Jesus when he said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (see: Deuteronomy 32:43). Jesus is God and deserves to be worshipped. The angels do not deserve to be worshipped. Therefore, Jesus is better than the angels. The lesser being worships the greater one. The angels worship the Son. Therefore, Jesus is greater than angels.

1. The author wrote that angels were created to serve God. This makes them like any other thing created by God. Jesus was not created. Instead, he has always existed. Therefore, Jesus is better than the angels (See: Psalm 104:4).

1. God honored Jesus in special ways. The author wrote in verses 8-9 that God spoke to Jesus directly. God said that Jesus rules forever in a way that honors God (see: Psalm 45:6-7). 1. Jesus created the world. The world he created includes the angels. The angels are a part of creation and may change, but Jesus will never change (see: Psalm 102:25-27).

At the end of this section, the author wrote another question contained in Scripture. This question was, "Did God ever ask angels to watch while God defeated their enemies?" (see: Psalm 110:1). This question expects an answer, "not one angel." Instead, God did for Jesus, the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Therefore we must give far more attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. ² For if the message that was spoken through the angels proved to be so reliable, and every transgression and disobedience receives just repayment, ³ how then can we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This is salvation that was first announced by the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard it. ⁴ At the same time God testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and by distributing the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

⁵ For it was not to the angels that God subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. ⁶ But someone has somewhere testified, saying,

"What is man, that you are mindful of him?
Or a son of man, that you care for him?

⁷ You made man a little lower than the angels;
you crowned him with glory and honor. ^[1]

⁸ You put everything in subjection under his feet."

For it was to him that God has subjected all things. He did not leave anything not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see everything subjected to him. ⁹ But we see him who was made lower than the angels for a little while, Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of his suffering and death, so that by God's grace he might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ For it was proper for God, because everything exists for him and through him, to bring many sons to glory. It was proper for him to make the founder of their salvation complete through his sufferings. ¹¹ For both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have one source. So he is not ashamed to call them brothers. ¹² He says,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers,
I will sing about you from inside the assembly."

¹³ And again,

"I will trust in him."

And again,

"See, here am I and the children whom God has given me."

¹⁴ Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he shared in those things in the same way, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil. ¹⁵ This was so that he would free all those who through fear of death lived all their lives subject to slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not the angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ So it was necessary for him to become like his brothers in all ways, so that he could be a merciful and faithful high priest in relation to the things of God, and so that he could make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because Jesus himself has suffered and was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Footnotes

2:7 ^[1] Some important and ancient Greek copies add,

Hebrews 2

2:1-4

Why do Christians need to "give more attention"?

[2:1]

The author told Christians to "give more attention" (προσεχω/g4337) to what Jesus said. Jesus was greater than any other messenger from God. So what he said was greater than what any other messenger from God had said before. If people believed in what the other messengers of God said, but not in what Jesus said, God will punish them more. 1. Some scholars think that the author wrote that Christians were going to have a greater punishment if they stopped believing in Jesus and started following the Law of Moses again. Because they knew about Jesus the messiah, they would be punished more than people who did not know about Jesus and just disobeyed the law of Moses. They think that these Christians would no longer be at peace with God. 1. Other scholars think that the author wanted to say that people who might "drift away" (παράρνηω/g3901) from believing in God never really believed in God. If they believed in God and were at peace with him, then they would not "drift way." 1. Other scholars think Christians might "drift away" from obeying God. If they did this, they would not be punished. Instead, God would not reward them.

The author wanted readers to remember how God had severely punished people who disobeyed the laws given through angels. Also, He wanted readers to know that God will punish people who ignore the things Jesus said to them.

Advice to Translators: A messenger is someone who is sent by someone else. They tell people the things the person who sent them want to tell them.

See: [Reward](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Reward](#)

Why is Jesus' message better than the angel's message?

[2:2, 2:3]

The author said that Jesus was better than angels. Several things make the things Jesus said better than the what the angels said.

1. Jesus said these things while he was on earth.

1. People who heard the things Jesus said told other people about the things Jesus said.

1. People told the author of this letter about the things Jesus said. These people heard it when Jesus said these things. They also told the people who read this letter about the things Jesus said.

1. God "testified" (συνεμάρτυρέω/g4901) while all of this was happening. God proved the things Jesus said were true. He also gave special gifts through the Holy Spirit. God did all of these things. He did not just send people to say things. They also did things and served Jesus and served other people.

See: [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Sign](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#)

2:5-18

What is God's plan for the world?

[2:5]

The author wrote about the "world to come." That is, God will end the world people live in now and create a new one that is perfect. That is, this new world will not have any suffering and nothing will die. Some scholars think God started this new world when he raised Jesus from the dead and gave him permission to rule over all things. This will continue until God makes the earth and heaven "new" (see Revelation 21). This "new heaven and new earth" will last forever. Other scholars think John was only talking about the "new heaven and new earth." God has not yet begun to make the world new. Other scholars think John was talking about the world when Jesus would rule for 1000 years (see: Revelation 20:1-7).

Angels will not rule the world to come. Jesus will rule. God the Father has given him permission to rule the world to come.

See: [God the Father](#); [Angel](#); [God the Father](#)

What did Jesus do after he went back to heaven?

[2:7]

After Jesus died and came back to living, he went back to heaven. When he did this, God gave him great honor. He was honored more than anything or anyone else. God's plan for Jesus did not end when Jesus died and rose from the dead. When Jesus suffered and died on the cross, he was made lower than angels. This is a metaphor. He wanted to say that Jesus was humiliated by dying on the cross. However, after

Jesus rose from the dead and went back to heaven, God gave him glory and honor above all things and all people. Jesus will never stop ruling over all things. He will rule all things when God creates the new heaven and earth. He will always be the king of all kings.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Cross](#); [Metaphor](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

How did Jesus save people who believe in him from their sins?

[2:10]

Jesus is able to save people who believe in him from their sins because he is different from every other person. Jesus and people are the same because Jesus was human in the same way that people are human. Also, Jesus and people are different because Jesus is also God. People are not God. This difference is what made Jesus able to save people who believe in him from their sins.

The author used Psalm 8:4-6 to tell how God first planned for people to rule the earth. When God created the world, he gave Adam and Eve permission to rule over the earth. God gave these two people nearly the same power and honor as the angels. They ruled over all things on earth. However, they did not do what honored God. This was the first sin. Because they did not honor God, God said that they will suffer and die. Also, their descendants will suffer and die. That is, all mankind. Adam and Eve lost their special permission from God to rule. They were no longer just a little lower than the angels, but a lot lower. This is because they did not honor God.

When people do not trust God and they do not do what honors him, this is a very bad thing. God must punish those who do not honor him. This punishment is "death" (see: Romans 6:23). The author wrote that Jesus died so that people did not have to die. That is, he was punished for them. Like Adam, Jesus was a man. Unlike every other person, Jesus did not sin once. That is, Jesus always did what honored God. Also, Jesus is God, and he is holy. When he came to earth, Jesus the Son did everything God the Father wanted him to do. Because Jesus always honored God, he was always holy. Because of this, he could die for those who did sin. Jesus did not die because of sins he committed. Jesus chose to honor God and die to be punished for everyone who believes in him.

See: [God the Father](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Angel](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Die \(Death\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [God the Father](#)

What does God do for those who believe in Jesus?

[2:11, 2:12]

God makes those who believe in Jesus "children of God." Before believing in Jesus, people fight against God in some way. But after they believe in Jesus, they are God's children. Jesus calls Christians his brothers and sisters. Jesus was a person in the same way they are people. He was born, he suffered, and he died. He lived in the same way as people, but he did not sin. Because of this, he had the power to save other people. That is, he could bring them to God and make them at peace with God. In the same way the high priest of the Old Testament brought sacrifices so that God would forgive them, Jesus brought his own sacrifice to God so that God would forgive people. That is, because Jesus died, God forgives people because Jesus was punished for them. Jesus is the greatest high priest. In the same way the high priest brought people to God, Jesus brings people to God. He is still there to help those who suffer and are tempted to sin. He helps them. Jesus also saves people from the power of the devil. The devil wants to make people slaves to do the things he wants them to do, things that do not honor God. However, Jesus makes them free this when someone believes in him.

See: [Free \(Freedom\)](#); [Children of God](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Free \(Freedom\)](#)

Will Christians be greater than angels?

[2:16]

Jesus has made it so that people can live with God in heaven. Men and women are children of God. God honors his children more than angels. People will rule with Jesus in the world to come. Angels will serve them and help them. Jesus died to save men and women, not angels.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Children of God](#); [Angel](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Therefore, holy brothers, you share in a heavenly calling. Think about Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession. ² He was faithful to God, who appointed him, just as Moses was also faithful in all the house of God. ³ For Jesus has been considered worthy of greater glory than Moses, because the one who builds a house has more honor than the house itself. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the one who built everything is God. ⁵ For Moses was faithful as a servant in God's entire house, bearing witness about the things that were to be spoken of in the future. ⁶ But Christ is faithful as a Son who is in charge of the house of God. We are his house if we hold firmly to our courage and the hope of which we boast. ⁷ Therefore, it is just as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you hear his voice

⁸ do not harden your hearts
as in the rebellion,
in the time of testing in the wilderness.

⁹ This was when your ancestors rebelled by testing me,
after they had seen my deeds for forty years.

¹⁰ Therefore I was angry with that generation.
I said, 'They have always gone astray in their hearts.
They have not known my ways.'

¹¹ It is just as I swore in my wrath:
'They will never enter my rest.'"

¹² Be careful, brothers, that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief, a heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "today," so that no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partners of Christ if we firmly hold to our confidence in him from the beginning to the end. ¹⁵ About this it has been said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts,
as in the rebellion."

¹⁶ Who was it who heard God and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt through Moses? ¹⁷ With whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ To whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if it was not to those who disobeyed him? ¹⁹ We see that they were not able to enter his rest because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3

3:1-6

How is Jesus a high priest?

[3:1]

The author called Jesus a high priest. That is, he does the same things the high priest in the Old Testament did. Jesus helps people to be at peace with God. He helps Christians. He talks to God for Christians. However, Jesus does these things better than the high priest because he is God's son. He is perfect, so he can go to God all the time. The high priest was unable to do this because they were sinners in the same way other people were sinners.

See: [High Priest](#)

Why is Jesus greater than Moses?

[3:3]

The author said that Jesus was greater than Moses because he was the son of God. He wrote this letter to people who were Jewish. Jewish people thought Moses was the most important prophet in their history. God chose Moses to be a great leader. Moses trusted God and did what God wanted. He spoke what God told him to speak. He spoke about things coming in the future. He was completely obeyed God. So, God greatly honored God.

However, Jesus came after Moses. Jesus deserves greater honor than Moses. Jesus is the messiah. This makes him greater than even the greatest leader and prophet. Jesus perfectly trusted and honored God. He did everything God wanted him to do. Jesus obeyed God more than Moses. So, Jesus deserves even greater honor than Moses.

The author used the metaphor of a house to tell how Jesus was greater than Moses (see: Numbers 12:7). He wrote that Moses was to obey God in the same way an honored "servant" (θεράπων/g2324) did in God's house. However, Jesus is God's son. God chose his son, Jesus, to rule over God's house, that is, all Christians. So, Jesus is much more than a faithful servant. In fact, Jesus actually created God's house, the temple, in which Moses served. In all these ways, Jesus was even more faithful than Moses.

The author called Jesus "apostle" and "high priest" of God. He called Jesus an apostle because God sent Jesus to tell people about the gospel. Jesus was able to speak for God better than other apostles or prophets. This is because he is God's son, not just a prophet. He is God.

Advice to translators: The word "faithful" is used throughout this chapter. The desired meaning is what is described in the last paragraph above. Use a word or phrase that has that meaning, in each place that "faithful" occurs in the commentary.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Prophet](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Apostle](#); [Jesus is God](#)

3:7-19

Why must Christians obey God?

[3:12, 3:15, 3:18]

The author wrote that Christians must obey God. If they are not, God will punish them. He wanted readers to know how God will think if they stop believing and trusting in him. He called this having an "evil heart of unbelief" (see: 3:12). That is, Christians need to always keep believing the things God said. If they did this, then they will do the things that honor him.

The author used Israel's history to talk about obeying God. He said the same thing as Psalm 95 (see: Psalm 95:1-7). The writer of this psalm wrote about when the Israelites left Egypt and followed Moses into the wilderness. God chose Moses as their leader. Moses told them what God wanted them to do. But the people did not do what Moses told them to do. When they disobeyed Moses, they disobeyed God. Because they did this, God punished them.

The author of Hebrews told them that the Holy Spirit spoke the words in the psalm. That is, God spoke these words. The author wanted his readers to know God said to them "do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion" (see: 3:15). That is, what happened to the Israelites can happen to Christians if they do not obey God.

In 3:16-19, the author wrote three questions so that his readers might better know what Psalm 95 was talking about: 1. All the Israelites who Moses led disobeyed God. That is, the people who God took out of Egypt disobeyed God. 1. God was angry with all the people of Israel, except Moses, because they sinned. They forgot how God helped them to leave Egypt, and they did not honor him. He punished them by letting them die in the desert. 1. God made a promise to the people who rejected him. He said that they will never enter his "rest." That is, he did not reward them, but he punished them. He punished them by keeping them from going into the promised land. Also, some scholars think the author wanted his readers to think about heaven when he wrote about God's "rest." So, God kept the Israelites from going into the promised land because they stopped believing in him. They committed sins and did not do what God wanted. The author wanted his readers to know God will also punish them if they do not do what he wants them to do.

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Psalm](#); [Sin](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Reward](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest is still allowed to stand, let us fear, so that none of you may seem to have fallen short of it. ² For we were told the good news just as they were. But that message did not benefit those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed. ^[1]³ For we who have believed enter that rest, just as he said,

"As I swore in my wrath,
They will never enter my rest."

Even so, his works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For he has somewhere spoken about the seventh day:

"And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." ⁵ And again in this same passage he said,
"They will never enter my rest."

⁶ Therefore, it remains for some to enter that rest, and those who previously had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience. ⁷ So God again appointed a certain day, calling it "Today," when he spoke through David much later in words already quoted:

"Today if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken about another day. ⁹ So there remains a Sabbath rest reserved for God's people. ¹⁰ For he who enters into God's rest has himself also rested from his deeds, just as God did from his. ¹¹ Therefore let us be eager to enter that rest, so that no one will fall into the kind of disobedience that they did. ¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ No thing that has been created is hidden before God, but everything is bare and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give an account.

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us firmly hold to our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. Rather, we have someone who has in all ways been tempted as we are, except that he is without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then go with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Footnotes

4:2 ^[1]Some important and ancient copies read,

Hebrews 4

4:1-13

What is "God's rest"?

[4:1]

When the author wrote about God's "rest," some scholars think he wanted readers to think about living together with God in heaven. This is because people in the Old Testament time period spoke of heaven in this way. (see: Exodus 33:14; Psalm 95:11; Isaiah 55:11). That is, heaven is a place of rest. Other scholars think he wrote about this because the Old Testament writers sometimes wrote about "rest" when they wanted to talk about Israel going into the promised land of Canaan. So that was "God's rest" because God promised peace to the people of Israel.

Other scholars think the author wanted to say that God himself rested. And people will join him in his rest. The rest of God began when God stopped creating the world. People who enter God's rest will rest from their good works in the same way God rested (see: Genesis 2:2-3).

See: [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Israel](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#)

Who can enter into the promised "rest" of God?

[4:3]

People who believe in Jesus can enter "God's rest." This is because God invites them. When the author wrote about people "entering" God's rest, he wanted to say they will be with God forever in heaven.

When they were in the wilderness, God promised the people of Israel that if they did all he told them to do they will enter into his rest when they came into the promised land. But the people who fled slavery in Egypt disobeyed God. They did not believe the things God promised to them. They did not trust God. They did not keep the commands of God. So, God did not let them enter into the promised land. So, they missed the rest of God.

The author also wrote that the people of God did not enter his rest when the next generation went into the promised land. This was when Joshua led them. This was because they also disobeyed and did not trust God. Many years after the time of Joshua, David wrote many Psalms. In Psalms, David still told the people of Israel to obey God instead of disbelieving or disobeying. So the author wanted his readers to know that Israel never entered God's rest because they kept disobeying God.

However, the author wrote that God did not forget his promise and his promise did not stop. He still tells people who believe in and follow Jesus to enter this rest. This rest will continue forever.

See: [Israel](#); [Wilderness](#); [Canaan \(Promised Land\)](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [People of God](#); [Generation](#); [Israel](#)

What did the author write about the "word of God"?

[4:12, 4:13]

When the author wrote about the "word of God," he wanted readers to think about God's power to see and judge everything people do. Some scholars think that when the author wrote about the "word of God," he wanted to say all of Scripture. Some of these scholars also think that he also wanted to talk about all the different ways God talks to people. Other scholars think that when the author wrote about the "word of God," he wanted people to think about Jesus (see: John 1).

The author wanted readers to think about the word of God. Great things can happen when someone obeys the word of God. No one and nothing can hide from God when he uses the scriptures to change things. God will use it to judge everyone. So nobody will enter God's rest unless they say and do the things that the word of God says to say and do.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

4:14-16

How can human beings approach God?

[4:16]

The author stated that Christians can approach God because Jesus is their "high priest." The author wanted his readers to think about the Jewish high priest from the Old Testament. He talked to God for the people of Israel. The Jewish high priest went into the most inside part of the tabernacle or the temple to talk to God. Only the high priest entered this part of the temple because anyone else would die. He had to go through certain washings and made sacrifices to be able to cleans himself before entering this part of the Temple.

Christians do not have high priests like the ones in the Old Testament. But the author wrote that Jesus talks to God the Father for us. So in that same way he is similar to those high priests. Because Jesus is the high priest, all Christians can go directly to God. That is, Jesus will speak for them to God the Father so they will not die.

The author wrote that Christians can trust Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God. That is, he is God. But he is also human. He was born and lived on earth in the same way humans are born and live. So, Jesus knows what it is like to be human. The world tempted him in all the same ways it tempts other people. But he was different from other people in one way. He did not sin. So, Jesus was able to enter heaven and he is there now. So, he can talk directly to God for them. That is, he can talk to God the Father directly because he is God the Son, and because he died on the cross so that Christians can come to God the Father without there being a separation between them and God.

If people keep believing in Jesus and following him, they can talk directly to God the Father. This is what the author wanted to say when he wrote about going to the "throne of grace." We do not need to be afraid to talk to God about anything. Because Jesus is also talking to God for us, we can know that God listens. God will hear and answer.

Advice to translators: When someone talks to another person directly, they talk to them without anyone else helping them. When someone does not talk directly to someone, they talk to someone else first who then talks to the person they want to talk to.

See: [Grace](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Temple](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [God the Father](#); [Son of God](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Throne](#); [Grace](#)

Chapter 5

¹ For every high priest, chosen from among people, is appointed to act on the behalf of people in the things concerning God, so that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can deal gently with those who are ignorant and who have been deceived, because he himself is subject to weakness. ³ Because of this, he also is required to offer sacrifices for his own sins, just as he does for the people's sins. ⁴ No one takes this honor for himself. Rather, he is called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ In the same way, neither did Christ glorify himself by making himself high priest. Instead, the one speaking to him said,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father."

⁶ It is just as he also says in another place,

"You are a priest forever
after the manner of Melchizedek."

⁷ During the days of his flesh, Christ offered up both prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God, the one able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his godly life. ⁸ Even though he was a Son, he learned obedience from what he suffered. ⁹ He was made perfect and became, for everyone who obeys him, the cause of eternal salvation. ¹⁰ He was designated by God as high priest after the manner of Melchizedek.

¹¹ We have much to say about Jesus, but it is hard to explain since you have become dull in hearing. ¹² For though by this time you should be teachers, you still have need for someone to teach you the elementary principles of God's messages. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ For anyone who only takes milk is inexperienced with the message of righteousness, because he is still a little child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature. These are those who because of their maturity have their understanding trained for distinguishing good from evil.

Hebrews 5

5:1-4

What did the author want people to think about the Jewish high priest?

[5:1, 5:2, 5:3]

The author wanted people to think about how the Jewish high priests could do only certain things. They did only certain things because they were only men. That is, they could serve God and lead people, however, Jesus could do much more.

See: [High Priest](#)

What were "gifts and sacrifices for sins"?

[5:3]

The Jewish people offered "gifts and sacrifices for sins" to God (see: 5:1). They did this to atone for sins they committed. That is, they did this so God would forgive their sins and bless them in some way. The high priest made these sacrifices for the people. God told the people how to make these sacrifices in the Law of Moses.

See: Leviticus

See: [High Priest](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [High Priest](#)

Why did the author write “he is called by God, just as Aaron was”?

[5:4]

When the author wrote "he is called by God, just as Aaron was", he wanted people to know that God decided who would be the high priest. God wanted Israel to have a high priest, so he gave them a high priest. He gave permission to someone to be the high priest and God said what the high priest would do.

God "called" Aaron. That is, God chose Aaron to be the high priest. This was when Moses led the Jewish people.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

5:5-10**Why did the author write, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”?**

[5:5]

When the author wrote "You are my Son; today I have become your Father," he wanted readers to know that Jesus is God. Jesus is the Son of God and a high priest. He is greater than any other high priests. When Jesus was baptized, God the Father said, "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (see: Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22). This is very much like the words the author wrote here (see: Psalms 2:7). People who are not Jesus cannot be God's child in this way. This makes Jesus a unique and special high priest.

See: [High Priest](#); [Son of God](#); [Trinity](#); [Jesus is God](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [High Priest](#)

Who was Melchizedek?

[5:6]

The author wrote about Melchizedek. In ancient times, Melchizedek was a king of Salem (see: Genesis 14:18-20). Melchizedek worshipped God. He worshipped God so well that people called him a high priest. His name means "king of righteousness." Abraham knew and respected Melchizedek. So the Jewish people also respected Melchizedek. This is why the author speaks about a priest "after the manner of Melchizedek".

Because of all these things, the author spoke about Melchizedek to tell people that Jesus is an even better high priest. He is righteous like Melchizedek. Melchizedek was human, so he had to die. However, Jesus lives forever. In fact, Jesus became the way that people can be forgiven of their sins. That is, he is the "cause of eternal salvation" (5:9). This is more than Melchizedek could do.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

See Map: Salem

Why did the author write “During the days of his flesh”?

[5:7]

The author wrote "during the days of his flesh." He was writing about when Jesus was alive on the earth. This is called the incarnation. He wrote it this way so people would think about how Jesus has always existed. This is because he is God. But at a certain time, he was born as a human being. He lived a human life. Then he was crucified and resurrected.

The author wrote in this way to be sure people would understand that Jesus was both fully God and fully human. Some false teachers taught that Jesus was not fully God. Other false teachers taught that Jesus was not fully human. The author wanted people to know that all these people were wrong about Jesus.

See: [Jesus is God](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Jesus is God](#)

How was God the Son "made perfect"?

[5:8]

Jesus is God the Son. He was "made perfect" because he completed the work God the Father gave him to do on earth. To do this, he completely obeyed everything that God the Father told him to do. This included dying on the cross so God will forgive people of their sins.

The author did not write this to speak about sins. Jesus did not commit any sins. However, some scholars think God the Father made Jesus "perfect" or complete when Jesus obeyed him completely. He did this when he was crucified.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Cross](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How did Jesus become "the cause of eternal salvation"?

[5:9]

Jesus became "the cause of eternal salvation" when he died on the cross. He did this so God the Father would save from their sins anyone who believes in Jesus. That is, Jesus atoned for peoples' sins. This was so that people who believe in him can live forever with God in heaven forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Heaven](#)

5:11-14

Why did the author write "dull in hearing"?

[5:11]

The author wrote "dull in hearing" to speak about people who did not know as much about God and Jesus as they should. He used the metaphor of someone who is not able to hear well. He used this metaphor to remind people they had been taught about Jesus. However, they were not showing they understood. They were not living in the way Christians should live. They were not doing what Jesus and the apostles taught. In fact, they were not even doing the most basic things they were taught. So in this way, it was as if they had not heard the things they were taught.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did the author write "You need milk, not solid food!"?

[5:12]

The author wrote "you need milk, not solid food!" This is a metaphor. He wanted people to know that they did not understand as much about God and Jesus as they should. This metaphor spoke about infants who cannot eat solid food. They can eat only milk. The author wrote about food to speak about the things of God and Jesus they were taught. In this way, he told them they needed to be more mature as Christians. That is, they needed to live in a way that honors God.

The author continued to use this metaphor in 5:13-14.

See: [Grow in Faith](#)

Why did the author write "inexperienced with"?

[5:13]

The author wrote "inexperienced with" to tell people that they behaved wrongly. They heard the gospel. They believed in Jesus. But they did not do the right things. They did not live in a way that honored God.

[Gospel](#)

Why did the author write “message of righteousness”?

[5:13]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote "message of righteousness." Some scholars think he spoke about the gospel. That is, the message of righteousness was the good news about Jesus. Other scholars think he spoke about people knowing the difference between right and wrong. That is, the message of righteousness was about how a person must live in a way that honors God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Chapter 6

¹ So then, let us leave the beginning of the message of Christ and move forward to maturity. Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith in God, ² nor the foundation of teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ We will also do this if God permits. ⁴ For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who tasted the heavenly gift, who were sharers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and who tasted God's good word and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ but who then fell away—it is impossible to restore them again to repentance. This is because they crucify the Son of God for themselves again, and publicly shame him. ⁷ For the land that drinks in the rain that often comes on it, and that gives birth to the plants useful to those for whom the land was worked—this is the land that receives a blessing from God. ⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and is near to a curse. Its end is in burning.

⁹ But we are convinced about better things concerning you, beloved ones, things that concern salvation, even though we speak like this. ¹⁰ For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you showed for his name, because you served his holy people, and you are still serving them. ¹¹ We greatly desire that each of you may show the same diligence to the end, in order to make your hope certain. ¹² This is so that you will not become lazy, but imitators of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises.

¹³ For when God made his promise to Abraham, he swore by himself, since he could not swear by anyone greater. ¹⁴ He said, "I will certainly bless you and give you many descendants." ¹⁵ In this way, Abraham obtained what was promised after he had patiently waited. ¹⁶ For people swear by someone greater than themselves. At the end of each of their disputes, an oath serves as confirmation. ¹⁷ When God decided to show more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable quality of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath. ¹⁸ He did this so that by two unchangeable things—with which it is impossible for God to lie—we, who have fled for refuge, will have a strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us. ¹⁹ We have this as a secure and reliable anchor for the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus, who went before us, has entered into that place on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6

6:1-3

What was the "message of Christ"?

[6:1]

The author wrote about the message of Christ. Some scholars think the "message of Christ" was everything Jesus and the apostles taught when they were alive. Other scholars think it was the gospel.

See: [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did the author speak about "maturity"?

[6:1]

The author spoke about "maturity." He wanted to make readers think they need to know God very well and always do things that honor God. The "maturity" he spoke about is spiritual. That is, he did not speak about physical growth. Nor did he speak about how many years a person has lived.

See: [Grow in Faith](#); [Grow in Faith](#)

What is laying a "foundation"?

[6:1]

When the author wrote about laying a "foundation", he used a metaphor to speak about the most important things a Christian learns about God. A "foundation" is the firm base for a building. Laying a foundation is when a builder creates this base. Sometimes foundations are made of very large stones. These will not move. They can support the rest of the building. This helps keep the building from falling down.

The most important things a Christian learns about God will keep them trusting in Jesus. In verse 2, the author wrote about other important things a Christian needs to know. The Christian who really learns these things will not stop trusting in Jesus. They will not do things that dishonor God.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Why did the author write "let us not lay again" the foundation?

[6:1]

When the author wrote "let us not lay again" the foundation, he continued to use the metaphor about the important things Christians learn about God. He wanted to tell Christians that they need to always remember these important things. Then they can do things that honor God. This is because they know what those things are.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What are "dead works"?

[6:1]

When the author wrote about "dead works", he wanted people to think about ways that people who are not Christians try to live in the right way. That is, he wanted Christians to know that these things do not serve God. He wanted them to know it was useless to do these things.

Scholars disagree about what the "dead works" are. Some scholars think the author spoke about Jewish people trying to do righteous things to please God. Perhaps the author was thinking about certain things the Jews did to follow the Law of Moses. Other scholars think the author spoke about people who worship idols. Other scholars think the author spoke about people who do things that cause them to die.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What is "repentance from" dead works?

[6:1]

When the author wrote about "repentance from" dead works, he wanted people to remember when they believed in Jesus. When they believed in Jesus, they stopped trying to do the right things without serving God. That is, they "repented from" doing things without wanting to honor God. The author wanted people to know that if they keep trusting in Jesus, they do not need to repent this way over and over.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

6:4-6

What was the "heavenly gift"?

[6:4]

When the author wrote about the "heavenly gift", he spoke about when God saves a person from his sins. Some scholars think the author was also thinking about the Holy Spirit. God gave the Holy Spirit to live in Christians. This is a gift.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

How can a person "taste" the heavenly gift?

[6:4]

When the author wrote about a person "tasting" the heavenly gift, he used the metaphor of eating food. He did this to speak about God really saving that person. He wanted to say that the person is completely saved from their sins when God does this. That is, he did not want people to think about the "taste" as just a small sample.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What are "sharers of the Holy Spirit"?

[6:4]

Christians are "sharers of the Holy Spirit" are Christians. When a person believes in Jesus, the Holy Spirit begins to live with them. That is to say, the Holy Spirit shares himself with all Christians.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What was "God's good word"?

[6:5]

"God's good word" is the gospel about Jesus.

See: [Gospel](#)

What are "powers of the age to come"?

[6:5]

Scholars disagree about what the "powers of the age to come" are. Some scholars think the author wanted people to know that they will see God's power more completely in the future. Other scholars think the author wanted people to think about angels. Other scholars think the author wrote about people who lead the church.

See: [Angel](#)

Why did the author write "then fall away"?

[6:6]

See: [Fall \(Fall Away, Stand\)](#)

6:7-8

What are the "land", "plants", and "thorns and thistles" the author writes about?

[6:7]

When the author wrote about "land", "plants", and "thorns and thistles", he used the metaphor of plants growing. When the author wrote "useful" plants, he wanted people to think of Christians. When the author wrote "thorns and thistles" he spoke about people who are not Christians. Scholars think the "thorns and thistles" are also Christians who fall away. The rain is the gospel. So the author wanted to say that the gospel makes Christians grow in some way like rain makes plants grow.

See: Matthew 13:3-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15

See: [Grow in Faith](#); [Gospel](#); [Grow in Faith](#)

6:9-12

What is "hope"?

[6:11]

See: [Hope](#)

How does a Christian "make your hope certain"?

[6:11]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote "make your hope certain." Some scholars think he spoke about the time when God will reward Christians who live in a way that honors him. That is, these scholars think the "certain" hope is because God will certainly do this. Other scholars think the author spoke about Christians having complete assurance that God will end this world and create a new, perfect world (see: Revelation 21). In that world, all people who believe in Jesus will have eternal life with him. That is, these scholars think the "certain" hope is when each Christian keeps on trusting in Jesus (see: Colossians 2:2, 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

See: [Heaven](#); [Reward](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Heaven](#)

6:13-18**Why did a person "swear by someone greater than themselves"?**

[6:13]

A person would "swear" (ὀμνύω/g3660) by someone more powerful than they were. To swear meant to confirm that something a person said was true. To swear "by someone greater" was to tell people the oath was stronger than even the person making it. In this passage, the author said people swore by God (see: Deuteronomy 6:13). God is the strongest and most powerful. That is, there is nobody stronger by whom God can swear. So, God swore by himself.

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Why did God tell Abraham he would "increase you"?

[6:14]

God told Abraham he would "increase" Abraham to say he would give Abraham many descendants (see: 11:12; Genesis 22:17).

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did people speak an "oath"?

[6:17]

People spoke an "oath" (ὄρκος/g3727) to say they would do things exactly as they promised. When this happened, people stopped arguing among themselves.

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

Who were the "heirs of the promise"?

[6:17]

The "heirs of the promise" were people who received the benefits of God's promise after Abraham was dead. That is, God blessed other people because of Abraham. Scholars disagree about who these people are. Some scholars think the author spoke about the Jewish people. Christians do not inherit these promises. Other scholars think the author spoke about Christians. Christians inherit God's promise because of what Jesus did. Other scholars think the author spoke about both the Jewish people and Christians.

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#)

What was the "unchangeable quality" of God's purpose?

[6:18]

When the author wrote about the “unchangeable quality” of God’s purpose, he wanted people to know that God will never change his mind. That is, God will never break the promise he made to Abraham. God also meant this promise for Christians through Abraham and Jesus.

See: [Covenant with Abraham](#)

Why did the author write that people “fled for refuge”?

[6:18]

The author wrote that people “fled for refuge.” This was a metaphor to speak about Christians. The author wanted people to think about someone trying to escape danger. When a person believes in Jesus, in some way he escapes from the danger of sin. Some scholars think that the people who “fled for refuge” were people who believed the message about Jesus, and escaped the sinful ways of the world. That is, they stopped living in sinful ways and started living in ways that honor God.

See: Colossians 1:13

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How does a person have “strong encouragement”?

[6:18]

A person has “strong encouragement” because he trusts that God keeps his promises. That is, he knows that God does what God says he will do.

6:19-20

What is a “secure and reliable anchor for the soul”?

[6:19]

When the writer said that Christians have a “secure and reliable anchor (ἄγκυρα/g0045) for the soul,” he wanted Christians to know God strongly supports Christians. He used the metaphor of an anchor that holds a boat in place. When a person believes in Jesus, God begins to help him. God makes him braver. God makes him able to resist temptation. The author wanted people to think that this is like a ship's anchor. It is something that will never go away.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

What was the “inner place behind the curtain”?

[6:19]

The “inner place behind the curtain” was the most special place in the tabernacle and temple. For the ancient Jewish people, it is where God dwelled on earth. It is called the “Holy of Holies” in the Old Testament.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Temple](#); [Temple](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

How did Jesus enter “behind the curtain”?

[6:20]

When the writer to the Hebrews said that Jesus entered “behind the curtain”, this was a metaphor. The high priest in the days of Israel entered behind the curtain of the holy of holies once a year to carry the blood of the atoning sacrifice for the sins of Israel. The author wanted to say that in some way, when Jesus was crucified, it was as if he did what the high priest did.

However, when Jesus shed his blood on the cross, he atoned for the sins of every person who believes in him. That is, he himself was the sacrifice. Jesus’ sacrifice was made once and it atoned for sins for all time (see: 10:11-14). So it did not have to be repeated. This is why the author wrote that Jesus is a high priest “forever”.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#)

What was a high priest?

[6:20]

See: [High Priest](#)

Why did the author write "after the order of Melchizedek"?

[6:20]

Long after Melchizedek lived, God declared that all priests would be descendants of Levi. God did this starting with Aaron. So people called them priests after the "order of Aaron".

Jesus did not come from the tribe of Levi, so he was not of the order of Aaron. He was a descendant of Judah. Because of this, Jesus could be the king of Israel and the messiah. Jesus was the high priest of God, in the same way that Melchizedek was the priest of God.

See: Hebrews 5:6

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 7

¹ It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. ² It was to him that Abraham gave a tenth of everything. First, the translation of his name means, "king of righteousness"; then he is also "king of Salem," that is, "king of peace." ³ He is without father, without mother, without ancestors, with neither beginning of days nor end of life. And resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

⁴ See how great this man was to whom the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the things that he had taken in battle. ⁵ The descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a command according to the law to collect tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, even though they, too, are descended from Abraham. ⁶ But Melchizedek, whose descent was not traced from them, received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him, the one who had the promises. ⁷ There is no denying that the lesser person is blessed by the greater person. ⁸ In this case, mortal men receive tithes, but in that case it is testified that he lives on. ⁹ And, in a manner of speaking, Levi, who received tithes, also paid tithes through Abraham, ¹⁰ because Levi was in the body of his ancestor when Melchizedek met Abraham.

¹¹ Now if perfection were possible through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the manner of Melchizedek, and not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed. ¹³ For the one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ Now clearly it is from Judah that our Lord was born, a tribe that Moses never mentioned concerning priests. ¹⁵ What we say is even clearer when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek. ¹⁶ This one became a priest, not based on a law of physical requirement, but by the power of an everlasting life. ¹⁷ For scripture witnesses about him:

"You are a priest forever
according to the order of Melchizedek."

¹⁸ For not only has the former command been set aside because it is weak and useless— ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect—but also a better hope is introduced, through which we come near to God. ²⁰ And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, ²¹ but he became a priest with an oath by the one who said to him,

"The Lord has sworn and he will not change his mind:
"You are a priest forever."

²² By this also Jesus has given the guarantee of a better covenant. ²³ The former priests were many in number, since death prevented them from continuing in office. ²⁴ But because Jesus continues to live forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is also able to save completely those who approach God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, who is holy, innocent, pure, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He does not need, unlike the high priests, to offer up daily sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He did this once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who have weaknesses. But the word of the oath, which came after the law, appointed a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 7

7:1-3

Who was Melchizedek?

[7:1]

See: Hebrews 5:6; 6:20

Why did the author write that Melchizedek was the “king of Salem”?

[7:1]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that Melchizedek was the "king of Salem." Some scholars think Melchizedek was the king of Jerusalem. Salem was an older name for Jerusalem. Other scholars think he was the king of the city of Salem that John wrote about (see: John 3:23). Still other scholars think the author wanted readers to think that Melchizedek was the king of peace. This is because Salem can be translated “peace.”

Why did the author write that Melchizedek was “without father, without mother, without ancestors”?

[7:3]

The author wrote that Melchizedek was “without father, without mother, without ancestors.” Some scholars think he did not want to say that Melchizedek did not have physical parents or ancestors. They think that no one knows who his parents or ancestors are. Moses wrote about Melchizedek but he did not write about these things. Fewer scholars think Melchizedek may have been a kind of angel. He was not human. So he did not have parents. These scholars think this because the author wrote that Melchizedek had “neither beginning of days nor end of life”. They think the author wanted to say that Melchizedek was not born and did not die.

See: Genesis 14:18-20

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

7:4-10

Why did the author call Abraham a “patriarch”?

[7:4]

The author called Abraham a “patriarch” because he started a nation, that is Israel. That is to say, the author used the metaphor of being a father to speak about this. However, the Bible also says that Abraham is the father of all people who believe in Jesus (see: Romans 4:11-17).

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did Abraham give Melchizedek a “tenth” of the things he took from battle?

[7:4]

Abraham gave to Melchizedek a tenth of the things he took from battle. He did this because he thought Melchizedek was greater than he was. In ancient times, when people defeated another group of people when they fought in a war, they took things from the people they defeated.

Why did the Law of Moses command the people to give a tithe to the sons of Levi?

[7:5]

The Law of Moses commanded the people to give a tithe to the tribe of Levi. The tribe of Levi served as priests for the nation of Israel. God said they did not have the right to own land. They needed to devote their time to helping people worship God. Therefore God provided for the priests. He did this by commanding the other eleven tribes to contribute tithes to the tribe of Levi.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Tithe](#); [Worship](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

How was Melchizedek greater than Abraham?

[7:7]

The author wrote that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham because he was a priest of God. So, he was able to give Abraham a blessing from God. That is why the author wrote "the lesser person is blessed by the greater person." The author did not want to say that Melchizedek obeyed God more than Abraham.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

How did Levi "pay tithes through Abraham"?

[7:9]

Scholars disagree about how Levi could "pay tithes through Abraham." Some scholars think that when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, he did it for all his future family. This included Levi. Other scholars think Abraham subjected himself to the priesthood of Melchizedek. Therefore Abraham's ancestors were also subject to Melchizedek.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

7:11-21

Why did the author write the word "perfection"?

[7:11]

The author wrote the word "perfection" (τελείωσις/g5050) to get people to think of doing no sin and living in a right way. This can happen only when the person is reconciled to God, that is when God saves them from their sins. This happens only when the person believes in Jesus. So the author told people that these priests could not save anyone (see: 7:11).

See: [Sin](#); [Reconcile \(Reconciliation\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#)

What was the "manner of Melchizedek"?

[7:11]

See: Hebrews 6:20

Why did the author write "the law must also be changed"?

[7:12]

The author wrote "the law must also be changed" so people know that God does not save people because of the Law of Moses. God changed things and people did not need to try to obey the Law of Moses (see: Galatians 2:16-21, Galatians 3:19-26)

The priesthood of Aaron was established by the Law of Moses. The priests offered sacrifices to atone for peoples' sins. That is to say, so God would forgive their sins. But when Jesus came to earth, this changed. Jesus atoned for all sins when he died on the cross. Now, God forgives sins when someone believes in Jesus.

See: [Cross](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Cross](#)

Who was the one who belonged "to another tribe"?

[7:13]

Jesus was the one who belonged "to another tribe." Jesus belonged to the tribe of Judah. He did not belong to the tribe of Levi. There was never a priest before who was from the tribe of Judah. So the author wrote this to say that Jesus did not come under the priesthood of Aaron.

See: [Tribes of Israel](#); [Tribes of Israel](#)

Why did the author write "served at the altar"?

[7:13]

The author wrote "served at the altar" to speak about when the priests led the people of Israel in worship. When they did this, they made sacrifices and offerings to God at the altar.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Worship](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

Why did the author write that Jesus was a priest "based on the power of an everlasting life"?

[7:16]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that Jesus was a priest "based on the power of an everlasting life." Some scholars think that the priesthood of Aaron was based only on the Law of Moses. However, the priesthood of Jesus was based on the promise of God. Jesus demonstrated the "power of an everlasting life" when he rose from the dead. Other scholars simply say that the priesthood of Aaron was limited. It came to an end because the priests died. However, Jesus lives forever, so his priesthood will never end.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What was the "former regulation"?

[7:18]

The "former regulation" was the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

How was the former regulation "weak and useless"?

[7:18]

The former regulation, that is to say the Law of Moses, is "weak and useless." This is because it could not save a person from their sins. It could not change a person and give them new life. It could not make someone part of God's family. It could not make a person righteous. Only when a person believes in Jesus can these things happen to them.

See: [Family of God](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Family of God](#)

What was the "better hope"?

[7:19]

The "better hope" was Jesus. The author wrote that Jesus established a different priesthood (see: 7:4-17). This new priesthood allowed people to truly draw near to God. Some scholars think the "better hope" accomplished what the Law of Moses could not. That is, the new hope lets everyone who believes in Jesus talk to God without needing a priest.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

What is to "come near to God"?

[7:19]

To "come near" (ἐγγίζω/g1448) meant to approach God. Jesus made it possible for everyone who believes in him to do this. The priesthood of Jesus allows all Christians to "come near to God". This is because the sacrifice of Jesus was perfect. It completely atoned for peoples' sins. So, it gave Christians direct access to God.

This is different than the old way. The priesthood of Aaron was designed to keep people at a distance from God. Only the high priest, once a year, could come close to God.

See: [High Priest](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [High Priest](#)

7:22-28

What is the “guarantee of a better covenant”?

[7:22]

The "guarantee of a better covenant" is Jesus. The "guarantee of a covenant" is a way of making certain that people fulfill the covenant. That is, another person may promise to fulfill the covenant if one of the people fails to fulfill it. Jesus, who is the Son of God, guaranteed a "better" covenant. He did this when he died. This new covenant is "better" because it lasts forever. It is also "better" because it will never be broken. God will never break his promise. Also, Christians now have Jesus as their "guarantee." That is, when they sin, God accepts Jesus' sacrifice to fulfill the new covenant. So, God forgives them of their sins. He does not think that a Christian ends the covenant by sinning.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Son of God](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [New Covenant](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#)

How was Jesus “able to save completely” those who came to God through him?

[7:25]

Jesus was able to "save completely" everyone who believes in him. This is because he fulfilled all of God's requirements for people to be saved from their sins. He did this when he died. Scholars think that Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. So, there was nothing else needed for people to be saved from their sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the author write that Jesus “lives to intercede” for his people?

[7:25]

The author wrote that Jesus "lives to intercede" for his people. To intercede is to defend a person when they do something wrong. So the author wanted to say that when Christians sin, Jesus defends them from God's judgement. Because Jesus lives forever, he is always able to do this for Christians.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How was Jesus “sinless” and “blameless”?

[7:26]

The author wrote that Jesus was "sinless" and "blameless" because Jesus never committed a sin.

See: [Blameless](#); [Blameless](#)

How was Jesus “pure”?

[7:26]

See: [Purify \(Pure\)](#)

How was Jesus “separated from sinners”?

[7:26]

Jesus was "separated from sinners" because he never committed a sin. That is, God the Father never had a reason to say that Jesus was a sinner. So Jesus is "separated" or different than every other person.

See: [God the Father](#); [God the Father](#)

How is Jesus “higher than the heavens”?

[7:26]

The author wrote that Jesus is "higher than the heavens" to say that he is in some way not in the world any longer. Some scholars think that Jesus now exists "higher," that is, he is somewhere outside of everything he created. He is the Son of God. He talks to God the Father directly. Other scholars think the words “higher than the heavens” mean that Jesus is now at the right hand of God (see: Philippians 2:11). He is in the most honored place next to God.

See: [Son of God](#); [Son of God](#)

How was the sacrifice of Jesus a “once for all” sacrifice?

[7:27]

The sacrifice of Jesus was "once for all" because it never needs to be repeated. That is to say, Jesus died once. When he died, he atoned for the sins of all people (see: John 3:16). He does not need to do this over and over.

In ancient Israel, priests made sacrifices for the people. However, the priests also committed sins. They needed to offer sacrifices for their own sins as well as for the sins of the people. Jesus is different. He never sinned and is the Son of God. So he did not have to offer a sacrifice for himself. Instead, he offered himself as the sacrifice for everyone else. It was the final, perfect sacrifice which atoned for the sins of everyone who believes in Jesus.

See: [Son of God](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Son of God](#)

How was Jesus “made perfect forever”?

[7:28]

See: Hebrews 5:9

Chapter 8

¹ Now the point of what we are saying is this: We have a high priest who has sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. ² He is a servant in the holy place, the true tabernacle that the Lord, not a man, set up. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary to have something to offer. ⁴ Now if Christ were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law. ⁵ They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. It is just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to construct the tabernacle: God said, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain." ⁶ But now Christ has received a much better ministry, just as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which is based on better promises. ⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, no occasion for a second would have been sought. ⁸ For when God found fault with the people, he said,

"See, the days are coming—says the Lord—
when I will make a new covenant
with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah.

⁹ It will not be like the covenant
that I made with their ancestors
on the day that I took them by their hand
to lead them out of the land of Egypt.
For they did not carefully obey my covenant,
and I disregarded them—
says the Lord.

¹⁰ This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days says the Lord.
I will put my laws into their minds,
and I will also write them on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

¹¹ They will not teach each one his fellow citizen
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'
For they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

¹² For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds,
and their sins I will not remember any longer."

¹³ By calling this covenant "new," he declared the first covenant to be obsolete, and what has become obsolete and old will soon disappear.

Hebrews 8

8:1-6

Who is the "high priest" the author writes about?

[8:1]

The author wrote about a "high priest." He was writing about Jesus.

See: Hebrews 7

Why did the author write that Jesus "sat down at the right hand" of the Majesty?

[8:1]

The author wrote that Jesus "sat down at the right hand" of the majesty to say that in some way, God the Father gave Jesus the highest possible honor. In ancient times, rulers invited someone to sit "at their right

hand", that is to say their right side. They did this when they wanted to greatly honor that person. So the author used this as a metaphor for how God honored Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Son of God](#); [Metaphor](#)

Who is "the Majesty in the heavens?"

[8:1]

The "Majesty in the heavens" is God. It was a name that told people that God has great honor. That is, there is no one greater than God. Why did the author write that Jesus "is a servant in the holy place?"

When the author wrote that Jesus "is a servant in the holy place". He wrote that Jesus is a "servant" so people would know that Jesus still does things to help people. He does this to serve God the Father. The author wrote that Jesus is a servant "in the holy place" to speak about where God is. That is to say, heaven.

The author did not write "the holy place" to speak about the Holy of Holies in the temple or tabernacle.

See: [Tabernacle](#); [Heaven](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Temple](#); [Tabernacle](#)

What is the "true tabernacle"?

[8:2]

The "true tabernacle" (8:2) is the original, or real tabernacle. The "true tabernacle" is eternal and was created in some way by God. It is in heaven. The Israelites built a tabernacle on earth. God gave them instructions on how to build this temple. In some way, it was a copy of the tabernacle in heaven.

The author did not write "true" tabernacle to say that the earthly tabernacle of the Old Testament was false. Instead, he wanted people to know that it was temporary. He wrote that it was a "copy and shadow" of the real one (see: Hebrews 8:5). But there is another tabernacle that lasts forever.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What were the "gifts and sacrifices" about which the writer spoke?

[8:3]

See: Hebrews 5:1

If Jesus was here on earth, why would he "not be a priest at all"?

The author wrote that if Jesus was still on earth, he would "not be a priest at all." He wrote this to say again that Jesus is greater than human priests. Some scholars think that Jesus could not be a priest on the earth because he was not a descendant of Levi (see: Hebrews 7:13-14). He could not be a priest according to the Law of Moses. Other scholars think that Jesus is a priest in heaven. That is to say, he does not replace priests on earth. Instead, he is a different kind of priest. He is a priest in heaven. Heaven has no other priests.

See: [Heaven](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did the author write that the earthly tabernacle was a "copy and shadow of the heavenly things"?

[8:5]

The author wrote that the earthly tabernacle was a "copy and shadow of the heavenly things." He wrote this so people would think only about God and where God is. That is, he wanted them to stop worshipping things on earth. God designed the earthly tabernacle to be only a copy of the real tabernacle (see: Hebrews 8:2). That is, it was a pattern of what God showed Moses (see: Exodus 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8). When the author wrote that it was a "shadow" (σκιά/g4639), he used a metaphor. He wanted people to know that the earthly tabernacle was much less than the true tabernacle in heaven. A shadow is a thing people can see. But it is not the real thing, that is, the thing which casts the shadow. In the same way, the earthly tabernacle was a thing people can see, but it was not the real tabernacle.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Heaven](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did a “mediator” do?

[8:6]

A “mediator”(μεσίτης/g3316) was a person who helped other people to solve a disagreement. The author used this metaphor to speak about how Jesus helps people with God. He speaks to God for people. When people disobey God, Jesus helps them to reconcile with God.

See: [Reconcile \(Reconciliation\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Reconcile \(Reconciliation\)](#)

What is the “better covenant, which is based on better promises”?

[8:6]

When the author wrote about the "better covenant, which is based on better promises," he wanted people to think about Jesus. He wanted people to know that Jesus started a new covenant between God and people. Under this new covenant, God blesses everyone who believes in Jesus. This is not like the old covenant God made with Moses. The old covenant required people to follow the Law of Moses. Only if a person kept the Law of Moses perfectly would God bless him. However, nobody could do this. So, the new covenant is better because people can be blessed if they believe in Jesus. God "writes it on the hearts of his people" (see: 8:10). This is a metaphor to say that God fulfills the covenant for Christians. This promise is better because people's sins are completely forgiven.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Metaphor](#)

8:7-13

How did God put his laws into the “minds” of Christians?

[8:10]

The author wrote that God promised to put his laws into the “minds” of Christians. That is, he used a metaphor to say that people would understand what God wanted them to do. The Law of Moses was written on stones. People could not perfectly obey the Law of Moses. This is because of sin. However, now God helps his people to know what he wants. He helps them do this using the Holy Spirit. He helps them do this when they read the Bible. He also gives them the ability to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

How did God write his laws on the “hearts” of Christians?

[8:10]

The author wrote that God promised to write his laws on the "hearts" of Christians. That is, he used a metaphor to say that people would want to obey God. That is, Christians want to live in a way that honors God. They want this because God changes them. He changes them when they believe in Jesus.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Why did the author write that the old covenant would “soon disappear”?

[8:13]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that the old covenant would "soon disappear." Some scholars think the author wanted people to think that the old covenant was fading. That is, it had not disappeared yet but would soon disappear. The old covenant would stop. These scholars think this because God spoke about a new covenant to the prophet Jeremiah (see: Jeremiah 31:31-34). They think that ever since Jeremiah lived, the old covenant had been fading and would soon disappear. Other scholars think that when God established the new covenant, it made the old covenant of no value. That is, the promises and conditions of the old covenant disappeared when Jesus came to earth.

See: [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#)

Chapter 9

¹ Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. ² For a tabernacle was prepared. The first room, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the presence, was called the holy place. ³ Behind the second curtain was another room in the tabernacle, called the most holy place. ⁴ It had a golden altar for incense. It also had the ark of the covenant, which was completely overlaid with gold. Inside it was a golden jar that held the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. ⁵ Above the ark of the covenant, glorious cherubim overshadowed the atonement lid, which we cannot now talk about in detail. ⁶ After these things were prepared, the priests always entered the outer room of the tabernacle to perform their services. ⁷ But only the high priest entered the second room, once each year, and not without blood that he offered for himself and for the people's unintentional sins. ⁸ The Holy Spirit showed that as long as the first tabernacle was still standing the way into the most holy place had not yet appeared. ⁹ This was an illustration for the present time. Both the gifts and sacrifices that are now being offered are not able to perfect the worshiper's conscience. ¹⁰ They are only concerned with food and drink and various ceremonial washings, regulations for the body until the time of the new order.

¹¹ Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come. He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that was not made by human hands, one not belonging to this created world. ^[1]¹² It was not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood that he entered into the most holy place once for all and secured our eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of a heifer's ashes on those who have been defiled sanctifies them for the cleansing of their flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant. This is so that, since a death has taken place to redeem those under the first covenant from their transgressions, those who are called will receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. ¹⁶ For where there is a will, the death of the person who made it must be proven. ¹⁷ For a will is only valid when there has been a death, because it has no force while the one who made it is still alive. ¹⁸ So not even the first covenant was established without blood. ¹⁹ For when Moses had given every command in the law to all the people, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water, red wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people. ²⁰ Then he said, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has commanded for you." ²¹ In the same manner, he sprinkled the blood on the tabernacle and all the containers used in the ministry. ²² According to the law, almost everything is cleansed with blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

²³ Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in heaven should be cleansed with these animal sacrifices. However, the heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with much better sacrifices. ²⁴ For Christ did not enter into the most holy place made with hands, which is only a copy of the true one. Rather he entered into heaven itself, to appear now in God's presence for us. ²⁵ He did not go there in order to offer himself many times, as does the high priest, who enters the most holy place year by year with the blood of another. ²⁶ If that had been the case, then he would have had to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so also, Christ was offered once to take away the sins of many, and will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but for the salvation of those who are waiting for him.

Footnotes

9:11 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Hebrews 9

9:1-5

What was the “earthly sanctuary”?

[9:1]

The “earthly sanctuary” was the tabernacle that the people of Israel built. The earthly sanctuary was a place where people worshipped God. This was the temple in Jerusalem. It was destroyed about 40 years after Jesus died.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

What was the “lampstand”?

[9:2]

The “lampstand” was something in the temple. It was made of gold. It had six branches connected to the main stem. The main stem and each branch had a candle holder. Therefore, it held seven candles in all.

See: Exodus 25:31-39

See: [Temple](#)

What was the “bread of the presence”?

[9:2]

The “bread of the presence” was special bread that in some way was dedicated to God. It was used in the temple in Jerusalem. Some scholars think the “bread of the presence” was bread that in some way was offered to God. Other scholars think the bread was twelve loaves, baked with very fine flour. The loaves were placed on the table each Sabbath day. The loaves were for the priests to eat. The priests had to eat the loaves in the temple.

See: Exodus 24:5-9

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Sabbath](#); [Holy Place](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

What was the “second curtain”?

[9:3]

There were two curtains in the tabernacle. The first curtain was a linen screen. This first curtain was the entrance into the holy place. The second curtain was made of very fine linen. The high priest, once a year, entered through the second curtain to offer a special sacrifice.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Temple](#); [Holy Place](#); [High Priest](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

What was the “most holy place”?

[9:3]

The “most holy place” was the place where the glory of the Lord dwelled. It was located behind the second curtain in the temple. Only the high priest entered into the most holy place, and he only did this only once every year.

See: [High Priest](#); [Temple](#); [Presence of God](#); [High Priest](#)

What was the “golden altar for incense”?

[9:4]

Scholars think the “golden altar for incense” was an altar that held burning coals. The priest took coals from the altar and placed the coals in a pan, called a censer. He sprinkled incense into the pan. He did this so that the coals would burn the incense. This produced an aroma. Scholars think the “golden altar for incense” was in the holy place, just outside the entrance to the “most holy place” (see: Leviticus 16:12).

See: [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Holy Place](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#)

What was the “ark of the covenant”?

[9:4]

See: [Ark of the Covenant](#)

Why was there a “golden jar” inside the ark of the covenant?

[9:4]

There was a golden jar inside the ark of the covenant to hold special things. This was to remind the Israelites how God took care of them when they traveled in the wilderness (see: Exodus).

See: [Ark of the Covenant](#)

What was the “manna” inside the golden jar?

[9:4]

The “manna” inside the golden jar was special food that God gave the Israelites when they traveled in the wilderness. The author wanted them to remember how God took care of them. So, Moses instructed Aaron to place some manna into a jar and place it in the ark. It was to remain in the ark for years to come (see: Exodus 16:33).

See: [Manna](#); [Manna](#)

What was “Aaron’s rod that budded”?

[9:4]

When Moses lived, God told Moses to get twelve “rods” (ῥάβδος/g4464), one rod from each leader of the twelve tribes of Israel. God told Moses that the man who owned the “rod that budded” would be the man to stop the complaining of the people of Israel. The rod of Aaron is the rod that budded (See: Numbers 17:1-11.)

See: [Tribes of Israel](#)

What were the “tablets of the covenant”?

[9:4]

The “tablets of the covenant” were the stone tablets upon which were written the ten commandments. These were the commandments that God engraved on tablets for Moses. (See: Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5:1-22.)

See: [Ten Commandments](#); [Ten Commandments](#)

What were “cherubim”?

[9:5]

The “cherubim” (Χερούβ/g5502) were carvings on top of the ark of the covenant. A cherub was a two-winged creature that people thought were with God. The carvings of these creatures were placed on the Ark of the covenant (see: Exodus 25:18-22).

See: [Ark of the Covenant](#)

What was the “atonement lid”?

[9:5]

The “atonement lid” was a gold lid covering the ark. People also called this the mercy seat. On the day of atonement, once a year, God appeared in a cloud over the atonement lid (see: Leviticus 16:2). When the high priest offered the blood of the sacrifice, once a year, he would sprinkle the blood onto the atonement lid. This was a sign a covering of sin (see: Leviticus 16:14).

See: [Sin](#); [Ark of the Covenant](#); [High Priest](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sign](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the author say there were things “which we cannot now talk about in detail”?

[9:5]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that there were things "which we cannot now talk about in detail". Some scholars think that the people who read this book already knew about the furnishings and the practices within the temple. Therefore, the writer did not take time to write about everything in detail. Other scholars think the writer did not think he needed to write about every part of the temple and the things the priests did in the temple.

See: [Temple](#)

9:6-10

Why did the author write “not without blood”?

[9:7]

The author wrote, “not without blood.” It was against the Law of Moses for the high priest to pass through the second curtain, into the most holy place, without taking the blood of animals for a sacrifice. The blood of the sacrifice was offered for the sins of the high priest and the sins of the people.

See: [Sin](#); [High Priest](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Sin](#)

What were “unintentional sins”?

[9:7]

Scholars disagree about what "unintentional sins" were. Some scholars think that “unintentional sins” were the kind of sins that were committed in ignorance. That is, the people did not know that they had sinned. Other scholars think that the writer used the words “unintentional sins” to speak about all sins that were committed by the people.

Who is the "Holy Spirit"?

[9:8]

See: [Holy Spirit](#)

Why were the gifts and sacrifices “not able to perfect the worshipper’s conscience”?

[9:9]

The gifts and sacrifices made under the Law of Moses were "not able to perfect the worshipper's conscience." That is, they did not make a person clean. Therefore, the person who worshipped was always reminded of his sin. The sacrifices only served to cover over sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Worship](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why were sacrifices offered concerning “food and drink”?

[9:10]

The Law of Moses included laws about what kinds of "food and drink" were clean and unclean (See: Leviticus 11:1-47). Sometimes a person ate or touched food that he was not permitted to eat. When he did this, he became unclean. So, he had to make sacrifices for breaking the Law of Moses.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

What were "ceremonial washings"?

[9:10]

A "ceremonial washing" was when a person washed themselves in a special way so they could worship God. In ancient times, if a person touched a dead animal, he became unclean. Therefore, he had to wash in a certain way in order to be made clean again. Until he did this, he could not worship with the rest of the people. The high priest, before and after making the atoning, once a year sacrifice, also bathed in water as a "ceremonial washing". That is, it showed his obedience to God, by following the Law of Moses.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [High Priest](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author write "the time of the new order"?

[9:10]

The author wrote "the time of the new order" to speak about the ending of the old covenant and the beginning of the new covenant. That is, he wanted people to think about when God will end the world and create a new world. The new world will be perfect. It is the "new order", that is a perfect place for people to live.

See: [New Covenant](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [New Covenant](#)

9:11-14

What were the "good things that have come"?

[9:11]

Scholars disagree about the "good things that have come." Some scholars think the writer spoke about Christians knowing they will live together with God in heaven forever. Other scholars think writer was speaking about how God ended the old "order." That is, God changed the world and now Jesus is the high priest.

See: [High Priest](#); [High Priest](#)

What was the "greater and more perfect tabernacle"?

[9:11]

See: Hebrews 8:2

Why did the author write "once for all"?

[9:12]

The author wrote "once for all" to tell people that they can stop offering sacrifices. The priests under the old covenant had to offer the atoning sacrifice every year. They offered the blood of goats and bulls for that sacrifice. When Jesus, as the high priest, offered his own blood on the cross, he did it "once for all". That is, by one sacrifice Jesus atoned for the sins of people and no other sacrifice is needed.

See: [Cross](#); [Covenant](#); [High Priest](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Cross](#)

What were the "heifer's ashes"?

[9:13]

The "heifer's ashes" were used to cleanse a person who had sinned or become unclean in some way. In the time when Moses lived, God commanded that the priest slaughter a red heifer outside of the camp. Some of the blood was sprinkled toward the tabernacle. Afterward, the heifer was burned completely. Its ashes were mixed with water and used to cleanse someone who had become unclean (See: Numbers 19:1-22).

Advice to translators: A heifer is a young female cow.

See: [Tabernacle](#); [Sin](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Tabernacle](#)

How did the ashes provide for the “cleansing of their flesh”?

[9:13]

The author wrote that the ashes provided for the "cleansing of their flesh" so people would think about God forgiving them. When a person became unclean, he needed to be separated from other people. When the unclean person was sprinkled with the mixture of ashes and water, God saw him as being clean once again. That is, God would forgive him. He did not need to be separated from the rest of the Israelites.

See: [Flesh](#); [Flesh](#)

Why did the author write “how much more”?

[9:14]

The author wrote “how much more” to speak about much greater Jesus’ sacrifice was then the sacrifices under the old covenant.

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

How was Jesus “without blemish”?

[9:14]

Jesus was "without blemish" because he never disobeyed God. The author did not speak about Jesus' body. Instead, he said that Jesus never sinned. Therefore he was “without blemish”, that is, without any imperfection. According to the Law of Moses, every sacrifice needed to be an animal without blemish. If it had a blemish it could not be sacrificed to God.

See: Isaiah 53:9

See: [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#)

What are “dead works”?

[9:14]

“Dead works” are the things people do and think that disobey or dishonor God. They lead to spiritual death, that is, to the person being separated from God forever. Dead works are things that do not serve God. They only separated people from God.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

Who is “the living God”?

[9:14]

The "living God" is the real God. The author says God is "living" so people will not think he is an idol that is not real.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

9:15-22

What was a “mediator”?

[9:15]

See: Hebrews 8:6

Who are those who are “called”?

[9:15]

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#)

What is “the promise of an eternal inheritance”?

[9:15]

“The promise of an eternal inheritance” is a way of speaking about eternal life. God first gave it to the people living in the days of the Old Testament. The prophet Jeremiah spoke about this promise as being a new covenant that God was to make with people (see: Jeremiah 31:31-34).

See: [New Covenant](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophet](#); [New Covenant](#)

What is a “will”?

[9:16]

A “will” (διαθήκη/g1242) is a written document that tells people who should inherit a dead person's property. The author used this as a metaphor to speak about the promise God made to his people. That is, the promise of an eternal inheritance. This promise was put into effect after the death and resurrection of Jesus. So, it was like a “will” for people who believe in Jesus to inherit eternal life from him.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [People of God](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

Why did the author write, “not even the first covenant was established without blood”?

[9:18]

The author wrote “not even the first covenant was established without blood” so people would think about the Old Testament sacrifices. The first covenant, that is, the covenant with Moses, required sacrifices (see: Exodus 24:3-8).

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author write about the blood, water, red wool, and hyssop?

[9:19]

The author wrote about the blood, water, red wool, and hyssop so people would think about the ceremony Moses performed when God gave him the Law. Scholars think the water was mixed with the blood as a symbol of cleansing. Then red wool and hyssop were wrapped around a stick. The wool absorbed the mixture of water and blood. The hyssop helped to brush or sprinkle the blood.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did Moses sprinkle both the scroll and the people with the water and blood mixture?

[9:19]

Scholars think that Moses sprinkled all things that had to do with the covenant God made with Moses. The writer to the Hebrews mentioned two things that were sprinkled, that is the scroll and the people. The sprinkling of blood represented setting things apart to serve God. The scroll was made clean and set

apart by the blood because it contained the words of God's promise to his people. The people were made clean and set apart by the blood to do everything God said in the scroll.

See: [Blood](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [People of God](#); [Blood](#)

What was "the blood of the covenant"?

[9:20]

The "blood of the covenant" represented the sacrifices of animals. The blood was then offered to God. Lastly it was sprinkled on the people who received the covenant. This was to show the power and the purpose of God. It showed how serious God was about the covenant with his people.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Covenant](#); [Sacrifice](#)

What were the "containers used in the service"?

[9:21]

The "containers used in the service" were the altar, the laver, the incense censers, dishes, bowls, and utensils. These were things used in the temple to worship God. Anything that the people of Israel used to sacrifice animals and atone for sin was sprinkled with blood to make it clean. The "containers" were used to do this.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Israel](#); [Altar](#); [Temple](#); [Sin](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why did the author write that "almost everything is cleansed with blood"?

[9:22]

The author wrote that "almost everything is cleansed with blood." This is because in the Old Testament, God gave ways for people to be forgiven without sacrificing an animal. Often, an atonement was made with the shedding of blood. However, if a person was very poor, he was allowed to bring flour to the priest as an offering (see: Leviticus 5:11). Some things were even purified with fire or water (see: Numbers 31:22-24).

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why did the author write "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness"?

[9:22]

Scholars think that God did not forgive any sins without the shedding of blood, that is sacrificing an animal. They think that the shedding of blood actually made atonement for the souls of the people (see: Leviticus 17:11). When people used other things to sacrifice to God, they represented the blood sacrifice in some way.

See: [Soul](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Soul](#)

9:23-28

What were the "copies of the things in heaven"?

[9:23]

See: Hebrews 8:5

What were "much better sacrifices"?

[9:23]

The author wrote "much better sacrifices" to speak about Jesus. He really wanted people to think about Jesus being crucified and resurrected. In the temple, the priests made sacrifices using the blood of animals. The temple was only a copy of the tabernacle in heaven (see: Hebrews 8:5-6). The heavenly tabernacle required a "much better sacrifice" than the blood of animals. It required Jesus to die. This is because only the blood of Jesus cleanses a person's conscience. The blood of Jesus cleanses a person from all uncleanness.

See: [Conscience](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Temple](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Heaven](#); [Conscience](#)

Why did the author write that Jesus entered heaven "to appear now in God's presence for us"?

[9:24]

The author wrote that Jesus entered heaven "to appear now in God's presence for us". He wrote this so people would know that Jesus continually speaks to God the Father for Christians (see: Hebrews 7:25). When the high priest served in the Temple, he only entered into the most holy place once every year. This was to take the blood of the atoning sacrifice into the most holy place. It was to sprinkle the blood there to atone for the sins of the people. He carried with him a censer filled with coals and incense. This was like a veil to hide the priest's face from God's presence. Jesus, however, entered into the heavenly tabernacle after he was resurrected. He is in the very presence of God the Father, face to face. So, Jesus continually speaks to God for Christians.

See: [God the Father](#); [Heaven](#); [Intercede (Intercession)] (../articles/intercede.md); [High Priest](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Atonement](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Temple](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Presence of God](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did the author write "since the beginning of the world"?

[9:26]

The author wrote "since the beginning of the world" to speak about all of history. Some scholars think he spoke about all time since God created the world. Other scholars think he spoke about the time that there have been people on the earth. The author wrote this so people would know that Jesus completely atoned for all the sins of all people who believe in him. That is, he only needed to be sacrificed once.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author write "the end of the ages"?

[9:26]

The author wrote "the end of the ages" to in some way speak about the last things God is doing before the end of the world. Some scholars think the "end of the ages" spoke about the last events of Jesus' life. That is, his crucifixion. They think Jesus' resurrection began a new age. Other scholars add that the "end of the ages" was when earthly sacrifices stopped. This is because the sacrifice of Jesus' was the last sacrifice necessary for the forgiveness of sins. They think this was what Paul wanted to say when he spoke about the "fullness of time" (see: Galatians 4:4-5).

Advice to translators: "Ages" is a word that speaks about periods of time. "Ages" are usually long times, but they don't have to be. So, when the author of Hebrews talks about "the ages", he is speaking about all of history. If your language has a word or phrase to say "all of history", you can use that instead of "ages".

When the author wrote "end of the ages," he did not want to say that history is finished. He wanted to talk about living in the last time before God will end the world. So translate this phrase in a way that tells readers that, even if it takes several words in your language.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Ascend \(Ascension\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Last Days](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author write that "man is appointed to die once"?

[9:27]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that "man is appointed to die once". Some scholars think the author was simply saying that every person dies. People die and God judges them. Other scholars think that death is "appointed" (ἀπόκειμαι/g0606) for each person. That is, death does not happen by chance. Instead, God has decided when each person will die. Some scholars think the author was saying both of these things.

The author used "man" as a metaphor for all people. That is to say, what he wrote is true for all men and women.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What is the "judgment" that comes after death?

[9:27]

See: [Day of Judgment](#); [Day of Judgment](#)

How did Jesus "take away the sins of many"?

[9:28]

Jesus "took away the sins of many" when he was crucified. That is, God will forgive the sins of anyone who believes in Jesus (see: John 3:16).

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

How will Christ "appear a second time"?

[9:28]

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did the author say that when Christ returns, it is "not to deal with sin"?

[9:28]

The author wrote that when Christ returns it will not be to "deal with sin." This is because Christ atoned for peoples' sins. He did this when he was crucified. His return will be to bless the people who have believed in him, and to punish the people who rejected him.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Chapter 10

¹ For the law is only a shadow of the good things to come, not the real forms of those things themselves. Those who approach God can never be made perfect by the same sacrifices that the priests continually bring year after year. ² Otherwise, would the sacrifices not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed one time and would no longer have any consciousness of sin. ³ But with those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵ When Christ came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you did not desire,
but a body you have prepared for me;

⁶ with burnt offerings and sin offerings
you did not take pleasure.

⁷ Then I said, 'See, here I am—as it is written about me in the scroll—
to do your will, God.'"

⁸ First he said, "It was neither sacrifices, nor offerings, nor whole burnt offerings, nor sin offerings that you desired. Nor did you take pleasure in them." These are sacrifices that are offered according to the law. ⁹ Then he said, "See, here I am to do your will." He takes away the first practice in order to establish the second practice. ¹⁰ By that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and ministers, offering the same sacrifices again and again—sacrifices that can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ He is waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. ¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us. First he says,

¹⁶ "This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, says the Lord.
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds."

¹⁷ Then he adds,

"Their sins and lawlessness
I will remember no longer."

¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness for these, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, we have confidence to enter into the most holy place by the blood of Jesus. ²⁰ That is the new and living way that he has established for us through the curtain, that is, by means of his flesh. ²¹ Because we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us approach with true hearts in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us also hold firmly to the hope we confess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ Let us think carefully about how to motivate one another to love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not abandon meeting together, as some have done. Instead, encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day coming closer.

²⁶ For if we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, a sacrifice for sins no longer remains. ²⁷ Instead, there is only a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies. ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment do you think one deserves who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, who regarded the blood of the covenant as unholy—the blood by which he was sanctified—and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know the one who said, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will pay back." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

³² But remember the former days, after you were enlightened, how you endured a great struggle in suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution, and other times you shared with those who were so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those who were prisoners, and you accepted with joy the seizure of your possessions. You knew that you yourselves had a better and everlasting possession. ^[1]³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you need perseverance so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

³⁷ "For in a very little while,
the one who is coming will indeed come and not delay.

³⁸ My righteous one will live by faith.
If he shrinks back, my soul will not be pleased with him."

³⁹ But we are not any of those who turn back to destruction, but we are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.

Footnotes

10:34 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Hebrews 10

10:1-10

How was the Law only a "shadow"?

[10:1]

When the author wrote that the law was only a "shadow" (σκιά/g4639), he used a metaphor. He wanted people to think that the Law of Moses was only partly like something that was to come. That is, the things in the Law of Moses were like something that was perfect and eternal.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What are "the good things to come"?

[10:1]

See: Hebrews 9:11

Why did the author write about people being "made perfect"?

[10:1]

The author wrote about people being "made perfect" to say that in some way God will remove all that is evil from people who believe in Jesus. This is different than in the Old Testament. The Law of Moses spoke about people atoning for their sins by offering sacrifices. However, nobody was ever "made perfect" because they offered a sacrifice. But the author said that now, God will in some way "make perfect" people who believe in Jesus.

Scholars disagree about how God "makes perfect" people who believe in Jesus. Some scholars think the author wanted to say that God perfectly and completely forgives a person for sins the person commits. Other scholars think the author wanted to speak about God helping people to resist temptation. That is, God helps them not to sin.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author write “consciousness of sins”?

[10:2]

The author wrote "consciousness of sins" to speak about a person knowing they sinned. This is even after God forgives them. Some scholars think the words, “consciousness of sins” spoke about a person's conscience not being satisfied after an offering was made. That is, the person could obey the Law of Moses, but they still felt guilty.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Conscience](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Guilty](#); [Sacrifice](#)

What was the “reminder” about which the author spoke?

[10:3]

The author wrote about a reminder. This was something that made people think about their sins over and over. In the Law of Moses, there was a yearly event called the Day of Atonement. This reminded people of their sins every year. Each year everyone in Israel had to repent. They had to make offerings for sin. This was so that God would cover over their sins for another year.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why was it “impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”?

[10:4]

It was "impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" because God wants people to obey him instead of sinning. The priests could remove sins. The “blood of bulls and goats”, that is to say sacrificing animals, only covered over sins that people committed.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#)

Why did the author say that God “did not desire” sacrifices and offerings?

[10:5]

The author wrote that God "did not desire" sacrifices and offerings. This is because the sacrifices and offerings did not give God any honor God unless they were done in the right way. These sacrifices needed to be made by faith in God. The author wanted to say that people needed to believe in Jesus, who is the messiah.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did the author write “a body you have prepared for me”?

[10:5]

The author wrote "a body you have prepared for me" to speak about Jesus, who is the messiah. The author wrote the same thing written in the Psalms where the messiah said to God (see: Psalm 40:6). That is, God allowed himself to be made into a human. He did this in the person of Jesus. It was necessary for Jesus to have a body so that he could offer himself as the perfect sacrifice to God.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Incarnation](#); [Sacrifice](#)

What was the scroll?

[10:7]

A "scroll" was a way ancient people kept written things. They did this because they did not have printed books. Scholars think the “scroll” (κεφάλις/g2777) the author wrote about was the first five books of the Bible.

See: [Scroll](#); [Scroll](#)

Why did the author write "to do your will"?

[10:7]

The author wrote "to do your will" so people would think about how Jesus completely did the will of God. God wanted Jesus to never sin and Jesus never sinned. Jesus did everything God wanted him to do. It was also God's will that Jesus would die for the sins of the world (see: Matthew 26:39,42).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What was the "first practice" the author spoke about?

[10:9]

The "first practice" was when people sacrificed animals according to the Law of Moses. People had to do many things to follow the Law of Moses.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

What is the "second practice" the author spoke about?

[10:9]

The "second practice" the author spoke about is when people believe in Jesus. That is, people who believe in Jesus do not need to follow the sacrifices in the Law of Moses for God to forgive their sins.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#)

How did Jesus take away the first practice to establish the second practice?

[10:9]

Jesus took away the first practice in two ways. First, he lived perfectly according to God's will. Second, he offered himself to God as the perfect sacrifice for sins. This sacrifice never needs to be done again. He did this when he was crucified. After this, people do not need to make sacrifices and obey the Law of Moses.

See: [Sacrifice](#); [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sacrifice](#)

What is "sanctified"?

[10:10]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

Why did the author write "once for all"?

[10:10]

The author wrote "once for all" so people would know that Jesus completely atoned for the sins of everyone who will ever live on earth. That is, he died "once" as a sacrifice. No other sacrifice for peoples' sins will ever be needed. Also, he died "for all" people who will ever believe in him.

Under the rules of the Old Covenant, the Jewish people sacrificed animals to obey the Law of Moses. However, with the New Covenant, Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice for the sins of everyone. His sacrifice was done once, and does not need to be repeated.

See: [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#); [Sin](#); [Covenant](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Covenant with Moses \(Old Covenant\)](#)

10:11-18

Who are the enemies of Jesus?

[10:13]

Scholars think the author spoke about different enemies of Jesus, Satan and the people who rejected Jesus.

Why did the author write about a “stool for his feet”?

[10:13]

The author spoke about a time when the enemies of Jesus would be made “a stool for his feet.” This was a metaphor. God will make the enemies of Jesus powerless. They will be completely subject to Jesus. Jesus will rule everything. Jesus will not give anyone else permission to rule.

See: I Corinthians 15:24-28

Who are "those who are being sanctified"?

[10:14]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

Why did the author write that Jesus “perfected forever” those who are being sanctified?

[10:14]

The author wrote that Jesus "perfected forever" those who are being sanctified. He wrote this so people would think that Jesus satisfied the wrath of God against sin. His sacrifice was “perfect” (τελειόω/g5048). That is, he fulfilled all of what God required for the payment of sin. This is, Christians do not do this themselves. Jesus did it for them. He did it "forever." That is, Jesus did this for all people who will ever be Christians.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#); [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#); [Wrath](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

Why did the author write “there is no longer any sacrifice for sin”?

[10:18]

The author wrote "there is no longer any sacrifice for sin" (10:18) because Jesus ended the need for any other sacrifices. Jesus' death is the only sacrifice that is needed for people to be at peace with God.

See: [Cross](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Cross](#)

10:19-25

What is the "most holy place" that Christians have confidence to enter?

[10:19]

The "most holy place" that Christians have confidence to enter is God's presence. That is, Christians can speak directly to God. This is not the same as the "most holy place" in the Tabernacle or Temple.

See: [Temple](#); [Presence of God](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Temple](#)

What is the “new and living way”?

[10:20]

The author wrote about a "new and living way" for people to be with God. It is “new” because it did not exist before the sacrifice of Jesus. The author called it a “living way” because Jesus’ sacrifice provided eternal life for people who believe in him. Jesus is the "way" to God the Father (see: John 14:6). That is, when people believe in Jesus, they can serve God and talk to God themselves.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

What was the “curtain” the author spoke of?

[10:20]

When the author spoke about a "curtain," he used a metaphor. He wanted people to think about the curtain that separated the holy place from the most holy place. This was in the Tabernacle and the Temple. It was also called the second curtain (see: Hebrews 9:6). This was the curtain which was torn from top to bottom at the moment of Jesus' died (see: Matthew 27:45-51; Mark 15:33-39). However, the author used this as a metaphor to say that after Jesus, the "curtain" that kept people separate from God no longer exists. People who believe in Jesus can worship God and talk to God themselves.

See: [Worship](#); [Temple](#); [Holy Place](#); [Most Holy Place \(Holy of Holies\)](#); [Tabernacle](#); [Worship](#)

Why did the author write “by means of his flesh”?

[10:20]

The author wrote "by means of his flesh" to speak about the human life of Jesus. That is to say, he wrote about "flesh" as a symbol. It was the human life of Jesus that was presented to God as the sacrifice for sins (see: 1 Peter 3:18).

See: [Atonement](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Sin](#); [Atonement](#)

What was the “house of God”?

[10:21]

The “house of God” is the church, all Christians (see: Hebrews 3:6).

See: [Church](#)

Why did the author write “approach with true hearts”?

[10:22]

The author wrote "approach" to speak about how Christians must behave toward God. He wrote "true hearts" as a metaphor. He wanted people to know that they need to genuinely believe in God before they pray to him.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

What is the “full assurance of faith”?

[10:22]

To have “full assurance of faith” is to trust God completely. It is to completely believe in Jesus.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What is an "evil conscience"?

[10:22]

When the author wrote about an "evil conscience," he wanted people to think about sin. That is, he said that when a person sins, it damages their "conscience." They will not be able to know when they sin as easily after they sin.

See: [Sin](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Sin](#)

Why did the author write about people having their “hearts sprinkled clean” from an evil conscience?

[10:22]

When the author wrote about people having their "hearts sprinkled clean", he used two metaphors. He used the metaphor of "heart" to speak about how people think and feel. He used the metaphor of "sprinkled clean" to speak about when God forgives people of their sins.

Scholars think the author wanted Christians to think about the Jewish priests. A priest was sprinkled with blood and bathed in water before they went to serve God (see: Exodus 29:21; Leviticus 8:30). They then could offer sacrifices for God's people. Jesus, the greatest High Priest, sacrificed himself. So his blood has cleansed the hearts of Christians. This lets Christians approach God and serve him.

See: [People of God](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [High Priest](#); [Conscience](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Sin](#); [Sacrifice](#); [People of God](#)

What was the "confession" of hope?

[10:23]

The author wrote about Christians holding tightly to the "confession" (ὁμολογία/g3671) of their hope. He wanted Christians to completely trust what God says he will do. That is, they should believe God's promise to give them eternal life because they believe in Jesus.

Advice to translators: The author did not write about "confession" here to speak about when a person confesses sins they have committed. He wrote "confession" to speak about when a person says something that they deeply believe.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Hope](#); [Eternal Life](#)

10:26-39

Why did the author write "deliberately go on sinning"?

[10:26]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote "deliberately go on sinning." Some scholars think the author spoke about people who keep rejecting Jesus and the gospel. They choose to do this even though they have heard the gospel. Other scholars think the author spoke about people who believe in certain things Christians teach, but do not trust in Jesus. They think these people have rejected God. Other scholars think the author spoke about a person who says they are a Christian but who keeps on sinning and do not try to stop sinning.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What was the "knowledge of the truth"?

[10:26]

Some scholars think the "knowledge" (ἐπίγνωσις/g1922) of the truth meant that a person understood true things about God. They knew they sinned and they also knew what they need to do for God to forgive their sins. Some scholars think that the author spoke about people who heard the truth about Jesus, but they never did anything. Other scholars think the author spoke about a person who knows the things Christians teach. This person has the "knowledge of the truth".

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did the author write "a sacrifice for sins no longer exists"?

[10:26]

The author wrote "a sacrifice for sins no longer exists." If a person goes on sinning after they say they believe in Jesus, the author wanted them to know that they cannot expect God to forgive them. Some scholars think that Christians will sin less and less. Other scholars think Christians can choose to stop being at peace with God and will not live forever with God in heaven. Other scholars think the author wanted people to remember that Jesus had to die for their sins.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did the author write “a certain fearful expectation of judgment”?

[10:27]

When the author wrote "a certain fearful expectation of judgment," he wanted people to know that God will judge a person who continually rejects Jesus. That is, the person can only expect that God will judge them with wrath. This judgment will be “fearful” (φοβερός/g5398). This person will live forever in hell. .

See: [Hell](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Wrath](#); [Hell](#)

What is the “fury of fire” about which the author spoke?

[10:27]

When the author wrote about the "fury of fire," he used a metaphor. He spoke about God he judges sinners. God is a consuming fire. That is, God completely destroys things. Some scholars think the author was writing about God punishing everyone who rejects Jesus. That is, God's wrath is like a fire when it punishes people

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Wrath](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Why did the author write about the “testimony of two or three witnesses”?

[10:28]

See: Deuteronomy 17:2-7

Why did the author write “trample underfoot the Son of God”?

[10:29]

The author wrote “trample underfoot the Son of God” to speak about thinking about Jesus shamefully. Jesus is the "Son of God." When someone was trampled underfoot, people kept stepping on them until they were badly injured or killed. The author used this as a metaphor to speak about dishonoring someone. He wanted people to think about someone saying that Jesus is unworthy to be the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

How did someone treat “the blood of the covenant as unholy”?

[10:29]

When someone said the death of Jesus was not different than any other death, then someone treated “the blood of the covenant as unholy” (see: Hebrews 9:14-15). They rejected the new covenant God made with people.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Covenant](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

Why did the author write about being “sanctified” by blood?

[10:29]

See: [Sanctify \(Sanctification\)](#)

What is "the Spirit of grace”?

[10:29]

The "Spirit of grace" is the Holy Spirit. Some scholars think the author wanted people to think about when Jesus spoke about the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (see: Mark 3:29). Other scholars think the author spoke about a person who refused to acknowledge the Holy Spirit. That is, the person disrespected or dishonored the Holy Spirit.

See: [Blaspheyme \(Blasphemy\)](#); [Blaspheyme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

Where was it written that “vengeance” belongs to the Lord, and that he “will judge his people”?

[10:30]

See: Deuteronomy 32:25-26; Romans 12:19

See: [Avenge \(Vengeance, Revenge\)](#)

Why did the author write “the living God”?

[10:31]

The author wrote "the living God" to tell people strongly that God is not some dead idol. He is not just an imaginary god. He is real. The "living God" keeps his promises and also judges people.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\); Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What were the “former days”?

[10:32]

Scholars think when the author wrote about the “former days,” he was writing about a time before in a Christian’s life.

Why did the author write “enlightened”?

[10:32]

The author wrote "enlightened" to speak about a person gaining important knowledge about God. Some scholars think that Christians were “enlightened” when they received instruction about how to live in a way that honors God. Other scholars think a Christian was “enlightened” at the moment he became a Christian. That is, he then saw and understood the gospel and true things about God.

See: [Gospel; Gospel](#)

What was to be “exposed to public ridicule”?

[10:33]

Some scholars think Christians were “exposed to public ridicule” because the Jewish religious leaders brought the Christians into the middle of a city. They then got people to insult the Christians. Sometimes these people attacked Christians. Other scholars think the author spoke about the times when the Christians were thrown into an arena and had to fight against wild animals.

About whom was the author writing when he wrote about “those who were prisoners”?

[10:34]

Some scholars think that when the author wrote about “those who were prisoners” he spoke about Christians who were thrown into prison because they believed in Jesus. Other scholars think the author spoke about himself. He had been put in prison because he was a Christian.

Why did the author write that the Christians “accepted with joy” being robbed of their possessions?

[10:34]

When the author wrote that the Christians “accepted with joy” being robbed of their possessions, he did not mean the Christians were happy about being robbed. He wanted people to think that Christians have something greater than anything you can own. Everything a person owns will be destroyed. However, the promises of God for them last forever. No one can take these promises away from them. This gave the Christians joy. So even if a thief broke in and stole their possessions, the promises of God were secure.

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

What is the “great reward” about which the author spoke?

[10:35]

The "great reward" the author spoke about is that God will in some way do good things for people who believe in Jesus. Some scholars think the “great reward” is God’s promise of eternal life. This reward is based on the goodness and faithfulness of God.

See: Luke 6:23

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

Why did the author write that God’s “righteous one will live by faith”?

[10:38]

A person who is God’s “righteous one” is a person God declares to be righteous. This is because the person believes in Jesus. It had nothing to do with following the Law of Moses (see: Romans 3:21; 4:3-5; 5:18-19).

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did the author write “turn back to destruction”?

[10:39]

Some scholars think author wrote "turn back to destruction" to speak about people who stop believing in Jesus. He warned people that God will send someone who stops believing in Jesus to hell, that is to "destruction." Other scholars think the author wrote this to speak about Christians who disobey Jesus. They will be punished and may even die because of this. However, they will still live with God in heaven forever. Christians are punished for sinning, but they are promised to go to heaven because Jesus was punished for their sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did the author write "keeping their souls"?

[10:39]

The author wrote "keeping their souls" to speak about Christians who keep believing in Jesus. These Christians "keep their souls." That is, they will not be punished. Some scholars think the author spoke about Christians who believe in Jesus until they die. They think the author spoke about words that Jesus spoke earlier (see: Mark 8:35). Other scholars think the words “keeping their souls” simply meant they will not go to hell.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Hell](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

Chapter 11

¹ Now faith is being sure of the things hoped for and certain of things that are not seen. ² For because of this the ancestors were approved for their faith. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is visible was not made out of things that were visible.

⁴ It was by faith that Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he was attested to be righteous, and God spoke well of him because of his offerings, and by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵ It was by faith that Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death. "He was not found, because God took him away." For before he was taken up, it was testified that he had pleased God. ⁶ Now without faith it is impossible to please him. For it is necessary that anyone coming to God must believe that he exists and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him.

⁷ It was by faith that Noah, having been given a divine message about things not yet seen, with godly reverence built an ark to save his household. By doing this, he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith.

⁸ It was by faith that Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went out to the place that he was to receive as an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ It was by faith that he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹ It was by faith, even though Sarah herself was barren, that she received ability to conceive. This happened even though she was too old, since she considered as faithful the one who had given the promise. ¹² Therefore, from this one man—and he was almost dead—were born descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as countless as sand by the seashore.

¹³ It was in faith that all these died without receiving the promises. Rather, they saw and greeted them from far off, and they acknowledged that they were foreigners and exiles on earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, since he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ It was by faith that Abraham, when he was tested, offered Isaac. It was his only son whom he offered, he who had received the promises. ¹⁸ It was Abraham to whom it had been said, "It is through Isaac that your descendants will be named." ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead, and figuratively speaking, it was from them that he received him back. ²⁰ It was also by faith about things to come that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau. ²¹ It was by faith that Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons. Jacob worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. ²² It was by faith that Joseph, when his end was near, spoke of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt and instructed them about his bones.

²³ It was by faith that Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw he was a beautiful child. They were not afraid of the king's command. ²⁴ It was by faith that Moses, after he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a while. ²⁶ He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as greater value than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his reward. ²⁷ It was by faith that Moses left Egypt. He did not fear the king's anger, for he endured as if he were seeing the one who is invisible. ²⁸ It was by faith that he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn should not touch the Israelites' firstborn sons.

²⁹ It was by faith that they passed through the Sea of Reeds as if over dry land. When the Egyptians tried to do this, they were swallowed up. ³⁰ It was by faith that Jericho's walls fell down, after they had been circled around for seven days. ³¹ It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute did not die with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³² What more can I say? For the time will fail me if I give a full account of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and about the prophets. ³³ It was through faith that they conquered kingdoms, committed righteousness, and received promises. They stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong when they were weak, became mighty in battle, and defeated foreign armies. ³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might experience a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others experienced mocking and whippings, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins. They were destitute, oppressed, mistreated. ¹³⁸ The world was not worthy of them. They were always wandering about in the deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ Although all these people were approved by God because of their faith, they did not receive the promise. ⁴⁰ God planned something better for us, so that without us, they would not be made perfect.

Footnotes

11:37 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Hebrews 11

11:1-3

What are "the things hoped for"?

[11:1]

When the author wrote about the "things hoped for," he wanted people to think about things God promises to Christians. Eternal life is one of these promises.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Why did the author write "faith is being sure of" something?

[11:1]

The author wrote that "faith is being sure of" something. He wrote this because he wanted people to know that if they believe in Jesus, then they should be confident about what God says. That is, if a person has real faith, they will completely trust God. Christians can be sure that God's promises are true. They will happen. This is true even though Christians may not see the promise come true while they are alive

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Who were the "ancestors" about whom the author wrote?

[11:2]

The "ancestors" about whom the author wrote are the people he wrote about in 11:4-38. The author did not write this because he thought everyone reading it was actually descended from all these people. He used the word "ancestor" as a metaphor. He wrote this because he wanted people to live in the same way these people lived. That is, he wanted people to trust God in the same way these people trusted God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How were the ancestors "approved for their faith"?

[11:2]

Scholars think God "approved" (μαρτυρέω/g3140) these ancestors. That is, God told the author about the people in chapter 11.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did the author write “by faith we understand”?

[11:3]

The author wrote "by faith we understand" to tell Christians that God will help them to understand certain things if they trust him. He wanted them to remember that God gives people faith as a gift (see: Ephesians 2:8-9). Then, after the person believes in Jesus, God can also give him a gift of knowing things about God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did the author write that the universe was created "by God's command"?

[11:3]

The author wrote that the universe was created "by God's command". The author used the Greek word "command" (ῥῆμα/g4487) to say that the universe was created because God spoke. That is, God said, "Let there be light" and there was light. God also said "let there be" when he created all the rest of the world. God commanded all things to be created by the word of his mouth.

See: Genesis 1

See: [Create \(Creation, Creature\)](#)

11:4-12

Why did the author write that Abel's sacrifice was a “better sacrifice”?

[11:4]

When the author wrote that Abel's sacrifice was a "better sacrifice," he wanted people to think that God approved it more than Cain's sacrifice. Scholars think that Abel's sacrifice was “better” because he offered it to God in faith. That is, Abel brought his offering to God out because he wanted to worship God. Abel brought the best of his flock to God as his offering.

See: Genesis 4:3-5

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

Why did the author say that Abel was “attested to be righteous”?

[11:4]

The author said that Abel was “attested to be righteous” so people would know that God knew that Abel was a righteous man. That is, God said Abel was righteous.

Advice to translators: The English word "attest" means to say something formally. Sometimes attesting something may require the person to take an oath that it is true. So, "attest" is much more important than "say".

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Why did the author write “Abel still speaks”?

[11:4]

The author wrote "Abel still speaks" because people can still learn about what he did. Most scholars think that because the story of Abel was recorded in the scriptures, his example still "speaks" to people who believe in God (see: Genesis 4:3-10).

Why did the author write that “Enoch was taken up” so that he did not see death?

[11:5]

The author wrote that Enoch was “taken up” (μετατίθημι/g3346), that is to say, he was moved from one place to another. Scholars think Enoch was taken from earth and moved to heaven (see: Genesis 5:21-24). Therefore, he did not die.

See: [Heaven](#)

What was the “divine message” given to Noah?

[11:7]

The “divine message” given to Noah was in two parts. First, God gave Noah a warning that the earth would be destroyed by a flood. Second, God told Noah to build a very large boat to save his family from the coming flood.

See: Genesis 6:13-22

What was “godly reverence”?

[11:7]

"Godly reverence" is when a person deeply honors something God says or does. Some scholars think Noah experienced a sense of deep caution because of what God said to him. Noah obeyed God because of that caution. That is to say, he obeyed because he feared what God might do if he did not obey. Other scholars think Noah simply believed what God said. So, out of respect and honor for God, he built the ark the way God told him.

Why did the author write that Noah “condemned the world”?

[11:7]

The author wrote that Noah "condemned the world" to speak about the effect of what Noah did. The author did not want to say that Noah spoke something to condemn the world. That is, by building the ark, Noah showed that he trusted God instead of trusting what other people said. Some scholars think that Noah's faith in building the ark “condemned the world” because other people in the world did not believe that God was going to destroy the world with a flood. Other scholars think that when Noah and his family entered the ark and it began to rain, it proved that the people in the world were wrong. So, those people were condemned to die in the flood because they rejected God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

How did Noah become an “heir of righteousness”?

[11:7]

Noah became an "heir of righteousness" in some way because he did what God said. That is, because Noah did what God said, God gave righteousness to him. This was in some way like an inheritance for Noah. Scholars think that Noah became an “heir of righteousness” because God declared him to be righteous. This was because Noah trusted and obeyed what God told him to do.

See: [Justify \(Justification\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Justify \(Justification\)](#)

What was “to receive as an inheritance”?

[1:8]

Scholars think the author wanted to say that Abraham would take possession of the land of Canaan because God said so (see: Genesis 12:1). Then, after Abraham died, his descendants would in some way inherit that land.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What is the “city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God”?

[11:10]

The "city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" was a city that did not exist when Abraham lived. Some scholars think the author spoke about a city in heaven. This is a city with permanent and firm foundations. This is because it is built by God, not by people. They think this is the same city called the “City of God” or the heavenly city of Jerusalem (see: Psalm 46:4; Revelation 21). Fewer scholars think the author spoke about the city of Jerusalem.

See: [Heaven](#)

Why did the author write that “Abraham received ability to father a child”?

[11:11]

Some scholars think that Abraham received “ability” (δύναμις/g1411) to father a child because God gave him special power to father a child. This had to happen because Abraham was too old to have a child. More scholars think that God gave Sarah the ability to conceive a child (see: Genesis 18:9-14). Sarah was too old to have children.

Why did the author write that Abraham was “almost dead”?

[11:12]

When the author wrote that Abraham was “almost dead,” he wanted people to know that Abraham was so old there was no hope of him starting a family.

How were Abraham’s descendants “as many as the stars in the sky”?

[11:12]

When the author said that Abraham’s descendants were “as many as the stars in the sky” he used a metaphor. He wanted people to know that nobody could count Abraham’s descendants.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

11:13-16

Who were “all these” about which the author spoke?

[11:13]

When the author wrote about “all these” he wrote about the people in 11:4-12.

Why did the author write that they were “foreigners and exiles on earth”?

[11:13]

The author wrote that the people he spoke about were “foreigners and exiles on earth” as a metaphor. He wanted people to think that these people trusted God completely. That is, they did not depend on anyone or anything on earth. So, it was as if they did not belong to any place on earth.

The people in 11:4-12 all admitted they were “foreigners and exiles on earth” because they believed God had given them an inheritance. They believed their inheritance was something they would find in heaven and not on earth.

See: [Heaven](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Heaven](#)

What was the “city” God prepared for the people of faith?

[11:16]

Scholars think the author spoke about a “city” prepared in heaven. They think this city will be the new Jerusalem.

See: Revelation 21

See: [Heaven](#)

11:17-28

Why did God say to Abraham, “through Isaac your descendants will be named”?

[11:18]

God said to Abraham "through Isaac your descendants will be named." Before this, God promised Abraham that he would be "father of many nations." God spoke about his chosen people, that is Israel. Now, God told Abraham that he would keep this promise "through Isaac." That is, Abraham's first son, Ishmael, and any other sons of Abraham were not part of God's promise. Scholars think God was very specific that Abraham's descendants were to inherit these promises through Isaac. So God promised Abraham that he would have a second son, Isaac, and that God was going to make a covenant with Isaac (see: Genesis 17:15-21).

See: [Covenant](#); [Covenant with Abraham](#); [People of God](#); [Covenant](#)

Why did the author write “figuratively speaking”?

[11:19]

When the author used the words “figuratively speaking,” he told people he used a metaphor. That is, it was as if Abraham already thought of Isaac as dead. The author wanted people to remember that Abraham had completely given Isaac to be sacrificed. Abraham bound Isaac and placed him on the altar. Abraham took out his knife to slay Isaac. But God stopped Abraham from actually killing Isaac. Instead of Isaac, God provided Abraham with a ram to sacrifice. Scholars think this was a symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

See: Genesis 22:1-18

See: [Symbol](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Sacrifice](#); [Altar](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Symbol](#)

Why did the author write “Jacob worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff”?

[11:21]

The author wrote that "Jacob worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff." Scholars think that because of Jacob's old age, he bowed before God but used his staff to support himself. Bowing before God was a sign of worshipping God and showing him honor.

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

Why did the author write that Joseph “instructed them about his bones”?

[11:22]

The author wrote that Joseph "instructed them about his bones" to say that Joseph told his family what he wanted them to do with his body after he died.

See: Genesis 50:24-26

What were the “pleasures of sin” about which the author wrote?

[11:25]

Scholars disagree about what the "pleasures of sin" were. Some scholars think the author wrote about when Moses was a leader in Egypt. While he was there, he was tempted by many things. Other scholars think Moses knew what God had called him to do. So if he did not obey God, that would be sin.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

See Map: Egypt

What was the “disgrace of following Christ”?

[11:26]

When the author wrote the "disgrace of following Christ," he wanted people to think that Moses suffered in some way like Jesus did. Moses was persecuted because he believed God. Jesus was also persecuted. So the author used this as a metaphor to speak about Moses.

The author did not intend to say that Jesus lived at the same time as Moses.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did the author say that Moses “endured”?

[11:27]

The author wrote that Moses “endured” (καρτερέω/g2594) in faith when he left Egypt. That is, he kept trusting God. He kept obeying God. He saw what God did when he was in Egypt, though he did not see God. Because of God’s mighty power, Moses wanted to obey God.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

See Map: Egypt

Why did the author write that Moses “kept the Passover”?

[11:28]

To say that Moses “kept the Passover” was to say that Moses established a special celebration for Israel. This was called "Passover." It was so the people would remember how God led Israel out of slavery in Egypt. When it was time for Israel to leave Egypt, God commanded the people to put the blood of a slaughtered lamb on the frames of their doors. This was to show the angel of God which houses to pass over (see: Exodus 12:1-13). That is, it was to tell the angel not to kill the firstborn in those houses.

See: [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#); [Angel](#); [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#)

11:29-40

Where was the “Sea of Reeds”?

[11:29]

See Map: Sea of Reeds

What happened in Jericho?

[11:30]

See: Joshua 6:1-21

See Map: Jericho

Who was Rahab?

[11:31]

See: Joshua 6:22-27

Who was Gideon?

[11:32]

See: Judges 6-8

Who was Barak?

[11:32]

See: Judges 4:1-16

Who was Samson?

[11:32]

See: Judges 13-16

Who was Jephthah?

[11:32]

See: Judges 11-12

Who was David?

[11:32]

See: 1 Samuel 16

Who was Samuel?

[11:32]

See: 1 Samuel 1:19-28; 3:1-21

Why did the author write that all those men “worked justice”?

[11:33]

When the author wrote that those men “worked justice” he wanted people to think that they established righteousness. That is, they made things just. They did this in the places where they ruled.

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

Why did the author write “stopped the mouths of lions”?

[11:33]

The author wrote "stopped the mouths of lions" so people would think about Daniel. Daniel was thrown into a lion's den. This was because he worshipped God. This angered the king of the country where Daniel was a slave. However, the angels of God prevented the lions from attacking Daniel (see: Daniel 6:16-22).

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why did the author write "extinguished the power of fire"?

[11:34]

When the author wrote "extinguished the power of fire", he wanted people to think about the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These were three men from Israel who refused to fall down and worship the king, Nebuchadnezzar. The king had them thrown into a fiery furnace because of this. However, the angel of the Lord did not allow the fire to harm the three men (see: Daniel 3:14-28).

Who "received back their dead"?

[11:35]

Two women in the Old Testament "received back their dead." That is, their sons died, but God brought the sons back to life. A widow from Zarephath had a son who became sick. After some time, he died. Elijah the prophet prayed to God, and God raised the boy back to life (see: 1 Kings 17:8-23). Another woman, who was from Shunem, had a son who became sick. After some time, he also died. Elisha the prophet prayed to God and God raised the boy back to life (see: 2 Kings 4:8-34).

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#) ; [Prophet](#); [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What was to be "stoned"?

[11:37]

In ancient times, a person could be "stoned" because people thought they did a great wrong. That is, people would throw large stones on the person to kill him. Scholars think the author wrote this about Zechariah, a priest and prophet in the Old Testament (see: 2 Chronicles 24:20-21). Some scholars think that the prophet Jeremiah, too, was stoned to death. They think he was stoned by the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

See: [Prophet](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Prophet](#)

Who was "sawn in two"?

[11:37]

Scholars think that Isaiah, the prophet, was killed by being sawn in two. Ancient writings other than the Bible wrote about the death of Isaiah.

See: [Ancient Writings](#); [Ancient Writings](#)

Who was "killed with the sword"?

[11:37]

Elijah spoke about prophets who "killed with the sword" by the leaders of Israel (see: 1 Kings 19:10).

See: [Prophet](#)

How was the world "not worthy" of all those who were put to death?

[11:38]

The author wrote that the world was "not worthy" of all those who were put to death. That is, he wanted people to think that the people who were put to death were more noble or righteous than the people who killed them. Scholars think the author meant that people thought those who were put to death for believing God did not deserve to continue living. This was because many people thought God's prophets were evil.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Why did the author write "they did not receive the promise"?

[11:39]

The author wrote "they did not receive the promise." He wrote "they" to speak about all the people he wrote about in chapter 11. He wrote "did not receive the promise" to speak about the long time God uses to do what he says. So the people in chapter 11 lived and died before God did all that he said he will do. That is, God intended to reveal part of his promise in the coming of Jesus, who is the messiah. God also holds a part of his promise to be revealed at the second coming of Jesus.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

What is "something better"?

[11:40]

When the author wrote "something better," he spoke about Jesus. That is, now people can believe in Jesus. Then God forgives their sins. Eventually, everyone who believes in Jesus will live with God forever in heaven. This is better than when people had to follow the Law of Moses and make sacrifices.

See: [Heaven](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Law of Moses](#); [Sin](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did the author write "without us"?

[11:40]

When the author wrote "without us", he wanted people to know that without Christians, God's plan for the world is not complete. Most scholars think that when the author said "without us" he was speaking about all the people who ever believe in Jesus. That includes all people who believe up until the time Jesus returns to earth.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Chapter 12

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin. Let us run with perseverance the race that is placed before us. ² Let us pay attention to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of the faith. For the joy that was placed before him, he endured the cross, despised its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ So think about him, the one who has endured such opposition from sinners against himself, so that you do not become weary and lose heart.

⁴ You have not yet resisted or struggled against sin to the point of blood; ⁵ and you have forgotten the encouragement that instructs you as sons:

"My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline,
nor grow weary when you are corrected by him.

⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he punishes every son he receives."

⁷ Endure suffering as discipline. God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ But if you are without discipline, which all people share in, then you are illegitimate and not his sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! ¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a short time as they thought best. But God disciplines us for our benefit, so that we can share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline at the time seems to give joy, but to give sorrow. But later it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it. ¹² So strengthen your hands that hang down and your weak knees. ¹³ Make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame will not be sprained but rather be healed.

¹⁴ Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ Be careful so that no one lacks God's grace, and that no root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble, so that many do not become defiled by it, ¹⁶ and that there is no one who is sexually immoral or profane, such as Esau, who for one meal sold his own birthright. ¹⁷ For you know that afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, because he found no opportunity for repentance, even though he sought it with tears.

¹⁸ For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched, a mountain of burning fire, darkness, gloom, and storm. ¹⁹ You have not come to a trumpet blast, nor to a voice that speaks words whose hearers begged that not another word be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not endure what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned." ^[1]²¹ So fearful was this sight that Moses said, "I am terrified and am trembling." ²² Rather, you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels in joyful assembly. ²³ You have come to the congregation of the firstborn, who have been registered in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous ones who have been made perfect. ²⁴ And you have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood. ²⁵ See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we turn away from the one who is warning from heaven. ²⁶ At one time, his voice shook the earth. But now he has promised and said, "One more time I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens." ²⁷ These words, "One more time," mean the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, of the things that have been created, so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain. ²⁸ Therefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and in this manner worship God with reverence and awe. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

Footnotes

12:20 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Hebrews 12

12:1-3

What is the “large crowd of witnesses” that surround Christians?

[12:1]

Scholars think the “large crowd of witnesses” are all the people about which the author wrote in chapter 11. The author did not want to say that they are watching the things Christians do. Instead, they are “witnesses” because what happened to them shows how God is faithful to his people.

Why did the author write “lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin”?

[12:1]

When the author wrote that Christians must “lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin,” he used a metaphor. Athletes raced. Before a race, they would remove extra clothes they did not need to wear. This would help them to run more easily. For the Christian, sin is like a “weight” that can keep the Christian from doing things that please God. Scholars think the author spoke about sins by which individual Christians are easily caught doing.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What is the “race that is placed before us”?

[12:1]

Scholars think that when the author wrote about the “race that is placed before us,” he spoke about the life that God designs for each Christian. He wanted Christians to obey God. He wanted them to do this even when it is hard.

How was Jesus the “founder and perfecter of the faith”?

[12:2]

Jesus was the “founder” (ἀρχηγός/g0747) of the faith because he started something new. Christians must first believe in Jesus. Jesus was the “perfecter” (τελειωτής/g5051) of the faith because he makes it complete. All of a Christian's faith is about Jesus.

See: [Philippians 1:6](#)

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What was the “joy that was placed before” Jesus?

[12:2]

Scholars think various things about the “joy that was placed before” Jesus. 1. Some scholars think Jesus had joy because he knew his suffering on the cross would redeem people from their sins. 1. Some scholars think Jesus had joy because he knew that he would return to heaven. So he would once again be in the presence of God the Father. 1. Some scholars think Jesus had joy because he knew that his disciples would also have joy themselves (see: [John 15:11](#); [16:20](#)).

See: [Disciple](#); [Heaven](#); [God the Father](#); [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#); [Cross](#); [Sin](#); [Presence of God](#); [Disciple](#)

Why did the author say Jesus “endured the cross, despised its shame”?

[12:2]

When the author wrote that Jesus “endured the cross, despised its shame,” he wanted people to know that Jesus thought differently about being crucified. Scholars think that people who were crucified experienced the worst kind of shame. When the author said that Jesus “despised its shame,” he meant that Jesus was not ashamed to be crucified. This is because he was committed to obeying the will of God.

See: [Will of God](#); [Cross](#); [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#); [Will of God](#)

Why did the author write that Jesus “sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”?

[12:2]

See: Hebrews 8:1

How did Jesus experience “opposition from sinners against himself”?

[12:3]

Scholars disagree about the meaning of the "opposition from sinners against himself." Some scholars think the author spoke about some Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. They tried to stop Jesus from doing the things he wanted to do. They also insulted him for what he said. Other scholars think the “opposition” was from the crowd of people who brought Jesus to the cross. They mocked him. They spit on him. They insulted him because he claimed to be the messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

12:4-11

Why did the author write that “Christians have not yet resisted or struggled against sin to the point of blood”?

[12:4]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote that "Christians have not yet resisted or struggled against sin to the point of blood." This was a metaphor. Some scholars think the author wanted to speak about Christians suffering because of sins. That is, they had not yet had to struggle against Satan to the point of shedding blood. Other scholars think the author said that Jesus had to suffer far worse than anything a Christian ever had to suffer.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Blood](#); [Sin](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the author write that the “Lord disciplines everyone whom he loves”?

[12:6]

When the author wrote that the "Lord disciplines everyone whom he loves," he used a metaphor about a father and his children. He wanted people to know that God has a strong love for all his people. This is like a father loves his children. But even more, he wants his children to live in the right way. That is, he wants people to obey him. God disciplines Christians so they will not sin. God does this because he loves Christians. He wants what is best for them.

See: [Family of God](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Sin](#); [Family of God](#)

Why did the author write “illegitimate”?

[12:8]

Scholars disagree about why the author wrote "illegitimate." Some scholars think the author used the word “illegitimate” (νόθος/g3541) to say that the father had no interest in the child. Other scholars think the author wanted to say that people who reject God’s discipline show that they are not true sons of God.

See: [Family of God](#)

What is God’s “holiness”?

[12:10]

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

How is it possible for Christians to share God's holiness?

[12:10]

Some scholars think that God enables Christians to "share in his holiness." He does this by disciplining them. That is, Christians are made more and more to be like Jesus. They do more of the types of things that Jesus did. Other scholars think that Christians "share in" God's holiness when they become more and more separated from the things of the world. They begin to want to do things that honor God.

See: [World](#); [World](#)

What is the "peaceful fruit of righteousness"?

[12:11]

The author wrote about the "peaceful fruit of righteousness" as a metaphor. He wrote about "fruit" to get people to think about the result of the discipline that he wrote about earlier. He wanted to say that discipline helped Christians to live in the right way. Scholars think that this gives Christians peace.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

12:12-17

What are "hands that hang down"?

[12:12]

When the author wrote "hands that hang down," he used a metaphor. Some scholars think the author spoke about Christians who were exhausted. They were exhausted from trying to live as Jesus lived. They think the author wanted Christians to encourage each other. That is, he wanted them to continue together to do the work to which God called them. Other scholars think the author wanted Christians to not accept defeat. That is, he wanted them to fight sin, that is, work hard to try to not sin.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

What are your weak knees?

[12:12]

When the author wrote "your weak knees," he used a metaphor. Scholars think the author spoke about Christians who felt unable to face the trials in their lives. That is to say, they feared things going on around them. To "strengthen...your weak knees" meant to regain your courage. It meant to live in a way that honors God when it is very difficult to live in this way.

See: [Trial](#); [Trial](#)

Why did the author write "make straight paths for your feet"?

[12:13]

When the author wrote "make straight paths for your feet," he used a metaphor. He spoke about how Christians should honor God and obey him. Some scholars think the author encouraged Christians to keep doing the right things. This also helped other Christians to do the right things. Other scholars think there were many opportunities for Christians to do things that led to evil. Because there were opportunities like this, the author encouraged Christians to focus on following the ways of God.

See: Psalm 5:8; Proverbs 3:6; Micah 3:9

See: [Metaphor](#)

How do people "lack God's grace"?

[12:15]

Scholars disagree about how people "lack God's grace." Some scholars think the author spoke about a person who was about to believe in Jesus, but for some reason the person did not. They do not believe in Jesus. Other scholars think the author wanted Christians to encourage one another so that no one misses the blessings from God. That is, the author spoke about a person who misses it when God favors them.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

What is a "root of bitterness"?

[12:15]

A "root of bitterness" is about a person who is very angry. This makes them do the wrong things. Their anger lasts for a long time. How does a person become "polluted" with bitterness?

When the author said a person becomes "polluted" with bitterness, he used a metaphor to say that this is like the person becoming unclean. A person who allows bitterness to "pollute" (μιάνω/g3392) them. That is, it makes them think the wrong things and do the wrong things.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What is "sexually immoral"?

[12:16]

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What is an "ungodly person"?

[12:16]

An "ungodly person" is a person who does not honor and obey God. He says and does wrong things. He may even deny that God exists.

How did Esau sell his own birthright?

[12:16]

See: Genesis 25:29-34

Why did the author write that Esau "found no opportunity for repentance"?

[12:17]

When the author wrote that Esau "found no opportunity for repentance" he wanted people to think that Esau could not change what he had done. When he sold his birthright, the agreement was final and could never be changed.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

12:18-24

What was "a mountain that can be touched"?

[12:18]

See: Exodus 19:16-19; 20:18-21; Deuteronomy 4:11-12

What was the "trumpet blast" about which the author spoke?

[12:19]

See: Exodus 19:18-20

Why did the author say “you have not come...to a voice that speaks words”?

[12:19]

The author said, "you have not come ...to a voice that speaks words." He wanted people to think about the time when Israel wandered in the wilderness. When God spoke to the people of Israel, they heard thunder and saw lightning and were afraid of the voice of the Lord. They wanted Moses to speak to the Lord. Then Moses told them what God said.

See: Exodus 20:18-21

What was “Mount Zion”?

[12:22]

See: [Zion](#)

What was the “city of the living God”?

[12:22]

The “city of the living God” was a way people spoke about where God himself lives. There was not a place on earth where people can go. Some people also called this the "heavenly Jerusalem".

See: [Heaven](#)

What was the “congregation of the firstborn”?

[12:23]

The "congregation of the firstborn" is a way to speak about God's people. Some scholars think this is all people who believe in God. That is, it includes people who believed in God before Jesus lived. The author wrote about some of these people in chapter 11. It also includes everyone who has ever believed in Jesus. Other scholars think the “congregation of the firstborn” are angels. This is because God created angels before he created people. The word “firstborn” (πρωτότοκος/g4416) spoke about a shared inheritance. That is, Christians all will share in one inheritance. This is an inheritance given by God to both men and angels.

See: [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [People of God](#); [Firstborn \(Birthright\)](#)

Why did the author write “registered in heaven”?

[12:23]

When the author wrote "registered in heaven," he wanted people to think about God having a written record of everyone who believes in him. Some people call this the "book of life" (see: Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 21:27). To be “registered in heaven” means a person is one of the people who are at peace with God and will live with God in heaven forever. Their names are written down, and they are considered citizens of heaven (see: Ephesians 2:18-22).

See: [Citizen](#); [Heaven](#); [Citizen](#)

Who are the “spirits of the righteous ones”?

[12:23]

The “spirits of the righteous ones” are all people who are Christians when they die.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What is the “new covenant”?

[12:24]

See: [New Covenant](#)

How was Jesus the “mediator” of the new covenant?

[12:24]

Jesus became the “mediator” (μεσίτης/g3316) of the new covenant between God and man. In some way, Jesus stands between God and sinners. He speaks to God for them. He does this so they can be at peace with God.

See: [Sin](#); [New Covenant](#); [Sin](#)

What was the “sprinkled blood”?

[12:24]

When the author wrote about "sprinkled blood," he used a metaphor. All covenants in the Bible were made using blood. That is, animals were killed so their blood could be sprinkled to make the covenant. In the same way, Jesus made the new covenant between God and man effective by shedding his own blood. The blood of Jesus atoned for man's sin once.

See: [New Covenant](#); [Blood](#); [Covenant](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sin](#); [New Covenant](#)

What was “Abel’s blood”?

[12:24]

When the author wrote "Abel's blood," he wanted people to think about how Cain murdered his brother Abel (see: Genesis 4:3-10). Abel's blood cried out from the ground for vengeance (see: Genesis 4:10). That is, "Abel's blood" is a way to speak about when God punishes someone who does wrong. On the other hand, Jesus's blood proclaims forgiveness and salvation.

See: [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Avenge \(Vengeance, Revenge\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#)

12:25-29

Who was the “one who is warning from heaven”?

[12:25]

Scholars disagree about who is the "one who is warning from heaven." Some scholars think the gospel was God's message to all people. The gospel says there is a blessing for people who believe in Jesus. However, it also warns that God will judge people who do not believe in Jesus. Other scholars think the author spoke specifically about Jesus. Jesus came to earth to teach people about God. Some of what Jesus taught was a warning about God's judgment.

See: [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#)

When did God’s voice shake the earth?

[12:26]

See: Exodus 19:18

Why did the author write that God will also shake the heavens?

[12:26]

When the author wrote that God will also shake the heavens, he used the metaphor of an earthquake to speak about God's final judgment. The Old Testament spoke about this (see: Exodus 19:18; Psalm 68:8, 77:18, 114:7; Isaiah 13:1-22; Joel 2:1-11; Haggai 2:6, 2:21, 12:26). He wanted people to think that when that happens, God will remove everything that is evil.

See: Isaiah 2:19-21; 13:13

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth; Heaven](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What are the things “that can be shaken”?

[12:27]

Scholars think that when the author wrote about things “that can be shaken” he was speaking about created things. This meant the world and everything in it will be shaken.

What are the things that “cannot be shaken”?

[12:27]

The author wrote about things that “cannot be shaken.” This is a metaphor. God’s blessings and promises that are part of God’s new covenant and the kingdom of God cannot be stopped. They will happen as God promised.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

Why did the author write that God is “a consuming fire”?

[12:29]

The author wrote that God is "a consuming fire" so people would think about God's final judgment. Scholars think the author spoke about God burning away all impurities in the life of a Christian (see: Luke 3:17, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15). This makes someone perfectly clean. This will purify them for entrance into heaven.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [Heaven](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Chapter 13

¹ Let brotherly love continue. ² Do not forget hospitality for strangers. For through this, some have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. ³ Remember prisoners as if you were bound with them. Remember those who are mistreated since you yourselves also are in the body. ⁴ Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept pure, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers. ⁵ Let your conduct be free from the love of money. Be content with the things you have, for God himself has said,

"I will never leave you,
nor will I abandon you."

⁶ Let us be content so that we may have courage to say,

"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
What can a man do to me?"

⁷ Consider your leaders, those who spoke God's word to you, and consider the result of their conduct. Imitate their faith. ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. ⁹ Do not be carried away by various strange teachings. For it is good that the heart should be strengthened by grace, not by foods that do not help those who walk by them. ¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat. ¹¹ For the blood of the animals killed for sins is brought by the high priest into the holy place, while their bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² So Jesus also suffered outside the city gate, in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹³ Let us therefore go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he endured. ¹⁴ For we do not have a permanent city here. Rather, we are looking for the one that is to come. ¹⁵ Through him, then, let us always offer up sacrifices of praise to God, praise that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶ Let us not forget doing good and sharing, for it is with such sacrifices that God is very pleased. ¹⁷ Obey and submit to your leaders, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give account. Obey so that your leaders will do this with joy, and not with groaning, which would be useless to you.

¹⁸ Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a good conscience and that we desire to live rightly in all things. ¹⁹ I encourage you even more to do this, so that I will be returned to you sooner.

²⁰ Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ²¹ equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

²² Now I encourage you, brothers, to bear with the word of encouragement that I have briefly written to you. ²³ Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I will see you if he comes soon.

²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all God's holy people. Those from Italy greet you.

²⁵ May grace be with you all.

Hebrews 13

13:1-6

How can a person show "hospitality to angels without knowing it"?

[13:2]

When the author wrote that a person can show "hospitality to angels without knowing it," he wanted people to think about how angels sometimes appeared and looked like people.

See: Genesis 18:1-14

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why did the author write “bound with them” to speak about Christians remembering prisoners?

[13:3]

To remember prisoners as if a person was “bound with them” was to fully sympathize with the suffering of people in prison. Paul spoke about Christians experiencing the suffering of other Christians (see: 1 Corinthians 12:26).

What is “the marriage bed”?

[13:4]

The “marriage bed” is the bed a husband and wife used when they sleep. The author used these words to speak about a husband and wife have sex in a way that did not dishonor God.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Why did the author write that Christians should “let the marriage bed be pure”?

[13:4]

The author wrote the command to “let the marriage bed be pure” as a warning. He wanted Christians to avoid adultery and sexual immorality.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Adultery](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Who were the “sexually immoral”?

[13:4]

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

What is “the love of money”?

[13:5]

The author wrote “the love of money” as a way to speak about greed. Scholars think the author meant that Christians must keep their lives from being characterized by the love for things you can buy. They think the Christian must keep even his thoughts from being greedy and wanting to buy many things.

See: [Greed \(Covet\)](#)

13:7-17

What is to “consider the result” of leaders' conduct?

[13:7]

To “consider the result” of Christian leaders' conduct is for Christians to observe what their leaders do. It is then to observe what happens in the church. Christians are to learn from Christian leaders how to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Church](#)

Why did the author command Christians to “imitate their faith”?

[13:7]

When the author commanded Christian to “imitate” (μιμέομαι/g3401) the faith of their leaders, he meant for Christians to live in the same way that their leaders did. He did not mean for Christians to copy everything done by their leaders, but to watch how they live in a way that honors God.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

How is Jesus “the same yesterday, today, and forever”?

[13:8]

When the author wrote that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, he wanted people to know that Jesus does not change. Jesus has always lived and will always live and nothing changes him. Christian leaders die, but Jesus lives forever.

What were the “various strange teachings”?

[13:9]

When the author wrote about "various strange teachings," he spoke about things some people taught in churches. These things were "strange" because they did not teach the same things that Jesus and the apostles taught. That is, some of the things they taught were wrong. During the time in which the book of Hebrews was written, there were still people who taught that people needed to follow the Law of Moses to be at peace with God. They wanted Christians to obey the Law of Moses. This is not what Jesus and the apostle taught.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why did the author write “we have an altar”?

[13:10]

When the author wrote "we have an altar," he used a metaphor to speak about Jesus. In the Old Testament, the altar was used to sacrifice animals so God would forgive people's sins. Now, Christians "have an altar" which is the cross. It was on the cross that Jesus was sacrificed for the sins of the world.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Sin](#); [Symbol](#); [Altar](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Cross](#); [Atonement](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

Why did the author write “Jesus also suffered outside the city gate”?

[13:12]

The author wrote "Jesus also suffered outside the city gate" so people would think about the crucifixion. He also wanted people to think about sacrifices for sin. That is, the atonement sacrifice of the Old Testament was burned outside the camp. But, the atoning sacrifice of Jesus was also made outside of the city of Jerusalem. Some scholars think that Jesus suffering outside the city gate showed Israel's complete rejection of Jesus as their messiah. Other scholars think that Jesus suffering outside the city gate was to show that Jesus' blood was the only acceptable sacrifice to God for sin. That is, nothing offered in the temple in Jerusalem could help people to be forgiven by God.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Atonement](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Blood](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

Why did the author write that Christians must “go to him outside the camp”?

[13:13]

Some scholars think that when the author wrote that Christians must “go to him outside the camp,” he wanted people to think about something that happened during Moses' life. Moses went up Mount Sinai to meet with God. While he was on the mountain, the people of Israel grew impatient. They demanded an idol to be made for them. So Aaron made an idol out of gold. Seeing this, Moses pitched his tent outside the camp. Then, people who wanted to seek God went where Moses was, outside the camp (see: Exodus 33:7-11). Because Jesus was rejected and was taken outside of the walls of Jerusalem to be executed, so now Christians must “go to him outside the camp.” That is, someone who followed Jesus did not need to do the things the Jews did in the temple in Jerusalem.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

See Map: Mount Sinai

How do Christians “bear his shame”?

[13:13]

The author wrote that Christians "bear his shame" to say that when a person believes in Jesus, he may be treated the same way Jesus was treated. That is, Christians may be rejected, insulted, persecuted, or even killed because they believe in Jesus. So Christians bear shame that is in some way like that of Jesus.

Some scholars think the author spoke about Jewish Christians “bearing his shame” in that they were often driven away from the religious practices of the temple. They were driven outside of Jerusalem. Many of them were persecuted and treated as outsiders.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did the author write that Christians do not have “any permanent city here”?

[13:14]

When the author wrote that “we do not have any permanent city here,” he wanted people to think that a home on earth will not be someone’s home forever. That is, Christians look forward to a city God builds. This heavenly city will last forever (see: Hebrews 10:34-36, 11:10; 12:27).

See: [Heaven](#)

What are “sacrifices of praise”?

[13:15]

When the author wrote "sacrifices of praise," he wanted Christians to always be thankful to God. This is because Jesus offered himself to God as a sacrifice that never needed to be repeated. Because he did this, God forgives the sins of people who believe in Jesus. So, nothing remains but to give God thanks and praise for what he has done. God accepts our continual thanks and praise as our “sacrifice” to him.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Praise](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

13:18-25

How is Jesus the “great shepherd”?

[13:20]

When the author said that Jesus was “the great shepherd,” he used a metaphor. A shepherd cared for his sheep, even to the point of dying for the sheep. Jesus loved and cared for people and died for them.

See: [Shepherd](#); [Shepherd](#)

What was the “blood of the eternal covenant”?

[13:20]

See: Hebrews 12:24

See: [Covenant](#); [Covenant](#)

Book: James

Introduction to James

Overview

James wrote to Christians who were scattered because King Herod persecuted them (see: Acts 12:1-5). James wrote this letter to be given to all the churches. James talks about problems likely going on in all the Christian churches.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Who wrote this letter?

Most scholars think James, Jesus' half brother, wrote this letter. Four men in the New Testament writings had the name James. Most scholars think that only two of these men had the ability to write this letter. That is, James who was the son of Zebedee and James who was the half brother of Jesus. King Herod killed James, the son of Zebedee. And Herod ruled from A. D. 37 until A. D. 44. Because scholars think that James wrote his book after A. D. 44, it is thought that only James the half-brother of Jesus had the ability to write the book. He wrote his book to give courage and strength to the Christians who King Herod persecuted.

Advice to translators: When two people are "half brothers," they have the same mother but not the same father. However, when two people have the same father, but not the same mother, they are still "have brothers."

To whom did James write his letter?

James wrote to the "twelve tribes in the dispersion." That is, to the twelve tribes scattered throughout the world. Some scholars think he wrote only to the Jewish Christians that were scattered in Gentile nations because of persecution. That is, he wrote to the literal twelve tribes of Israel. Other scholars think that James wrote to both Jewish and Gentile Christians because both were scattered because the people persecuted them. That is, he wrote to both the people from the twelve tribes of Israel and the Gentiles who became part of a group called the "people of God."

See: [Tribes of Israel](#); [People of God](#)

Why did James write this letter?

One of the main things about which James wrote was about enduring difficulties, trial, and attack. James reminded the believers to use their speech wisely, for encouraging other believers in their faith rather than speaking lies against them. James wanted the readers of this letter that genuine faith in Jesus is the kind of faith that shows itself to others, so one of his great encouragements was that they should be "doers of the word and not only hearers".

Why did James write his letter?

James first tells Christians to endure their suffering and the persecution that has caused them to leave their home. That is, he wanted to them to encourage and strengthen each other with their words and actions. When they spoke lies about each other, they only caused each other to be discouraged and they would not be at peace from one another and Jesus. James wanted Christians to know what was "true faith." That is, how believing in Jesus changed them and the way that they did things. He said they needed to be "doers of the word and not hearers only." That is, Jesus expects those who believe in him to do certain things and to honor God in the way that they live.

Outline of James

1. Endurance (1:1-27)
 1. Greeting (1:1)
 2. Trials (1:2-11)
 3. Tests of faith (1:12-18)

4. Obeying the word of God (1:19-27)
 2. Faith and behavior (2:1-26)
 1. Faith and law (2:1-13)
 2. Faith and works (2:14-26)
 3. The test of the tongue (3:1-12)
 4. Earthly wisdom and heavenly wisdom (3:13-18)
 5. Submitted to God (4:1-17)
 1. Source of quarrels (4:1-7)
 2. Draw near to God (4:8-10)
 3. Speaking evil (4:11,12)
 6. Warnings to merchants and the rich (4:13-5:6)
 1. Warnings to the arrogant merchants (4:13-16)
 2. Warning to those who get rich by fraud (5:1-6)
 7. Patience (5:7-20)
 1. Examples of patience (5:7-12)
 2. Patience, endurance and effective prayer (5:13-18)
 3. Encouragement to rescue those wandering from the truth (5:19,20)
-

James

Chapter 1

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion: Greetings! ² Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you experience various troubles. ³ You know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ Let endurance complete its work so that you may become fully developed and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ But if any of you needs wisdom, let him ask for it from God, the one who gives generously and without rebuke to all who ask, and he will give it to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing. For anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed around. ⁷ For that person must not think that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the lowly brother boast of his high position, ¹⁰ but the rich man of his low position, because he will pass away as a wild flower in the grass. ¹¹ For the sun rises with burning heat and dries up the grass. The flower falls off, and its beauty perishes. In the same way, the rich man will fade away in the middle of his journey. ¹² Blessed is the man who endures testing. For after he has passed the test, he will receive the crown of life, which has been promised to those who love God. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God," because God is not tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted by his own desire, which drags him away and entices him. ¹⁵ Then after the desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and after the sin is full grown, it gives birth to death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. It comes down from the Father of lights. With him there is no changing or shadow because of turning. ¹⁸ God chose to give us birth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all his creatures. ¹⁹ You know this, my beloved brothers: Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. ²⁰ For the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore take off all sinful filth and abundant amounts of evil. In humility receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²² Be doers of the word and not only hearers, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word but not a doer, he is like a man who examines his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ He examines himself and then goes away and immediately forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the person who looks carefully into the perfect law of freedom, and continues to do so, not just being a hearer who forgets, this man will be blessed in his actions. ²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not control his tongue, he deceives his heart and his religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and unspoiled before our God and Father is to help the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

James 1 Commentary

1:1

How did people write letters in the first century?

[1:1]

In ancient times, it was common to begin a letter with the author's name, what other people called him, the names of those who were given the letter, and words of greeting. James used a common greeting in his letter and he wanted the people who he wrote to to have courage and be happy.

Why did James say he was a servant "of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ"?

[1:1]

James said that he was a servant "of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." Perhaps he wanted people to know that Jesus is God. James was a Jew. Because of this, it would have been very wrong to call someone God or to say that there is more than one God. However, Jesus was God and there is only one God.

See: [Trinity](#)

Who were the twelve tribes?

[1:1]

The twelve tribes formed the nation of Israel (see: Genesis 49:1-28). Some scholars think that James was speaking to Christians who were also Jews. When James wrote, almost all Christians were from Jewish families. Other scholars think James used the metaphor "twelve tribes" to talk to all Christians, both Jewish and Gentile (see: Isaiah 49:6). They think that Christians are now the Israel, that is, the people of God.

Advice to translators: "Twelve tribes" could mean the actual nation of Israel, or it could be a metaphor that represents all Christians. In the same way the twelve tribes of Israel were God's chosen people, all Christians are God's chosen people.

See: [People of God](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [People of God](#)

1:2-8

What did James tell Christians to do during struggles?

[1:2, 1:3, 1:4]

Some scholars think James wanted Christians to know that God used "struggle" (πειρασμός/g3986) to make Christians stronger. James said that this struggle caused "endurance" (ὑπομονή/g5281). That is, it helped them to trust in God more. James wrote to Christians while they were suffering from persecution. This persecution caused Christians to leave Israel. James wanted to encourage these Christians. He told them that God used these struggles to help Christians do the same types of things that Jesus did. That is, they do the types of things that Jesus did.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why do Christians need wisdom?

[1:5]

Christians need wisdom to know how God uses difficult times in their lives. He uses these difficult times to be Christians more like Jesus. That is, they do the types of things that Jesus did. James told Christians to ask God for this wisdom. He told them to ask "in faith (πίστις/g4102)." That is, when Christians ask God by praying, they need to completely trust God.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What is a “double-minded” person?

[1:8]

James spoke about a “double-minded” person. Some scholars think James spoke about a person who said they trusted in God but did not trust him to answer their prayers. This person trusts in God sometimes but trust in the world at other times (see: Psalm 86:11; Romans 7:14-25).

See: Proverbs 11:3; Matthew 7:7-8; Romans 5:3-5

1:9-11

What does it mean to be a “poor” brother?

[1:9]

Some scholars think “poor”(ταπεινός/g5011) meant a poor person. Other scholars think it also meant a person without power or without honor in their community. James told the poor person to be happy in the “high position”(ὑψος/g5311) Jesus gave them (see: Luke 6:20; Ephesians 2:4-6).

How are rich Christians to be humble?

[1:10]

Paul wanted rich Christians to know that their riches cannot save them. That is, their money and possessions cannot keep them from dying and it cannot help them to have peace with God. Only by God giving the favor or showing them grace can a person live together with God forever in heaven. Because of this grace, James wanted these Christians to be happy and humbled because of what Jesus did for them.

Paul told the rich Christian that they will “fade away”(παρέρχομαι/g3928) in the same way that all other people do. All people die in the same way the flowers die (see: Isaiah 40:6-8).

See: [Humble \(Humility\)](#); [Humble \(Humility\)](#)

1:12

What is the “crown of life”?

[1:12]

God gives the “crown of life” to Christians who have difficult times, but still live in a way that honors Jesus (see: Romans 8:28-30). That is, they are honored in heaven. Perhaps James spoke about the time when all Christians are with God in heaven. At this time, God will give them the crown of life if they honor Jesus in the time of their struggles.

1:13-15

What causes people to sin?

[1:14]

James said that people’s own “desire”(ἐπιθυμία/g1939) tries to cause them to sin (see: Galatians 5:16-21; Ephesians 2:3). That is, people want to sin. If people do not fight against their desire to sin, they will sin. Sin causes death. In scripture, there are two types of death. Death is a type of separation. When someone’s body dies, they are separated from their body. The second type of death separates a person from God forever. They go to a place called hell.

Some scholars think James spoke about those who are not Christians. Their sin causes them to be separated from God forever. This will happen when their body dies. Other scholars think James wanted to say that Christians sin because they do not fight their desires. If this happens, then God might punish them and their body may die.

See: [Hell](#)

1:16-18

Why did James tell Christians not to be deceived?

[1:16]

Some scholars think James wrote to Christians who thought that God tried to cause people to sin (see: 1:13). However, James told Christians that God was never caused them to sin or to desire to sin. They want to sin.

What did “Father of lights” mean?

[1:17]

James used the words “Father of lights” to say that God is the creator of all things. Also, he created the sun, moon, stars, and everything else in the sky (see: Genesis 1:14-19). John also said that God is light (see: 1 John 1:5). The shadows affect the lights of the sun, moon, and stars in the sky. However, the light of God never changes and no shadow can cover it.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

How are Christians born for a second time?

[1:18]

James told Christians that God gave them new “birth”(ἀποκυέω/g0616) (see: Titus 3:5). Christians have new birth because of the “word of truth.” That is, Christians are newly born when they hear and accept the gospel.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

Why did James call Christians “firstfruits”?

[1:18]

James used the metaphor of “firstfruits”(ἀπαρχή/g0536) to say that Christians belong to God (see: Exodus 22:29-30; 23:19; Leviticus 19:24).

They were also the first of something new God was doing through Jesus. Some scholars think James wanted Christians to know that they give themselves to God in the same way as they gave their best offerings to him in the Old Testament (see: Romans 12:1-2).

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

What commands did James give Christians?

[1:19]

James gave Christians three commands.

He told Christians to be “quick”(ταχύς/g5036) to hear. Some scholars think James spoke about being quick to hear the word of truth (see: 1:18). That is, they were quick to trust in Jesus. James also spoke about being quick to hear the word “implanted” in them (see 1:21). Other scholars think James was thinking about one of the Proverbs (see: Proverbs 17:27-28).

James told Christians to be “slow”(βραδύς/g1021) to speak. This does not mean Christians speak in a way that is slow. James wanted Christians to think about every word they spoke so that their words honor Jesus (see: Proverbs 29:20).

Also, James told Christians to be “slow”(βραδύς/g1021) to anger. Many scholars think James told all Christians not to become angry quickly. Other scholars think James spoke to teachers and preachers. He wanted them to not be angry when other Christians did not know the scriptures in the same way church leaders knew it. However, James said that human anger does not honor God.

What does it mean to receive “with humility the implanted word”?

[1:21]

A person “humbly”(πραΰτης/g4240) receives the “implanted”(ἐμφυτος/g1721) word of God when they hear the Scriptures and honor God by obeying the scriptures instead of honoring themselves. This does not mean Christians only need to know many things about the scriptures. Instead,

James spoke about taking this word inside of themselves. That is, they take the scriptures and obey them so that they change how they live and think.

1:22-25

What is the “perfect law of freedom”?

[1:25]

When James wrote about the “perfect”(τέλειος/g5046) law, he wrote about the Law of Moses. Also, he wrote about the things Jesus taught. However, the things Jesus taught that had not yet been written down. What Jesus taught gave people much more knowledge about the things God wanted people to do. Also, James wrote his book with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps Christians to understand God’s word completely. James also wrote that when Christians look carefully into the perfect law, it changes them. They obey God and God honors them.

James also said that this was the law of “liberty”(ἐλευθερία/g1657). Perhaps James said the perfect law was the law of liberty because this law makes Jesus known to all. Jesus saves people from the punishment of sin. After Jesus saves a person from sin, they can follow the law that honors God.

See: John 8:36; Romans 8:2; Galatians 3:21-25

See: [Law of Moses](#)

1:26-27

What is pure and unspoiled religion?

[1:27]

In scripture, sin is often spoken about as if something were getting or becoming dirty. When James spoke about something that was “pure and unspoiled,” he wanted to say that it was not dirty. That is, it was not sinful or evil. In 1:27, James spoke about pure and unspoiled “religion”(θρησκεία/g2356) in three ways.

James said that a person who controlled their words was pure in their religion. That is, he did not speak about other people in an evil way.

He also said that a person who took care of the widows and orphans was pure and unspoiled in their religion. That is, they cared for widows and orphans in the same way God cares for all people (see: Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 68:5).

Also, James said a person who stayed away from the evil of the world was pure and unspoiled (see: Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17). That is, they lived in a way that honors God.

See: [World](#)

Chapter 2

¹ My brothers, do not hold to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality toward certain people. ² Suppose that someone enters your meeting wearing gold rings and splendid clothes, and there also enters a poor man in dirty clothes. ³ If you look at the person wearing fine clothes and say, "You sit here in a good place," but you say to the poor man, "You stand over there" or "Sit by my footstool," ⁴ are you not judging among yourselves? Have you not become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, did not God choose the poor of the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor! Is it not the rich who oppress you? Are they not the ones who drag you to court? ⁷ Do they not insult the good name by which you have been called? ⁸ If, however, you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. ⁹ But if you favor certain people, you are committing sin, and you are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever obeys the whole law, except that he stumbles in just a single way, has become guilty of breaking the whole law. ¹¹ For the one who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery, but if you do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and act as those who will be judged by means of the law of freedom. ¹³ For judgment comes without mercy to those who have shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴ What profit is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ Suppose that a brother or sister is badly clothed and lacks food for the day. ¹⁶ Suppose that one of you says to them, "Go in peace, stay warm and be filled." If you do not give them the things necessary for the body, what profit is that? ¹⁷ In the same way faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ¹⁸ Yet someone may say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God; you do well. But even the demons believe that, and they tremble. ²⁰ Do you want to know, foolish man, that faith without works is useless? ^[1]²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith worked with his works, and that by works his faith was completed. ²³ The scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness," and he was called a friend of God. ²⁴ You see that it is by works that a man is justified, and not only by faith. ²⁵ In the same way also, was not Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them away by another road? ²⁶ For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

Footnotes

2:20 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

James 2

2:1

Who were the brothers?

[2:1]

James used the Greek word "brothers" to talk to all the Christians who read his letter. In the New Testament, Christians called one another brother and sister because they were God's children.

See: [Family of God](#)

Why are Christians not to have favoritism?

[2:1]

James told Christians not to have “favoritism”(προσωποληψία/g4382) for certain people. Jesus did not have favoritism for different people (see: Acts 15:7-9; Romans 10:12-13). If Jesus did not have favoritism, Christians are not to have favoritism.

See: [Family of God](#)

2:2-4

What does it mean to judge with evil thoughts?

[2:4]

James did not want people to “judge with evil thoughts.” Many scholars think James wanted to say that judging others because they looked evil. That is, judging others because of what they wear and how they speak. The Bible says that only God can judge a person, and he judges by what is inside their hearts (see: Isaiah 16:7). That is, God judges them on their thoughts and why they do the things they want to do.

2:5-7

Who were the “poor”?

[2:5]

James spoke about the poor. Perhaps James spoke about people who did not have a lot of money or those who did not have a lot of education. Therefore, James said that God made poor people Christians and to teach the rich people how to have faith.

Why did James tell Christians to be “rich in faith?”

[2:5]

When James told Christians to be “rich in faith,” he wanted them to know that only faith in Jesus gave them life. That is, the riches the world gave them did not continue after they died. Jesus said that the riches Heaven gave only come by faith (see: Matthew 6:19-21).

Advice to translators: Someone who has “riches” has a lot of money.

Why did James say Christians were “heirs of the kingdom”?

[2:5]

A Christian is an “heir”(κληρονόμος/g2818) of the kingdom. Some scholars think they have God’s promise of being saved from their sins. James wanted Christians to know that when they die, they will be made perfect in heaven. Christians can know they are heirs because they have the Holy Spirit inside them. That is, he helps them to remember that God has saved them and helps them to live in a way that honors God. Other scholars think that certain Christians will have a place of honor when Jesus rules on the earth.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

2:8

What was the “royal law?”

[2:8]

The “royal”(βασιλικός/g0937) law was greater than all other laws. The royal law had two parts:

1. Love God
2. Love your neighbor (see: Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:17-18; Romans 3:8-10).

Jesus said this was the greatest law (see: Matthew 22:36-40). He said that all other laws of God were made up of this one.

2:9-13

Why is it sin to give someone favor?

[2:9]

Christians are not to favor some people over others because God does not favor anyone. Anything Christians do that God does not want them to do is sin (see: Deuteronomy 1:17; 10:17; 16:19).

What is the “law of liberty”?

[2:12]

James spoke about a “law of liberty.” Some scholars think the law of “liberty”(ἐλευθερία/g1657) was the gospel. Other scholars think the law of liberty was the word of God, that is, Scripture. At the time James wrote this letter, Christians only had the Old Testament. These books told that the Messiah was coming with a new law that would free people from God’s anger on sin.

See: [Gospel](#)

2:14-17

What did James say about faith and works?

[2:14, 2:17]

James wanted Christians to know that God did not want them to say they believed in Jesus but live in a way that dishonors God. Many scholars think James was talking about those who believed in God and knew a lot about God, but did not obey him. James wanted Christians to know that knowing about Jesus did not save them from sin. They needed to believe or trust in Jesus.

2:18-19

How do Christians show their faith?

[2:18]

James said that other see the faith of Christians when they do what honors God. For James, faith and works were not to be separated. James said that demons believe in God and Jesus (see: Deuteronomy 6:4-5). But this did not save them from sin because they hated God and his promises.

2:20-25

How did others show their faith by their works?

[2:21, 2:22, 2:23, 2:24, 2:25]

Abraham and Rahab trusted God. They showed people they trusted God by obeying him. Abraham left his home and family to obey God (see: Genesis 12:4). When God told him to sacrifice his son Isaac, Abraham obeyed (see: Genesis 22:9,12; Hebrews 11:17-19). Rahab showed people that she trusted God when she hid the Israelites to save their lives (see: Joshua 2:11-12).

2:26

Why did James compare the body and spirit with faith and works?

[2:26]

In 2:26, James spoke about the things that people do as if they were dead. Some scholars think that John wanted to say that in the same way the body does not exist without the spirit, faith does not exist without works. That is, the body does not have life without the “spirit”(πνεῦμα/g4151), and faith does not have life without works. Other scholars think that James wanted people to know that believe

Chapter 3

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in words, he is a perfect man, able to control even his whole body. ³ Now if we put bits into horses' mouths for them to obey us, we can also direct their whole bodies. ⁴ Notice also that ships, although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, are steered by a very small rudder to wherever the pilot desires. ⁵ In this way, the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts great things. Notice also how small a fire sets on fire a large forest. ⁶ The tongue is also a fire, a world of evil set among our members. The tongue defiles the whole body, sets on fire the course of life, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every kind of wild animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is being tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we praise the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things should not happen. ¹¹ Does a spring pour out from its opening both sweet and bitter water? ¹² Does a fig tree, my brothers, make olives? Or a grapevine, figs? Neither can salty water produce sweet water.

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let that person show a good life by his works in the humility of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Rather, it is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where there are jealousy and ambition, there is confusion and every evil practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace among those who make peace.

James 3

3:1-12

How does God judge Christians who teach other Christians?

[3:1]

James said that leaders are judged more harshly or stricter than other Christians. This is because teachers lead and teach people what to know about God and how to follow Jesus' commands. Therefore, teachers must only say what is true about God (see: Ephesians 4:11-16). James warned teachers that if they said things that were not true about God, God punish them after they died. Scholars disagree about why they think James warned teachers.

1. There were people who did not believe in Jesus who were trying to teach other Christians about God. So James told these teachers that God will judge them for not believing in Jesus and for teaching untruths about God (see: Judges 14-15).
2. James wanted teachers who did believe in Jesus to remember how great was their responsibility as a teacher of God's truth (see: Hebrews 13:7). Perhaps they were responsible for the things that their students said about God. That is, they will be punished when their students say false things about God that the teacher taught to them.

Why did James say that all Christians stumble?

[3:2]

James wanted Christians to know that they never stopped sinning and that all Christians will "stumble" (πταίω/g4417)(see: Job 4:17-19; Proverbs 20:9; 1 John 1:8). James wrote that if a person does not stumble in what he said, he was "perfect"(τέλειος/g5046). Some scholars think James wanted to say that a person is perfect if they do not sin with the words they say. Because no person can stop saying wrong things, James said that no person was perfect. Other scholars think James spoke about a person who was a mature Christian. That is, they learned to control the words they say because they follow Jesus. This makes them "perfect" or more complete in their faith in Jesus.

Why did James compare the human tongue to bits and rudders?

[3:3, 3:4]

James wanted Christians to know that the words people speak control them in some way. He used two metaphors.

The first was about a horse with a bit in its mouth, which was a piece of metal attached to something a person used to lead them in a certain direction. In the same way a bit in the mouth of a horse leads the horse wherever the person wants it to go, so does the “tongue”(γλῶσσα/g1100) lead a person with the words that come from it.

The second metaphor is about the rudder of a boat; this is the part on the back of the boat that steers the boat. Also, in the same way a large boat is controlled by a small rudder, the human tongue is a small part of the body that can control the entire person’s life. James wanted Christians to know that the tongue was small, but the words it speaks can cause great destruction.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why is the tongue a “restless evil”?

[3:8]

James spoke about the tongue as if it were a person, even though it is not a person. He said that no person can “tame”(δαμάζω/g1150) the tongue. That is, because the tongue is “restless”(ἀκατάστατος/g0182), a person cannot fully control it.

Also, James said the tongue was “evil”(κακός/g2556). That is, the words that it says can destroy people in the same way a poison destroys and kills people.

James wanted Christians to know that people cannot control their tongues, but God can control their tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit inside them.

3:13-16**How does a Christian show “meekness of wisdom”?**

[3:13]

When James spoke about the “meekness”(πραΰτης/g4240) of wisdom, he spoke about a person’s heart and mind. That is, those who were meek never got tired of doing what was good to others without thinking they were going to get anything in return. Some scholars said that a meek person has great power, but power they were able to control. They said that those who are meek are humble and gentle with other people. That is, a meek person does not give themselves a higher position over other people. That is, he does not try to control other people and he is not selfish.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

3:17-18**What is the fruit of righteousness?**

[3:18]

The “fruit of righteousness” James spoke about is a metaphor of how God works in all Christians. He helps Christians to do good things and do things that God wants them to do. However, it is more than just doing good things. They change and want to do things that honor God.

Those who have the “fruit of righteousness” are at peace with other people. These Christians are able to live at peace with others and create peace with other people in the world. By living in this way, Christians show other people what God is like. That is, who he is and what he does for the people he created.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#); [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Where do quarrels and disputes among you come from? Do they not come from your desires that fight among your members? ² You desire, and you do not have. You murder and covet, and you are not able to obtain. You fight and quarrel. You do not possess because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, in order that you may use it for your desires. ⁴ You adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility against God? So whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think the scripture says in vain, "The Spirit he caused to live in us is deeply envious"? ⁶ But God gives more grace, so the scripture says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

⁷ So submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come close to God, and he will come close to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded people. ⁹ Grieve, mourn, and cry! Let your laughter turn into mourning and your joy into gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

¹¹ Do not speak evil about another, brothers. The person who speaks evil about a brother or judges his brother speaks evil about the law and judges the law. If you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. ¹² Only one is the lawgiver and judge. He is the one who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you, you who judge your neighbor?

¹³ Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, spend a year there, trade, and make a profit." ¹⁴ Who knows what will happen tomorrow, and what is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears. ¹⁵ Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that." ¹⁶ But now you are boasting about your arrogant plans. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So for anyone who knows to do good but does not do it, for him it is sin.

James 4

4:1-3

Why do Christians quarrel and fight?

[4:1]

James wrote that Christians "quarrel" (πόλεμος/g4171) and "fight" (μάχη/g3163) with one another because they want their own "desires" (ἡδονή/g2237). That is, they want to do what they want to do instead of being at peace with one another. Also, James said this made Christians "jealous" (ζήλος/g2205) and have "selfish ambition" (ἐριθεία/g2052) (see: 3:16). When Christians are selfish and jealous, this causes them to harm one another.

James wrote about two kinds of fighting.

Fights that happen in the mind. A Christian's selfish ambition fights against the Holy Spirit who lives inside of them. That is, the Holy Spirit reminds the Christian of what God wants them to do so that they will fight their own desire to sin (see: Romans 7:21-23).

Christians fight against Christians. Jealousy causes Christians to want what other Christians have. This causes them to fight with one another to get what they want.

How do Christians ask God for things in the wrong way?

[4:3]

When a Christian asks "wrong" (κακῶς/g2560), they ask for selfish reasons. That is, they ask for things they want, not things that God wants. Some scholars think James spoke about those who were not Christians. Non-Christians ask only for things they want God to give them to make them happy. Other scholars think James spoke to Christians who asked only for what made them happy instead of asking what God wanted from them. James spoke earlier about people who did not ask with faith (see: 1:6-8).

4:4**Why did James call people “adulteresses”?**

[4:4]

James called the people “adulteresses.” This is because they called themselves Christians but only did what they wanted to do. They did not do what God wanted. God called the Jews adulterers because they left God for what they wanted to do things that the rest of the world did. In the same way, James called certain Christians adulterers because they did not do the things Jesus commanded them to do (see: Jeremiah 6:3-9; Ezekiel 23:37).

See: [Adultery](#)

4:5-6**Who is the “jealous” one?**

[4:5]

Some scholars think James spoke about God being “jealous”(φθόνος/g5355) for his people. That is, God cares for people and wants them for himself (see: Exodus 20:5; 34:14). Other scholars think the Holy Spirit caused this jealousy in God. That is, because the Holy Spirit lives inside Christians, God owns the Christian and has control over their lives. He is jealous when Christians do not do what he wants because they are not listening to his Holy Spirit. Other scholars think James spoke about Christian who were full of jealousy because they were selfish (see: 4:4).

How does God give “more grace?”

[4:6]

James spoke about God giving “more grace.” Some scholars think that because James spoke about God being jealous in verse five, he gives enough grace to keep his anger from destroying the Christian who disobeys God. Other scholars think James spoke about how all Christians’ fight against their own jealousy. God gives grace to help Christians to overcome this jealousy.

See: [Grace](#)

4:7-10**How do Christians “draw near” to God?**

[4:8]

James told Christians to “draw near” to God. That is, they come close to him because they love him and want to know him better. This came with the promise that God will draw near to anyone who wants to be close to God. James told Christians to “cleanse your hands” and to “purify your hearts.” Some scholars think that James wanted Christians to know that they needed to do these things to draw near to God. During the time of the Old Testament, priests were required to wash their bodies before going into the temple and serve God there (see: Exodus 30:20). In the New Testament, John also told Christians how they can draw near to God by confessing their sins to God. This cleansed them from the sin that holds back their relationship with God (see: 1 John 1:9). Also, John wrote that in the same way Jesus is pure, Christians can be pure because of the Holy Spirit inside of them (see: 1 John 3:2-3). This gives them confidence to draw near to God without fear.

Also, James told Christians to “grieve”(ταλαπυρρέω/g5003), to “mourn”(πενθέω/g3996), and to “cry”(κλαίω/g2799). Most scholars think James wanted Christians to have a deep sadness because of their sin. The apostle Paul experienced deep sadness for sin (see: Romans 7:21-25). Also these scholars think this sadness is to cause Christians to repent.

Finally, James told Christians to “humble”(ταπεινώω/g5013) themselves before the Lord. That is, Christians need to know their need for God. This is because they cannot be close to God without the power of God.

See: [Confess \(Confession\)](#); [Temple](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Confess \(Confession\)](#)

How can Christians be humble?

[4:10]

James wrote that Christians need to be humble. Also, he said God gives “grace to the humble.” To be humble, Christians must “submit”(ὑποτάσσω/g5293) themselves to God. This is, Christians do all that God wants them to do. Also, James told Christians to “resist”(ἀνθίστημι/g0436) the devil. Some scholars think James wanted to say that when Christians submit to God they can resist the devil. Other scholars think that to resisting the devil is to stand firmly against him (see: Ephesians 6:13; 1 Peter 5:8-9).

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#); [Grace](#); [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

4:11-12

Why are Christians not to speak against one another?

[4:11]

James said that a person who speaks against another person has become a “judge”(κρίνω/g2919). However, there is only one judge. That is, God is judge because he made the law (see: Romans 2:1). Only the one who makes the law can judge it correctly. One way Christians can speak against another Christian is to say that they did wrong when they did not actually do so (see: 1 Peter 2:1). Also, A second way is speaking against another Christian because they do not like something about them.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

4:13-17

Why are Christians to be careful with their plans for the future?

[4:14]

James told Christians not to “boast”(καυχάομαι/g2744) about the things they will do. Some people talk about what they will be doing in the future without thinking of what God wants from them. James said that this makes them “arrogant”(ἀλαζονεία/g0212) plans. James wrote to those who talked much about what they wanted to do days, weeks, and years in the future. However, James wanted them to remember that only God knew what was going to happen days, weeks, and years into the future. James said that this boasting was evil. Some scholars think that when James said to “do good,” he was talking about making plans. That is, to do good is to trust God with the plans for the future. James told Christians to say instead that “if the Lord wills” their plans will happen.

See: [Will of God](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Come now, you who are rich, weep and wail because of the miseries coming on you. ² Your riches have rotted, and your clothes have become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and your silver have become tarnished and their rust will be a witness against you. It will consume your flesh like fire. You have stored up your treasure for the last days. ⁴ Look, the wages you kept back from the laborers who mowed your fields is crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵ You have lived in luxury on the earth and indulged yourselves. You have fattened your hearts for a day of slaughter. ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not oppose you.

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit from the ground and he is patient about it, until it receives the early and late rains. ⁸ You, too, be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Do not complain, brothers, against one another, so that you will not be condemned. See, the judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰ Take an example, brothers, from the suffering and patience of the prophets, those who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ See, we regard those who endured as blessed. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you know the purpose of the Lord, how he is very compassionate and merciful.

¹² Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by the earth, or by any other oath. Rather, let your "Yes" mean "Yes" and your "No" mean "No," so you do not fall under judgment.

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him. Let them anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will heal the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed sins, God will forgive him. ¹⁶ So confess your sins to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very strong in its working. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain in the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸ Then Elijah prayed again. The heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

¹⁹ My brothers, if anyone among you strays from the truth, and someone brings him back, ²⁰ that person should know that whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and will cover over a great number of sins.

James 5

5:1-6

Why does James tell Christians not to "store up treasure"?

[5:3]

James told Christians not to worry about getting money and possessions here on earth. James spoke to those who had much more money and than they needed to survive. James told rich people to use their money and possessions to honor God (see: 1 Timothy 6:17-19). He told Christians that the riches the world gave them cannot be taken to heaven when they died. James did not want Christians to think that being rich was wrong, but he wanted them to know that they needed to use their money and possessions to honor God. That is, they needed to use their riches to help the poor and sick in the church. By doing this, they followed Jesus' command to store their treasures in heaven (see: Matthew 6:19-20). God gave them these riches to honor him. Anything not used to honor him rots away in the same way fruit or meat rots, very quickly.

Advice to Translators: A possession is something that a person owns. When someone owns many things of great value they are called "riches."

See: [Heaven](#)

Why did James say the “pay of the laborers cries out”?

[5:4]

James said that the “pay of the laborers is crying out.” He wanted Christians to know that landowners broke the law of God when they did not pay their workers on the day that they worked (see: Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14). If these people were not paid, they did not eat. James wanted Christians to know this was unjust. He said that God hears these cries, and he gave justice to the unjust (see: Malachi 3:5; Jeremiah 22:13-17).

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

How were the righteous being condemned and killed?

[5:6]

James said that the people condemned and killed the righteous people. That is, people were killing people who did the right things. Perhaps James spoke to landowners who said their hired workers were guilty of things that they did not do. That is, they said that the innocent workers were guilty of wrong against them. Because the landowners were taking their workers to court, they took away their workers ability to make money. Because they did not make money, they did not eat. Because they did not eat, they died. Also, those who were judged guilty in the courts were killed. James said that those who did this were guilty of their workers deaths.

See: [Innocent](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Guilty](#); [Innocent](#)

5:7-12

Why are Christians to be patient?

[5:7]

James told Christians to “be patient” (μακροθυμέω/g3114) when they suffer. He wanted them to be patient until Jesus came back to earth because he will make suffering stop.

Why did Christians need to stand firm?

[5:7]

James told Christians to be patient because Jesus was coming for them. Christians were suffering trials and persecution. James wanted them to know that they needed to hope in Jesus and have courage in his coming for them. Also, he told Christians not to complain about each other because this caused them to forget about Jesus. Also, James told them to have “endurance” (ὑπομονή/g5281) in the same way Job did. Because Job endured, God honored him (see: Job 42:1-17).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why did James say not to take an oath?

[5:12]

James told Christians not to take “oaths”(ὀμνύω/g3660). He said that they were only to say “yes” and “no.” James wanted Christians to know that they needed to speak the truth always. If they took an oath, God judged them. He judged if they told the truth or not (see: Matthew 5:33-37).

5:13-18

Who are the sick?

[5:14]

James spoke about sick people.

Some scholars think James spoke about people who had physical suffering. That is, their bodies had something wrong with it and they were in pain. Some physical suffering only stay for a short time while other physical suffering continues for a long time in people's body.

Also, scholars think James spoke to Christians who had spiritual suffering. That is, the enemy, Satan and his demons, tried to get them to sin or to reject Jesus. Other scholars think James wrote about Christians having severe physical suffering. James said that those suffering in this way needed other Christians to comfort them and perhaps help them defeat their suffering.

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

What did James tell the sick to do?

[5:14]

James told sick Christians to go to the elders of their local church and have them pray for them. The elders spoke a "prayer" (εὐχή/g2171) of faith. That is, they prayed the will of God and trusted God's answer (see: 4:13-15). James said this prayer saved sick people. Some scholars think the word "save" meant saved from sin and spiritual death. That is, it helped them to be able to live together with God forever in heaven. Other scholars think the word "save" means their physical health will be saved. That is, the sick person will become well.

See: [Elder](#)

Who are righteous people?

[5:16]

James spoke about people who did the right things. Some scholars think James spoke about people made righteous by Jesus (see: Roman 5:18-19). Other scholars think James spoke about people Jesus made at peace with God and those who Jesus helped to do the right things (see: 1 John 3:7). That is, Jesus saved them, and they lived their lives in a way that honored Jesus because he saved them.

Why does the prayer of the person who greatly honors God has power?

[5:16]

Some scholars think the prayer of a person who greatly honors God has great power because it is spoken with complete trust that God will answer. Other scholars think James spoke that this prayer had power because these people knew God alone had the power to make their request happen.

5:19-20

Who are those who stray from the truth?

[5:19]

James said that those who "stray" (πλανάω/g4105) from the truth chose to leave the truth of Jesus.

Some scholars think these people stopped listening to the truth about the gospel that had been taught to them. That is, they rejected the gospel. Paul also spoke about these people (see: Timothy 4:2-4).

Other scholars think James spoke to those Christians who were being led back into following the Jewish Law of Moses to save them from their sins.

Other scholars think James spoke to Christians who chose to return to doing sinful thing and thinking sinful things. That is, they knew what was right, but chose to do what was wrong.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Law of Moses](#)

What happens when those who are sinning "turn back"?

[5:19]

James says good things about people who encourage a “straying”(πλανάω/g4105) brother or sister to stop sinning and begin to do the right things.

Some scholars think that he wanted to say that this will to “rescue”(σώζω/g4982) the sinner from eternal death. That is, they will not be separated from God forever in hell.

Other scholars think that this will help the sinner from being punished by dying on the earth because of their sin. James told Christians that it was good for them to help a brother or sister straying from the truth. Also, James told these Christians to encourage straying people.

See: [Hell](#)

Book: 1 Peter

Introduction to 1 Peter

Overview

Peter wrote, "this is the true favor of God. Stand firm in it." He did not want people who read the letter just to know that God favored them. He wanted them to know this to change how they think and the way they live. He wanted them to know that God's favor gives them power to live the way Jesus lived. That is, the Christian can honor God in some way like Jesus did. God's favor helps the Christian to endure trials and suffering. Because of these things, Christians should speak and live differently than other people. They should think and live in a way that honors God.

See: [Trial](#); [Suffer](#)

Who Wrote This Letter?

The apostle Peter wrote this letter. Peter wrote that he was a witness of the suffering that happened to Jesus (see: 1 Peter 5:1). Peter's parents named him Simon, son of Jonah. Jesus gave him a new name, Peter (see: John 1:42). Jesus named him this because he knew Peter would become a great Christian leader.

See: [Apostle](#); [Witness \(Martyr\)](#); [Suffer](#)

Who Did Peter Write To?

Some scholars think that Peter wrote his letter to all Christians. That is, they think Peter wrote to Christians who were Jews and to Christians who were Gentiles. Fewer scholars think Peter wrote more to the Christians who were Gentiles.

Peter called the people he wrote to God's "chosen ones" who live as "aliens" or strangers. He wrote this for two reasons: These early Christians believed things and did things that were not like other people. People thought Christians were strange because they did things that honored God. All Christians are "aliens" because they have a better home, not in this world (see: 1 Peter 1:3-4).

They lived in places where there were not many other Christians. These Christians were scattered all over the Roman Empire.

See: [Gentile](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Citizen](#)

What Did Peter Write About in This Letter?

God's Favor

Peter wrote much about God's favor in this letter. God favored Christians more than non-Christians. God saves people from their sins. Christians know they will live together with God in heaven forever (see: 1:10-13). God enables Christians in some way to be holy. He enables them to live in a way that honors him (see: 1:13-2:10). God gives Christians special gifts. He empowers them to use these gifts to serve him (see: 4:10). God gives Christians strength when they have hard things in their lives (see: 5:10). In all these ways, God shows favor to people who believe in Jesus.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Grace](#); [Heaven](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

Suffering

Peter wrote about suffering many times in this letter. He did not write about all kinds of suffering. Instead, he wrote that Christians must expect to struggle and suffer because they believe in Jesus. This is because many other people do not believe in Jesus. These people may attack and persecute Christians.

See: [Suffer](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Why Did Peter Write This Letter?

Peter wrote this letter to help Christians keep on trusting in Jesus. He told them to do this even when people do wrong things to them because they believe in Jesus.

Peter wanted Christians to live at peace with other people

He also wanted Christians to know that God favors them. They know they are at peace with God and will live with him in heaven forever. Because of this, Christians can live in a way that honors God. They can do this even when other people oppose them. They can do this even when the devil attacks them.

See: [Grace](#); [Hope](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

Outline of 1 Peter

1. Peter's greetings to people who read this letter (1:1-2)
2. God saves people from their sins by his power (1:3-12)
3. When God saves a person from his sins, it should change things he chooses to do (1:13-2:3)
 1. Christians should choose to let God make them holy (1:13-16)
 2. Christians should choose to worship and honor God (1:17-21)
 3. Christians should choose to love other Christians (1:22-2:3)
4. How Christians should live (2:4-3:12)
 1. Christians are people who belong to God (2:4-10)
 2. Christians show respect to other people, including leaders in the government (2:11-17)
 3. Christians obey Jesus, even when they suffer for it (2:18-25)
 4. Christians demonstrate what a godly marriage looks like (3:1-12)
5. Christians may suffer because they believe in Jesus (3:13-4:11)
 1. Christians may suffer for doing what is right (3:13-17)
 2. Christ also suffered but won (3:18-22)
 3. How Christians should treat non-Christians (4:1-6)
 4. How Christians should treat other Christians (4:7-11)
6. What Christians should do when they suffer (4:12-19)
7. God's favor to Christians (5:1-14)

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Sin](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Worship](#); [Suffer](#)

1 Peter

Chapter 1

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the foreigners of the dispersion, the chosen ones, throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. ² This is according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience and for the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. May grace be to you, and may your peace increase.

³ May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. ⁴ This is for an inheritance that will not perish, will not become stained, and will not fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you. ⁵ You are protected by God's power through faith for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now, for a little while, you may have to suffer all kinds of trials. ⁷ This is for the proving of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes, even though it is tested by fire. This happens so that your faith will be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revealing of Jesus Christ. ⁸ You have not seen him, but you love him. You do not see him now, but you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory. ⁹ You are now receiving for yourselves the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to come to you, searched diligently and examined carefully, ¹¹ inquiring into what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he testified beforehand about the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told to

you by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

13 So gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober. Put your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed. **14** As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the desires that you followed when you were ignorant. **15** But as the one who called you is holy, you, too, be holy in your whole behavior. **16** For it is written, "Be holy, because I am holy." **17** So if you call "Father" the one who judges impartially and according to each person's work, conduct yourselves in fear during your time here as foreigners. **18** You know that it was not with perishable silver or gold that you have been redeemed from the futile behavior that you inherited from your ancestors, **19** but by the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. **20** Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but now he has been revealed to you in these last times. **21** Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. **22** You made your souls pure by obedience to the truth. This was for the purpose of sincere brotherly love; so love one another earnestly from a pure heart. ^[1]**23** You have been born again, not from perishable seed, but from imperishable seed, through the living and remaining word of God. **24** For,

"All flesh is like grass,
and all its glory is like the wild flower of the grass.
The grass dries up, and the flower falls off,
25 but the word of the Lord remains forever."

This word is the gospel that was preached to you.

Footnotes

1:22 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 Peter 1 Commentary

1:1-2

Why did Peter call the people "foreigners"?

[1:1]

Peter wrote to certain people. He called them "foreigners of the dispersion." When Peter lived, the Jews were dispersed or spread out. That is, they lived all over the world and only a few of them lived in Israel. However, Peter was talking about Christians and not Jews. Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that being a Christian made someone different than other people. They were foreign or different from other people in the evil world around them. Fewer scholars think Peter wanted them to know that believing in Jesus was more important than remaining in the country in which they lived or their birth country. At this time, many Christians were forced to move away from their homes or separated from other people like them.

Advice to translators: In some places, people are outcast from their communities. This means that they have been separated from other people who live with or near them. In many places, when someone becomes a Christian, they are treated badly by people who live with or near them.

See: [World](#)

Why did Peter call the people to whom he wrote "chosen ones"?

[1:1]

Peter called Christians “chosen”(ἐκλεκτός/g1588) by God because God planned for something to happen. He planned it before he made the world (see: Ephesians 1:4). The Holy Spirit made God’s plan work. God chose people to obey Jesus. Peter wanted them to know that a Christian needs to obey Jesus every day.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#)

What does "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" mean?

[1:2]

Peter wrote that God said Christians are to be "sprinkled with the blood of Jesus." That is, God continues to forgive Christians. He does this because of Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God. (see: 1 John 1:7).

Advice to translators: The intended meaning of "God keeps forgiving Christians" is that God is always wants to forgive. If there is a way to say "God continually forgives" in your language, use that.

See: [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Blood](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#)

1:3-5

What is a “living hope”?

[1:3]

Peter wrote about a “living hope.” Some scholars think Peter wrote “living hope” because he wanted readers to know God made it so that people could live with him in heaven forever. This is because Jesus resurrected and Christians will too. God said that people who believe in Jesus will physically be with Jesus in heaven. Some scholars also think Peter wrote “living hope” because he wanted Christians to think about a person without hope. Paul also wrote about this (see: Ephesians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:13). Peter wrote about what Jesus gives Christians now. He also wrote about what he gives them in the future with him (see:1:13; 1:21; 3:15).

Advice to translators: In Scripture, hope is a type of confidence. It is about knowing who God is and trusting in the things he will do because he is God.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is the “inheritance” God gives to Christians?

[1:4]

The “inheritance”(κληρονομία/g2817) God gives to Christians is getting to live together with God in heaven after they die. Peter wrote that Christians will inherit someone and this cannot change. Because God promised this, he will give it to those who believe in Jesus. Christians can know that they will live forever. Also, Christian will not sin or be near sin after they die.

Peter said God “protects”(τηρέω/g5083) this inheritance in heaven for Christians. God fully gives this gift, but Christians are not given it until they go to heaven (see: Ephesians 1:14).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

1:6-9

Why did Peter say in “this” you rejoice?

[1:6]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote "in this" Christians rejoice. Some scholars think Peter wrote about how God will “completely save”(σωτηρία/g4991) Christians when Jesus returns to earth. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say how great it is for Christians to know that they have this, even before they die (see: 1:3-5).

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How can Christians be joyful even when bad things happen to them?

[1:6, 1:7]

Peter said that Christians can be joyful when bad things happen to them because they know God's power (see:1:5). Peter said that when bad things happen to Christians, it is a time for them to show how they trust God to care for them. That is, they show they truly and completely believe in God. This allows the Christian to be able to give praise and honor to God now and when Jesus Christ "returns"(ἀποκαλύψις/g602).

Also, Peter wanted Christians to know they can have "joy"(χαρά/g5479) because they know God saved them from their sins. Because of this, he knows that he will be with Jesus. Peter says that this is a kind of joy that is "incredibly wonderful"(δοξάζω/g1392). It is so wonderful that the Christian cannot even talk about it clearly or fully.

See: Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

1:10-12

Why did Peter write about the Old Testament prophets searching the scriptures?

[1:10]

The prophets wanted to know about how God saved people from their sins. The prophets read Old Testament to know more about this. Peter wrote that the prophets read the scriptures carefully to know how God saved people from their sins (see: Matthew 13:16-17). The prophets spoke that the "favor"(χάρις/g5485) of God is greater than what the prophets knew in their lives.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Who is the "Spirit of Christ"?

[1:11]

Peter spoke about the Holy Spirit when he said the "Spirit of Christ." The Holy Spirit told the prophets to know the Messiah was going to come into the world. He was going to suffer to save people from their sins (see: Isaiah 53:3-5). The prophets read the scriptures God gave them to find out who was this Messiah and when this suffering was going to happen.

God told the prophets that what the Messiah was going to do was not going to happen in their lifetimes. He told them that it was going to happen in the future (see: Ephesians 3:4-6). This message was so great that even the angels wanted to know and understand it. That is, not even angels knew what God was going to do to save people.

See: [Angel](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Suffer](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Angel](#)

1:13

Where did Peter tell Christians to place their hope?

[1:13]

Peter told Christians to "place all of their hope"(ἐλπίζω/g1679) in the goodness and favor of God. This he will give them when Jesus Christ "comes back to earth"(ἀποκαλύψις/g602) again. Nobody knows when this is going to happen. But, some scholars think Peter wanted Christians to think it was coming in their future.

Peter also told his readers that they needed to think about how God wanted them to live now. This means everything they needed to honor God and do what he tells them.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

1:14-16

How are Christians to be different after they believe in Jesus?

[1:14, 1:15]

Peter wrote that after someone believes in Jesus, they are to do things differently than when they did not believe in Jesus. They need to completely obey God the Father. That is, they should stop sinning and allow rule their lives and to follow him (see: Romans 6:12-17; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

Peter said that before people believe in Jesus, they want to do things that are evil. They do this because they are "ignorant" (ἄγνοια/g0052). That is, they did not know the things they did dishonored God (see: Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:18).

Only God is "holy" (ἅγιος/g40). That is, only God is perfectly pure and good. But in the same way God is completely pure and holy, Christians are to try to be pure and holy in everything they do. Christians cannot be completely pure and good before they die, but the Holy Spirit helps them. Christians are to change what they do and think to honor God in all they do and think.

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [God the Father](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

1:17

What does Peter say Christians must remember about God?

[1:17]

Peter wrote that Christians need to remember two things about God. Christians can pray to God and call him "Father." This is because Christians are God's children. Christians also need to remember that God judges everyone. That is, he judges Christians and non-Christians. God treats all people with his good and right standard (see: Matthew 16:27; 1 Corinthians 3:13). Because God is the judge, Peter told his readers to live their whole lives here on earth in "reverence" (ψόβος/g5401). That is, Christians need to give honor to God by doing what he says.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [God the Father](#); [Children of God](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

1:18-19

Why did Peter tell Christians to give great respect to God?

[1:18, 1:19]

Peter said Christians need to give great respect to God because they know God "set them free" (λυτρόω/g3084) from sin. Before believing in Jesus, people want to sin and this controls them. God set them free from this and they can know that they have peace with God (see: Mark 10:45; Titus 2:14; Colossians 1:13).

Another reason Christians need to give great respect to God is because of what God did to set people free from their sin. That is, Jesus had to die so that people could be at peace with God. Peter wanted readers to think about how Jesus died on the cross (see: Hebrews 9:13-14; Revelation 5:9). When Peter wrote about "silver or gold," he wanted to say that what Jesus did cost far more than anything on earth.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

1:20-23

When did God plan to save people from their sins?

[1:20]

Peter wrote that, before the "foundation" (καταβολή/g2602) of the world, God planned to save people from their sins. That is, God planned to save people before he created the world. This plan needed Jesus to suffer and die on the cross (see: 1:11,18-19; Acts 2:23). God caused his plan to be done by Jesus in the

last days. All Christians today live in these last days. That is, the last days began when Jesus came to the earth, and they are still continuing.

Because Jesus was the Messiah and did God's plan, Christians believe in God and trust him completely. God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Jesus "glory" (δόξα/g1391). Because God did this, Christians trust in God. They know that God will do all that he promised.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Cross](#); [Last Days](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Why did Peter command Christians to love one another with true love?

[1:22]

Peter gave two reasons why Christians need to love each other with true love. First, God wants Christians to be pure so they can "love" (φιλαδεψία/g5360) other Christians. The Christian "obeys" (ὕπακοή/g5218) all that God commands. This obedience "purifies" (ἀγνίζω/g0048) the Christian's soul. This makes it possible for the Christian to love other Christians. God planned all this (see: 1:2). Second, the Christian is "reborn" (ἀναγεννάω/g0313). That is, born a second time. Peter used a metaphor about a "seed" that cannot die. He wanted to say that the Christian's second birth is from Jesus, and will last forever. The best thing about that seed is "love" (ἀγάπη/g0025). This also makes it possible for the Christian to love other Christians.

Because of these two reasons, Peter told Christians to love each other in the same way God loves them.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Purify \(Pure\)](#); [Soul](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

1:24-25

How did Peter say the "flesh" is different than "the word of the Lord"?

[1:24, 1:25]

Peter quoted from Isaiah that spoke about "flesh" and "the word of the Lord" (see: Isaiah 40:6-8). When he wrote about "flesh," he wanted to talk about how people are before they believe in Jesus. He used the metaphor of grass in a field that dries up and dies. He wanted to say that before people believe in Jesus, nothing they do will remain long. Even the greatest things people do will be destroyed or forgotten. This is because people are born from a "seed" that dies (1:23).

But when people believe in Jesus, they are given a new and a better life. They now want to do things that honor God. This new life is better because it comes from the "word" (ῥῆμα/g4487) of God, which never dies. That is, the word of God is eternal. So the Christian's new life is also eternal. It is this eternal word that is known as the "good news" (εὐαγγελίζω/g2097) that Peter and others told the first Christians. This is the same good news that Christians today hear and believe.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Therefore put aside all evil, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. ² As newborn infants, long for pure spiritual milk, so that through it you may grow in salvation, ³ if you have tasted that the Lord is kind. ⁴ Come to him who is a living stone that has been rejected by people, but that has been chosen by God as valuable to him. ⁵ You also are like living stones that are being built up to be a spiritual house in order to be a holy priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ Scripture contains this:

"See, I am laying in Zion a cornerstone,
chosen and valuable.
Whoever believes in him
will not be ashamed."

⁷ The value, then, is to you who believe. But to those who do not believe,

"The stone that was rejected by the builders,
this has become the head of the corner,"

⁸ and,

"A stone of stumbling
and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word—which is what they were appointed to do. ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession, so that you would announce the wonderful actions of the one who called you out from darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. You did not receive mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I exhort you as foreigners and exiles to abstain from fleshly desires, which fight against your soul. ¹² Your conduct among the Gentiles should be honorable, so that when they slander you as evildoers, they may be eyewitnesses of your good deeds and give glory to God on the day when he appears.

¹³ Be subject to every human authority for the Lord's sake. Obey both the king as supreme ¹⁴ and also the governors, who are sent for the punishment of evildoers and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is God's will, that in doing good you silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. ¹⁶ As free people, do not use your freedom as a covering for wickedness, but be like servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect. Be subject not only to the good and gentle masters, but also to the malicious ones. ¹⁹ For it is praiseworthy if, because he is conscious of God, a person endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For how much credit is there if you sin and then endure while being afflicted? But if you have done good and then you suffer while being punished, this is worthy of praise from God. ²¹ For it is to this that you were called, because Christ also suffered for you. He left an example for you to follow in his steps.

²² "He committed no sin,
neither was any deceit found in his mouth."

²³ When he was insulted, he gave no insult in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten back, but he gave himself over to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself carried our sins in his body on the tree so

that we would die to sin and live for righteousness. By his bruises you have been healed. ²⁵ All of you had been straying like lost sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2

2:1-3

How did Peter say that Christians need to do to honor God?

[2:1, 2:2]

Peter wrote that Christians needed to stop doing the evil things they did before they believed in Jesus. They needed to do the things that honor God.

They needed to stop having "hateful feelings"(κακία/g2549) and "all kinds of deceit"(δόλος/g1388). Christians needed to not "pretend to be someone they are not"(ὑπόκρισις/g5272). That is, a Christian does not need to pretend they do good things when they do not do good things. Christians need to stop all "jealous desires"(φθόνος/g5355) and "speaking evil of other people"(καταλαλιά/g2636).

Peter then wrote about what Christians needed to do to honor God. He used the metaphor of "milk." He wanted to say that Christians needed to want to learn about God. They needed to think and do the same things Jesus thought and did. In the same way babies want milk to live, Christians need to want to do the things Jesus did to live. In the same way milk gives food to babies, the Bible shows Christians how to know God and the things that honor him. Christians also get their "spiritual food" when they listen to a wise teacher who knows what God wants them to do (See: Ephesians 5:1-10).

Peter wrote that Christians want this because they see and know how good God is to them. Peter used the metaphor of "tasting" to talk about this. That is, when Peter wrote that Christians "tasted" that God is good and kind, he wanted to say that they know this because God was kind to them.

Peter also wanted readers to think about 1:22, where he commanded Christians to love each other. Now, in 2:1-3, he wrote how Christians can do this. That is, he wrote what Christians need to do these things if they want to love each other.

See: 1 Corinthians 3:2

See: [Grow in Faith](#); [Hypocrisy \(Hypocrite\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Grow in Faith](#)

2:4-5

What is the "living stone" about which Peter wrote?

[2:4]

Peter used the metaphor "living stone" to speak about Jesus. He wanted to say that in the same way a stone is solid and good to build a house upon, so Jesus is a solid foundation for people to believe in. In the same way a large stone makes a solid physical base for a building, so Jesus is a foundation for his church. Peter wrote about Jesus as the "living"(ζῶν/g2198) stone because God brought him back from the dead after he died on the cross. The same metaphor applies to people who believe in Jesus. That is, when they believe in the living stone, they become living stones.

Peter added to this metaphor by saying that God builds all Christians into a spiritual house. In ancient Israel, people built homes out of stones and clay. In the same way, God builds his kingdom out of people who believe in Jesus. Peter wanted to say that God does not live in a building. The Holy Spirit, who is God, lives in Christians. When Christians do what the Holy Spirit tells them to do, he places them together the way a builder places stones into a house.

These living stones also have something God wants them to do. Peter called them a "household of priests"(ἱεράτευμα/g2406). He wanted to say that they need to worship God. Christians worship God by how they talk and what they do (see: 2: 9). Peter also wanted to say that when Christians worship God, this is the same as "sacrifices"(θυσία/g2378) to God.

When Peter and other Christians talked about Jesus, many people did not believe in Jesus (see: Acts 4:11; Matthew 21:42). But Peter wrote that God “chose”(ἐκλεκτός/g1588) Jesus. So, Jesus has “high value”(ἕντιμος/g1784).

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Church](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Worship](#); [Sacrifice](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

2:6-8

Why did Peter write about the "cornerstone"?

[2:6]

Peter used a metaphor from the Book of Isaiah to say that Jesus is the cornerstone of God's kingdom (see: Isaiah 28:16). The cornerstone is the strongest and most important stone in a building. In the same way, Jesus is the most important part of God's kingdom.

Peter said that people who “believe” or “trust”(πιστεύων/g4100) in Jesus will not be ashamed. They will be given honor. God gave Jesus the highest honor as the cornerstone. In the same way, Christians are given honor by being living stones. That is, God makes them into the spiritual home where God dwells.

However, the people who do not believe in Jesus, the cornerstone, will “stumble”(προσκοπῶ/g4350) and fall. That is, they did not do the right thing and God judges them because they did not do what honors God.

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Shame \(Ashamed\)](#); [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

2:9-10

How did God approve people who believe in Jesus?

[2:9, 2:10]

Peter wrote about how God accepts Christians in six ways: God “chose”(ἐκλεκτός/g1588) to accept Christians because they believe in Jesus (see: Isaiah 43:20-21). God made Christians a royal “priesthood”(ἱεράτευμα/g2406) (see: Exodus 19:5-6). That is, Christians serve and worship God, the King. They show those who do not believe in Jesus who God is and what he does (see: Revelation 20:6). God “set apart”(ἅγιος/g0040) Christians (see: Exodus 19:6). When a person believes in Jesus, God makes them different from those who do not believe in Jesus. That is, Christians show God's goodness by the things that they do to honor God (see: 1:15-16). Christians are people who “belong to God”(περιποίησις/g4047). Because Christians belong to God, they tell other people about the good things God does. Peter wrote that people who are not Christians are in “darkness”(σκοτός/g4655). This is a metaphor he used to talk about how they do not know God. Because they do not believe in God, they do things that are sinful and evil. However, God brought Christians out of the darkness and into the “light”(φῶς/g5457). That is, they can know God and honor him by what they do. God brought Christians together to be his people. That is, in the past, they did not worship God. But now, because they believe in Jesus, God brings Christians together to worship him and to do other things together that honor him. They care for each other in ways that good families care for each other. God gave mercy to Christians. That is, God showed great kindness to his people when he forgave their sins. This was a gift God gave to people who did not deserve this gift.

See: [Mercy](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Worship](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Mercy](#)

2:11-12

Why did Paul call his readers "foreigners and exiles"?

[2:11]

When Peter wrote that his readers were “foreigners and exiles,” he wanted to say that Christians are different than other people. When a person believes in Jesus, God saves them from their sins. He also changes them. Now they do the things that honor God instead of the things that other people in the world want them to do, things that do not honor God. It is as if they become strangers to the world, and they no

longer do the things that other people do. So, Peter used the metaphor of "foreigners" to write about this difference.

See: [Metaphor](#); [World](#); [Metaphor](#)

How should Christians live in a world in which they are strangers?

[2:12]

Peter wrote that Christians need to live differently than other people in the world because they are strangers in the world. Peter "strongly encouraged" ([παρακαλέω/g3870](#)) Christians not to talk or to do things the way they did before they believed in Jesus (see: Colossians 1:13-14). If they keep doing the same things, this will cause conflict inside of them (see: James 4:1-3).

Instead, Christians are to do things in a "good way" ([καλός/g2570](#)) among other people. These people will say bad things about the Christian. But if they see the good things the Christian does, they will give God honor (see: Matthew 5:16).

Peter says this honor will be given to God on the "day of his coming." Some scholars think the day of God's coming talks about a time when God will judge the nations of the world. At this time, all people will honor Jesus as their master (see: Philippians 2:10-11). Other scholars think the day of God's coming is the time when God saves someone from his sins and causes him to become part of God's kingdom. This is because God has favored them.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

2:13-15

Why does Peter instruct Christians to obey earthly rulers?

[2:13]

Peter wrote that Christians need to obey their earthly rulers for two reasons:

Peter said that it was for Jesus. Christians need to obey earthly rulers so that they do not bring dishonor to the name of Jesus because they disobeyed their rulers. Christians understand that earthly rulers were put in their position by God (see: Romans 13:1-7). So, when Christians obey earthly rulers, they are obeying God. They are also following Jesus' example. This brings honor to God. Peter wrote that God deeply wants Christians to do what is good because it will stop people who spoke wrong things about Christians. This means that Christians need to obey their rulers, and continue to do good deeds. That is, unless their rulers try to get them to do something that dishonors God. In this way, people who oppose Christians will not be able to say bad things about them.

See: [Name](#)

2:16-17

What did Peter want to say when he wrote that Christians are "free"?

[2:16]

Peter told Christians to do the things that people who are "free" ([ἐλεύθερος/g1658](#)) do. That is, that they no longer need to sin (see: Galatians 13:13; Romans 6:6-7) because God forgave their sins. Christians must never use their freedom to "cover up" ([ἐπικάλυμμα/g1942](#)) for doing wrong. Instead, Christians serve God. They honor God by how what they do (see: Romans 6:17-19)

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#); [Sinful Nature](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

How do Christians show that they are free?

[2:16, 2:17]

Christians show that they are free by what they do. Because Christians are free, they need to respect all people. Christians are to "love" ([ἀγαπάω/g0025](#)) each other. They are to "revere" ([φοβέω/g5399](#)) and

worship God only. Peter says Christians are to "honor the king." That is, they need to show respect to the one who rules their country.

See: [Fear of God](#); [Love](#); [Fear of God](#)

2:18-20

What does Peter tell Christians to do to serve God?

[2:18]

Peter wrote that a "household servant" (οἰκέτης/g3610) works for his master, giving them "all respect" (φόβος/g5401). That is, servants voluntarily give respect to their masters the way everyone is to respect their rulers (see: 2:17). This is because the Christian has the highest respect for God. Servants should serve masters who are fair or unfair in the same way. This gives honor to God.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

What does Peter say is "praiseworthy"?

[2:19]

Peter wrote that it is "praiseworthy" when a Christian is treated unjustly because he believes in Jesus. That is, God is pleased when Christians trust him when they are being treated badly or suffer. Christians do not need to stop doing things that honor God in order to avoid being punished or mistreated by other people. This is because Christians are to do the same types of things that Jesus did.

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

2:21-25

To what were Christians "called"?

[2:21]

When Peter wrote that Jesus called Christians to "this," he wanted his readers to think about suffering. Some scholars think Jesus called Christians specifically to be falsely accused and mistreatment for simply being Christians. Other scholars think Jesus called Christians specifically to trust God when they suffered for doing what was right (see: John 15:18-20; 2 Timothy 3:12).

See: [Suffer](#)

How was Jesus "reviled"?

[2:23]

Jesus was "reviled" (λοιδορέω/g3058) when people spoke evil thing about him. The rulers insulted Jesus, falsely accused him of things he did not do, and made threats with words in anger. Jesus' trusted God who judges all things in a correct and just way. Jesus did this as an example for Christians to follow (see: 3:9).

What did it mean for a Christian to have "no more part in sin" and to "live for righteousness"?

[2:24]

Paul wrote that Christians needed to have "no more part in sin" and needed to "live for righteousness." He wanted his readers to remember that they no longer have to sin. This is because they believe in Jesus, and God saved them from their sins. Now, they are to do things that honor God. This is what Jesus did. When Jesus died on the cross, he made it possible for people to be at peace with God and to do what God wants them to do. He also made it possible for them to live together with God in heaven forever (see: Isaiah 53:5). None of this is possible before God saves someone from their sins.

See: [Heaven](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Cross](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Peter write, “by his bruises you have been healed”?

[2:24]

When Peter wrote "by his bruises you have been healed," he used a metaphor to talk about how God saves people from their sins. The bruises of Jesus came when the soldiers beat him and then hung him on a cross to die. Peter wanted to say that because Jesus suffered physically, people who believe in Jesus no longer need to suffer in a different way. This was not a physical suffering. Instead, if they believe in Jesus, God will save them from their sins and they will be at peace with God. This is a type of healing.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Cross](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What did Peter want readers to think about when he wrote about the "shepherd and guardian of their souls"?

[2:25]

When Peter wrote about readers returning to the "shepherd and guardian of their souls," he wanted them to think about following Jesus. Some scholars think Peter wrote this to the Jewish people who continued to do things that did not honor God's commands. They think that when some Jewish people believed in Jesus, they began to honor God again. Other scholars think Peter wrote this to both Jews and Gentiles. When he wrote that the Jews and Gentiles "returned" (ἐπιστρέφω/g1994) to the shepherd of their souls, it meant they stopped sinning and started following Jesus, who is the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Soul](#); [Israel](#); [Gentile](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ In the same way, you who are wives should submit to your own husbands. Do this so even if some men are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word, through their wives' behavior, ² having been eyewitnesses of your respectful, pure behavior. ³ Do not let your adornment be outward—the braiding of hair, and putting on of gold ornaments, or the clothing you wear. ⁴ Instead, let your adornment be the inner person of the heart with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious before God. ⁵ For this is how holy women long ago who hoped in God adorned themselves, by submitting to their husbands. ⁶ In this way Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are now her children if you do what is good and if you are not afraid of trouble.

⁷ In the same way, you husbands should live with your wives according to understanding, as with a weaker container, a woman. You should give them honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life. Do this so that your prayers will not be hindered.

⁸ Finally, all of you, be likeminded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, and humble. ⁹ Do not pay back evil for evil or insult for insult. On the contrary, continue to bless, because for this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.

¹⁰ "The one who wants to love life
and see good days
should stop his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit.

¹¹ Let him turn away from what is bad and do what is good.
Let him seek peace and pursue it.

¹² The eyes of the Lord see the righteous,
and his ears hear their prayers.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

¹³ Who is the one who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats. Do not be troubled. ¹⁵ Instead, set apart the Lord Christ in your hearts as holy. Always be ready to give an account to anyone who asks about the hope you have— ¹⁶ however, with meekness and respect. Have a good conscience so that in whatever you are spoken of as evil the people who slander your good life in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ It is better, if it should be God's will, that you suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ Christ also suffered once for sins. He who is righteous suffered for us, who were unrighteous, so that he would bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but he was made alive by the Spirit. ¹⁹ By the Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits who are now in prison. ²⁰ They were disobedient when the patience of God was waiting in the days of Noah, in the days of the building of an ark, and God saved a few people—eight souls—by means of the water. ²¹ This is a symbol of the baptism that saves you now—not as a washing away of dirt from the body, but as the appeal of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. ²² Christ is at the right hand of God. He went into heaven. Angels, authorities, and powers must submit to him.

1 Peter 3

3:1-7

Why did Peter write "in this way"?

[3:1]

When Peter wrote "in this way," he wanted people to think about how they could live in the same way Jesus lived. Peter had just written about how Jesus lived. He honored God when he was arrested and crucified (see: 2:21-25). Scholars think Peter wanted Christians to obey their leaders who ruled over them. He wanted Christians to think about how servants were obeyed and respected their masters (see:

2:13-25). Other scholars remind us that no one deserves more honor than Jesus. However, people beat and killed Jesus. Peter wanted Christians to obey their leaders as much as Jesus did.

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

How was a wife to submit to her husband?

[3:1]

Peter did not make rules about how a wife was to submit to her husband. Some scholars think Peter wanted each husband and wife to decide this between themselves. Peter wrote to wives who were Christians. Peter expected the wife to submit to her husband for "the Lord's sake" (see: 2:13). That is, the wife did this to honor Jesus.

See: [Submit \(Submission\)](#)

Why did Peter write that a husband can be "won without a word"?

[3:1]

Peter wrote that a husband can be "won without a word." He wanted to say that the wife may help the husband to believe in Jesus. Scholars think Peter wrote about a non-Christian husband in this verse. The wife lived in a way that honored God. She did this when she honored and respected her husband. Because she lived in this way, she helped the non-Christian husband to believe in Jesus.

Peter did not want to say the wife had to be silent in the home. Rather, he wanted people to think that what the wife did was more important than what she said (see: 1 Timothy 2:11-12).

What is the "inner person of the heart"?

[3:4]

When Peter wrote the "inner person of the heart", he wanted readers to think about how they thought and felt.

See: [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#); [Heart \(Metaphor\)](#)

How did Peter speak about genuine beauty?

[3:4]

Peter spoke about genuine beauty as not being about how a woman looks. Instead, Peter contrasted the "outward ornaments" (ἐξωθεν/g1855) with the private "inner person" (κρυπτός/g2927). Some scholars think Peter spoke about the things a wife did to make herself beautiful to others. If the wife was concerned with her outward appearance only, then her husband might not see how Jesus changed her life. If the wife was primarily concerned with the ways a Christian thinks and acts, then her husband might see that Jesus made her a better person.

Other scholars think Peter spoke about what Solomon said. In Proverbs, Solomon wrote about how outward beauty did not last, but only the inward beauty (see: Proverbs 31:30).

Advice to translators: In some places, people talk about a woman having two types of beauty. The way a woman looks is a beauty that is on the outside of her. That is, people can see that she is beautiful when they look at her. However, people also talk about a woman being beautiful on the inside. This is a metaphor. She lives in a way that honors God. However, people cannot easily see this by looking at her.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who were the "holy women long ago who hoped in God"?

[3:5]

Peter wrote about "holy women long ago who hoped in God." He was writing about about women in the Old Testament. He spoke about women who trusted what God said. They completely trusted God's

promises. Those women “adorned” themselves with certain things. They wore certain things. This is a metaphor. They lived in a way that honored God and other people could see them do this.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did Sarah think of Abraham as her lord?

[3:6]

When Sarah called Abraham “lord,” she did this because she respected and honored him. She did this because he was her husband. In ancient times, people often used the word “lord” when they wanted to tell someone they respected and honored the person with whom they spoke. The word “lord” also means master. Why did Peter write “not afraid of trouble”?

Scholars disagree about what Peter wanted to say when he wrote “not afraid of trouble.” Perhaps Peter wrote about when a non-Christian husband treated his Christian wife badly. Some scholars think that a Christian wife will not be afraid of any kind of trouble. These scholars think she was treated badly because she was a Christian. Other scholars think Peter wanted Christian wives to do what was right. He wanted them not to be afraid and hate her non-Christian husband.

How does a husband live with his wife “according to understanding”?

[3:7]

A husband lives with his wife “according to understanding” when he knows her very well. Then he lives in a way that honors her by knowing what she needs and wants.

Scholars think the words “according to understanding” (γινώσκεις/g1108) also mean that a husband needs to know what the Bible says about a husband and wife (see: Ephesians 5:21-33). This included knowing what God wanted married people to do. He honors God by saying and doing good things that help her.

Why did Peter write “weaker vessel”?

[3:7]

Peter wrote “weaker vessel” to speak about certain things a woman physically could not do. When Peter lived, most people thought women were physically weaker than men. Peter did not want to say that women were not as smart as men. Women could honor God as much as men could honor God. Some scholars think that when Peter wrote this, he also wanted to say that men were weak, but in a different way than women.

What is “the grace of life”?

[3:7]

The “grace of life” is God's love and care for people. This is a special gift God gives to people who believe in him.

See: [Grace](#)

How are Christian husbands and wives “fellow heirs” of the grace of life?

[3:7]

Christian husbands and wives are “fellow heirs” of the grace of life because they both will live with God forever. This is because they both believe in Jesus.

God values men and women equally (see: Galatians 3:28-29). Peter wrote that men and women are not greater or lesser when speaking about spiritual things. However, in chapter 3, Peter did recognize that in a marriage, the man and woman do different things. That is, the husband has the role of authority within the marriage and the wife the role of helper (see: Genesis 2:18).

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#); [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

3:8-12**Why did Peter write “like-minded”?**

[3:8]

Peter wrote "like-minded." He wanted people to think about people who believed what their ancestors. In the Roman Empire, many people were like-minded and worshipped many gods. These are the same gods their ancestors worshipped. However, Peter did not want Christians to do this (see: 1 Peter 1:18). Instead, Peter encouraged Christians to become “like-minded” in another way. He wanted Christians to think the same things about the gospel that the apostles taught.

See: [Apostle](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Peter write “for this you were called”?

[3:9]

When Peter wrote "for this you were called," he continued to tell Christians that God wants them to be like Jesus. Peter also wrote about this in 1 Peter 2:21. God wants Christians not to attack back people who attack them. The apostle Paul also called Christians to do good things, even if other people do evil things to them (see: Romans 12:17-21). Jesus said Christians should bless and pray for people do evil things to them (see: Luke 6:27-29, 35).

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#)

Why did Peter write that “the eyes of the Lord see the righteous”?

[3:12]

Peter wrote that "the eyes of the Lord see the righteous." He wanted to tell Christians that God knows what happens to them. God will help them in some way. Peter said the same things written in Psalms (see: Psalms 34:12-16). God delivered the righteous out of all their troubles. Many times God delivered the people of Israel.

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

What is "the face of the Lord"?

[3:12]

The "face of the Lord" is a metaphor for God treating someone well. Peter wanted to say that God will not reward people who do wrong things. Instead, he will reward people who trust and obey him.

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

3:13-17**Why did Peter write “who is the one who will harm you”?**

[3:13]

Peter wrote "who is the one who will harm you." He wanted people to think about how people treat other people who do the right things. Normally, no one will punish a person if they do good. Peter wanted people to think about when Christians are harmed even though they do what God wants.

Peter spoke about people saying Christians do bad things when they do not do these things (see: 1 Peter 2:12, 15). People will insult and want to harm Christian (see: 1 Peter 3:9,14).

Christians will be persecuted. However, God will reward him in the end.

See: [Reward](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Reward](#)

Why did Peter write “suffer because of righteousness”?

[3:14]

Peter wrote that Christians sometimes suffer even if they do good things. Christians suffer because they do what God wants, God blesses them. Jesus also said this (see: 1 Peter 4:3-4; Matthew 5:11-12). Because of this, Peter encouraged Christians trust God when they suffered (see: Isaiah 8:12-13).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How do Christians “set apart the Lord Christ” as holy?

[3:15]

Christians are "set apart the Lord Christ as holy" when they believe in him and worship him. Scholars think that when Jesus was alive, many people knew that he was 'holy.' So they honored him. These Christians truly believed that Jesus controlled everything. So they trusted him completely. Because of this, Christians were not afraid of how other people treated them. Peter wanted all Christians to do this.

See: [Worship](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Worship](#)

What is “a good conscience”?

[3:16]

A "good conscience" is when a person does their best not to sin. When they do sin, they repent and ask God to forgive them. In verse 16, Peter wrote about Christians keeping a good conscience when they are insulted for living in a way that honors God.

See: [Sin](#); [Conscience](#); [Sin](#)

3:18-22

Why did Peter write that Jesus “suffered once for sins”?

[3:18]

When Peter wrote that Jesus "suffered once for sins," he wanted Christians to know that Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God.

Some scholars think Peter wanted people to think about the Law of Moses. According to the Law of Moses, people needed to offer sacrifices every day. It also required a special sacrifice once a year (see: Hebrews 7:27; 10:1-4). However, when Jesus sacrificed himself, he was punished for people's sins.

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Atonement \(Atonement\)](#); [Offer \(Offering\)](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Who were the “spirits...now in prison”?

[3:19]

Scholars are not sure who Peter wrote about when he wrote "spirits...now in prison." Some scholars think Peter was writing about people. Perhaps they were people who lived during the days of Noah, but who thought only about doing evil things. They were in hell when Jesus preached to them.

Other scholars think Peter was writing about demons who disobeyed God.

Other scholars think Peter wrote about people who lived and disobeyed in Noah's time, but

See: [Demon](#); [Hell](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Demon](#)

What did Jesus preach?

[3:19]

Scholars think Jesus “preached” through Noah. Peter wrote that Noah preached righteousness (see: 2 Peter 2:5). Because of this, these scholars think the message preached during Noah’s day was a message of repentance and faith.

Other scholars think Jesus preached to condemn the people and angels who disobeyed God when Noah lived.

See: [Angel](#); [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Faith \(Believe in\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Angel](#)

When did Jesus preach?

[3:19]

Scholars disagree about when Jesus preached the things Peter wrote about in verse 19. Scholars who think the “spirits” were people, think that the Spirit of Christ, that is to say the Holy Spirit, preached when Noah lived. Other scholars think that the Spirit of Christ spoke to the “spirits” in hell sometime between when he was buried and when he was resurrected.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Holy Spirit](#); [Hell](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

How were "eight souls" saved “by means of the water”?

[3:20]

When Peter wrote "eight souls," he wanted people to think about Noah and his family. "Souls" is a metaphor for people.

When Peter wrote “by means” of the water, he wanted people to think about how God used the flood's water to remove bad people from the world. However, he rescued Noah and his family. God saved those who obeyed him. He saved eight people in Noah's family.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How were the flood waters during Noah’s day a symbol of baptism?

[3:21]

Peter wrote about the flood when Noah lived. This was a metaphor or symbol of baptism for Christians. Peter wanted his people to know that God judged people and punished them for their sins with the flood. The ark which Noah built was a symbol of how Jesus saves people from their sins. Eight people of Noah’s day were rescued in the ark from God’s judgment. In some way, people who believe in Jesus and appeal to God for a “good” conscience are rescued. That is, God does not punish them for their sins.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Sin](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why did Peter write “Christ is at the right hand of God”?

[3:22]

Peter wrote "Christ is at the right hand of God" to say that God gave Jesus power and permission to rule everything. In ancient times, when a person sat at the right hand of a king, the king gave the power and permission to rule others.

See: Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 10:12, 12:2

See: [Reward](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Therefore, because Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same intention. For whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. ² As a result, such a person, for the rest of his time in the flesh, no longer lives for men's desires, but for God's will. ³ For the time that has passed is enough for you to do the desire of the Gentiles, living in sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, having wild parties, and committing lawless acts of idolatry. ⁴ They think it is strange that you do not join with them in these floods of reckless behavior, so they speak evil about you. ⁵ They will give an account to the one who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this purpose the gospel was preached also to the dead, so that, although they have been judged in the flesh as humans, they may live in the spirit the way God does.

⁷ The end of all things is coming near. Therefore be of sound mind, and be sober in your thinking for the sake of prayers. ⁸ Above all things, have fervent love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without complaining. ¹⁰ As each one of you has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, let it be with God's words. If anyone serves, let it be from the strength that God supplies. Do these things so that in all ways God would be glorified through Jesus Christ. May there be to Jesus Christ glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹² Beloved, do not regard as strange the testing in the fire that has come upon you, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, however much you experience the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for Christ's name, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a meddler. ¹⁶ Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; instead, let him glorify God with that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who disobey God's gospel?

¹⁸ And

"If it is difficult for the righteous to be saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

¹⁹ Therefore let those who suffer because of God's will commit their souls to the faithful Creator in well-doing.

1 Peter 4

4:1-6

Why did Peter write "arm yourselves" with the intent of suffering?

[4:1]

Peter told Christians to "arm themselves" (ὀπλιζω/g3695) with the intent of suffering. That is, knowing they would be persecuted. This was a metaphor. A soldier armed himself with weapons and armor. He used this metaphor to tell Christians to think about suffering in the same way Jesus thought about suffering. That is, Christians should be ready to suffer because they believe in Jesus. As Peter wrote earlier, Christians can expect to suffer for doing what is right, just as Jesus did (see: 1 Peter 2:22-23; 3:17-18).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How does a Christian who "has suffered in the flesh" cease from sin?

[4:1]

Peter wrote about someone who has suffered in the flesh. Some scholars think Peter was speaking about Christians who suffered for doing what is right (see: 1 Peter 3:17). They think that when a Christian suffers for doing what is right, he has chosen to stop sinning. Other scholars think that when a Christian chooses to obey God, he shows he does not want to sin any more.

Peter did not want to say that a Christian stops sinning completely. A Christian will only stop sinning when they die and are with God in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did Peter write “the rest of his time in the flesh”?

[4:2]

Peter wrote "the rest of his time in the flesh" to speak about the rest of a person's life on earth.

According to Peter, what were “men's desires”?

Scholars think that when Peter wrote about "men's desires," he spoke about how people who were not Christians thought. They thought about things they wanted. When they did this, they were doing the wrong thing. Peter also spoke about people doing the wrong things because they did not know the right thing to do. He also spoke earlier about how the things they wanted made “war against the soul” (see: 1 Peter 1:14; 2:11).

See: [Soul](#); [Soul](#)

How does a Christian live “for God's will”?

[4:2]

A Christian lives “for God's will” when he does what God wants. In this letter, Peter wrote about ways a Christian can do what God wants. Peter told Christians to “love one another” (see: 1:22). He also told Christians to “be hospitable” to one another and to “serve one another” (see: 4:9-10).

Advice to translators: Someone who is hospitable welcomes someone who they do not know. They help people they do not know.

See: [Will of God](#)

Who were the “Gentiles” about which Peter wrote?

[4:3]

See: [Gentile](#)

Why did Peter write about people living “in sensuality, passion, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, having wild parties”?

[4:3]

Peter wrote about people living “in sensuality, passion, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, having wild parties.” He wanted people to think about someone who did not live in the right way. They did not control themselves. They wanted to sin, so they did evil things.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What were “disgusting acts of idolatry”?

[4:3]

Peter wrote about "disgusting acts of idolatry." He wanted people to know that some people worshipped idols. A person committed idolatry when they worshipped things in the world or things that people created. They worshipped these things instead of God.

Some scholars think when Peter wrote "disgusting acts," he did not speak about all idolatry. This is because all idolatry is a sin against God. They think Peter spoke about breaking the laws made by the government. That is, even people who were not Christian thought these acts were evil.

See: [Sin](#); [Worship](#); [Sin](#)

Why did Peter write "floods of reckless behavior"?

[4:4]

Peter wrote "floods of reckless behavior." He was writing about people who did more evil things than good things. They lived in a way that was very evil. They loved to sin and constantly sinned. So they did not care that God would punish them for what they did.

See: [Sin](#)

Who is "the one who is ready to judge"?

[4:5]

The "one who is ready to judge" is God.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did Peter write that people will "give an account" to God?

[4:5]

When Peter wrote about people "giving an account" to God, he wanted people to think about the time when God will judge people who lived their lives in "sensuality" (see: 1 Peter 4:3) and spoke against Christians. He used the metaphor of a trial in court, where people are accused of crimes and they have to respond. He wanted to say that God will judge people who continue to live in the wrong way (see: Matthew 12:36).

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did Peter write "the living and the dead"?

[4:5]

Peter wrote "the living and the dead" so people would know that God will judge everyone who is not a Christian (see: Revelation 20:11-15). This is called the Great White Throne Judgment. Peter wanted to say that nobody can escape this judgment just because they die before it happens.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How was the gospel "preached also to the dead"?

[4:6]

Scholars disagree about how the gospel was "preached also to the dead." Some scholars think Peter spoke about the gospel being preached to those who were alive when the preaching happened, but died by the time Peter wrote this letter. That is, Peter spoke about Christians who were dead when he wrote this. Fewer scholars think Peter spoke about Jesus preaching to people in hell (see: 1 Peter 3:18-19).

The reason the gospel was preached was because God was about to judge people (see: 1 Peter 4:5).

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Hell](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

How are Christians "judged in the flesh as humans"?

[4:6]

When Peter wrote about Christians being "judged in the flesh as humans", he wanted to write about Christians dying. In the beginning, Adam sinned (see: Genesis 3). God punished him and all his descendants. Because of this, all people from then on die (see: Romans 5:12-21). All people are punished or judged in this way. Peter wanted to say that Christians also die.

See: [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#); [Ancestor and Descendant \(Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs\)](#)

Why did Peter write "live in the spirit the way God does"?

[4:6]

Peter wrote "live in the spirit the way God does." He wanted people to think about eternal life. For the Christian, when their body dies, their spirit keeps living and it will always live (see: 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). That is, in some way, Christians are able to live forever because of what God did for them through Jesus. Non-Christians also live forever. Their spirit lives in hell forever.

See: [Hell](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Hell](#)

4:7-11

Why did Peter write "the end of all things is coming near"?

[4:7]

Peter wrote "the end of all things is coming near." He wanted people to know that Jesus could return to earth at any time.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How does a person have a "sound mind"?

[4:7]

A Christian has a "sound mind" (σωφρονέω/g4993) when he thinks about things in a right way. That is, he knows how to live at peace with other Christians (see: Romans 12:3; Titus 1:8).

Why did Peter write that Christians need to be "sober in your thinking"?

[4:7]

Peter wrote that people need to be "sober in your thinking" because he wanted Christians to be aware of things going on around them. He wanted them to look for things that did not honor God. They will know that they should not do these things. They will also pray.

See: [Pray \(Prayer\)](#)

What is "fervent love"?

[4:8]

When Peter wrote about "fervent" (ἐκτενής/g1618) love he wrote about helping other Christians to live in a way that honors God. A Christian needs to do this, even if it means not doing what they want to do. They should serve other Christians. A Christian who has "fervent love" does so even when he is treated unkindly.

See: [Love](#)

How does love cover a "multitude of sins"?

[4:8]

Christian love covers a "multitude of sins" because the Christian always seeks to do good to others. That is, this often helps Christians to forgive other people. Peter wanted people to think about being ready to forgive others.

Peter did not want to say that someone who loves can also sin. Instead, he wanted people to forgive others when someone sins against them.

See: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Proverbs 10:12

See: [Love](#); [Forgive \(Forgiveness, Pardon\)](#); [Love](#)

Why did Peter write "be hospitable to one another"?

[4:9]

Peter wrote "be hospitable to one another" to encourage Christians to willingly open their homes to other Christians. This might be another Christian who is traveling or visiting. Sometimes this meant for a Christian to host a group to worship and to learn about the Bible. Christians should do this without complaining or disputing (see: Philippians 2:14).

See: Galatians 6:10

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

How do Christians receive a "gift" ?

[4:10]

Christians receive a "gift" because God gives them something. Peter wrote the word "gift" to show that God freely gives something to each Christian. He did not speak about a gift of money. Instead, he meant God gives them a certain ability that helps them to serve God or other people in some way.

See: [Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)

How do Christians speak "with God's words"?

[4:11]

Many of the gifts given by God to Christians were speaking gifts, that is gifts the person uses when they speak. A Christian who is given a speaking gift needs to be careful that he truly speaks things that agree with God's word, the Bible.

See: [Word of God](#); [Word of God](#)

4:12-19

What is the "testing in the fire" about which Peter spoke?

[4:12]

The "testing in the fire" that Peter wrote about is when a Christian suffers or struggles in life (see: 1 Peter 2:21) because they believe in Jesus. This may happen because other people attack them or persecute them. Peter wanted his people to learn to trust God when they suffered. He wanted them to praise God for the strength he gives them in the middle of the suffering (see: 1 Peter 1:7). Peter wanted Christians to know that they will suffer and struggle.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

How does a Christian "experience the sufferings of Christ"?

[4:13]

In ancient times, when a person became a Christian, they were often persecuted. They were put into prison or even killed. Other people insulted them, or mocked them, or in some way treated them wrong because they believed in Jesus (see: Acts 5:41; 16:25). This may still happen to Christians now. Peter

wanted Christians to know that in some way they share in what Jesus suffered, when this happens to them.

Peter encouraged Christians, however, to “rejoice” when they suffered in this way so that they can rejoice even more when Jesus returns (see: Romans 5:3-5).

See: [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#) ; [Rejoice \(Joy, Joyful\)](#)

When will the "revealing of" Jesus's "glory" happen?

[4:13]

Scholars scholars think Peter spoke about Jesus being “revealed” when he returns to earth. Nobody except God the Father knows when this will happen.

See: [God the Father](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [God the Father](#)

Why did Peter write about the "Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God" resting on Christians?

[4:14]

Peter wrote about the "Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God" resting on Christians to encourage them. Peter wanted Christians not to be discouraged when people spoke badly about them because they believed in Jesus. Peter told them that the Spirit of God would give them strength to endure when other people ridicule them or unfairly treat them (see: Acts 5:40-42).

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What is a “meddler”?

[4:15]

A “meddler” is someone who involves himself in other people’s lives without their permission. This includes people who gossip or say things about certain people to other people and it hurts the people they are talking about.

See: [Gossip](#)

Why did Peter write “if anyone suffers as a Christian”?

[4:16]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote "if anyone suffers as a Christian." Some scholars think Peter wrote about people thinking that Christians are criminals because they believe in Jesus (see: Acts 8:3; 9:1-2). Other scholars think Peter wrote about people being punished because they were Christians.

How does “judgment begin with the household of God”?

[4:17]

When Peter wrote that it is time for "judgment to begin with the household of God," he wanted people to know about how God will treat Christians. The "household of God" is all Christians.

Some scholars think Peter wrote about judgment he wanted Christians to know that this judgment was a type of mercy for Christians. Christians may suffer while they are alive. But God will make them stronger so they can endure the suffering. Then he will judge Christians for the good things they do to serve Jesus.

Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God’s judgement will begin with Christians. It will be a judgment of mercy on Christians. Then God will judge all people who do not believe in Jesus. This will be a judgment of wrath on non-Christians.

See: [Reward](#); [Wrath](#); [Mercy](#); [Reward](#)

Why did Peter tell Christians to “entrust their souls to the faithful Creator”?

[4:19]

Peter told Christians to "entrust their souls to the faithful Creator." He wanted to encourage them to keep trusting in God, no matter what happened to them. Scholars think Peter wanted them to think that all of their suffering was because of God's will for them. He wanted them to trust that God would make their suffering help them to live more in a way that honored God. (see: Romans 5:3-5).

See: [Will of God](#)

Chapter 5

¹ I am exhorting the elders among you, I, who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and am also one who will share in the glory that will be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God would have you serve—not for shameful profit but eagerly. ³ Do not act as lords over those allotted to you. Instead, be examples to the flock. ⁴ Then when the Chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive an unfading crown of glory. ⁵ In the same way, you younger men, submit to the older men. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility and serve one another.

For God is opposed to the proud,
but he gives grace to the humble.

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under God's mighty hand so that he may exalt you in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil is walking around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Stand against him. Be strong in your faith. You know that your brotherhood in the world is enduring the same sufferings. ¹⁰ After you suffer for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will perfect you, confirm you, strengthen you, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹² I regard Silvanus as a faithful brother, and I have written to you briefly through him. I am exhorting you and I am testifying to you that what I have written is the true grace of God. Stand in it. ¹³ The woman who is in Babylon, who is chosen together with you, greets you. Also Mark, my son, greets you. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love.

May peace be to you all who are in Christ.

1 Peter 5

5:1-4

Who were the “elders”?

[5:1]

See: [Elder](#)

Why did Peter write the word “exhorting”?

[5:1]

Peter wrote "exhort" because he wanted the other elders to work hard to serve the church.

Advice to translators: The word “exhort” meant to encourage or to make a serious request.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why did Peter say he was a “witness of the sufferings of Christ”?

[5:1]

Scholars disagree about why Peter said he was a "witness of the sufferings of Christ." Some scholars think Peter saw Jesus when he was beaten and crucified (see: Luke 22:28, 54-62; John 18:15-27). Other scholars think that Peter was a “witness”(μάρτυς/g3144) because he spoke about how Jesus suffered, but he did not actually see Jesus suffer. Other scholars think Peter both saw Jesus suffer and told other people about the things he saw.

See: [Crucify \(Crucifixion\)](#)

How was Peter “one who will share in the glory that will be revealed”?

[5:1]

Scholars think Peter was “one who will share in the glory that will be revealed” in two different ways: He will share in the glory that God will reveal to all Christians when Jesus returns to earth. He will share in a certain type of glory with Jesus (see: Matthew 19:28). The other apostles will also share this glory.

See: [Apostle](#); [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Apostle](#)

What was a “shepherd of God’s flock”?

[5:2]

A “shepherd of God’s flock” was a metaphor. He was writing about the Christian leaders. They taught Christians the word of God. They also warned Christians not to listen to certain teachers who taught the wrong things. These teachers wanted Christians to stop trusting in Jesus.

See: [Word of God](#); [Shepherd](#); [Word of God](#)

Why did Peter write that a church leader must not serve for “shameful profit”?

[5:2]

Peter wrote that a Christian leader must not serve for "shameful profit." He wanted them to know why people should become leaders in the church. Peter warned that there were some Christian leaders who wanted to make money because they were Christian leaders. Peter wrote that they shamed themselves if they did this. Instead, he wanted them to simply serve God by teaching and caring for Christians.

Some scholars think Peter spoke about teachers who only wanted to be leaders so that people would honor them. They did not serve God with humility.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why did Peter warn church leaders not to “act as a master over the people in your care”?

[5:3]

Peter warned the church leaders not to "act as a master over the people" in their care to tell them to lead in the church in a way that honors God. That is, he did not want them to act like someone who ordered slaves around. He did not want them to be proud and arrogant. Instead, Peter wanted them to think about helping other Christians to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Who is the “Chief Shepherd”?

[5:4]

The “Chief Shepherd” is Jesus, who is the messiah. He alone will judge what the Christian leaders do when He returns to earth.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What is the “crown of glory”?

[5:4]

The "crown of glory" is a metaphor. He was writing about how God will honor people who serve him well. When Peter lived, crowns were given to people as a reward or to show people special honor. Some scholars think Peter used the “crown of glory” as a metaphor to say that God will show special honor to leaders who served him well. Other scholars think Peter used “crown of glory” as a metaphor to say that God will honor all Christians in a special way when Jesus returns.

See: [Reward](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Reward](#)

5:5-11**Why did Peter write that “God resists the proud”?**

[5:5]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote that "God resists the proud." When a person "resists" (ἀντιτάσσω/g0498) someone, he opposes what they do. That is, he works against it. Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that God opposes a proud person. They think he used the metaphor about people who opposed each other in battle. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God turns his back on proud people. That is, he will not honor or reward them because of their pride. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God refuses to listen to proud people.

See: [Reward](#); [Metaphor](#); [Reward](#)

How do people humble themselves “under God’s mighty hand”?

[5:6]

People humble themselves "under God's mighty hand" when they decide to follow and serve God. They do this because they understand that he is greater than they are. Some scholars think Peter spoke about people accepting and following the wisdom of God instead of following the ideas of the world. Other scholars think Peter spoke about people following God because God always accomplishes what he wants to do (see: Job 42:1-3; Micah 6:8).

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#); [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

Why did Peter write that God "may" lift up Christians?

[5:6]

When Peter wrote that God "may" lift up Christians, he wanted people to know that God does not have to do this. Peter wanted people to know that God will do it if they continue to serve God and honor him. However, if they do not continue to serve God and honor him, then God may choose not to reward them.

See: [Reward](#)

Why did Peter write that God will "lift up" Christians?

[5:6]

Peter wrote that God will "lift up" Christians to say that God will bless or honor or reward them in some way. That is, he used the metaphor of a person being lifted up out of a hole, or being raised to some high position. God lifts Christians up when he gives a spiritual blessing to them, or allows them to have a closer fellowship with God. God sometimes gives greater responsibility to church leaders who are humble (see: Luke 16:10). This is a way of lifting them up.

See: [Church](#); [Reward](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Bless \(Blessing\)](#); [Fellowship](#); [Church](#)

Why did Peter write that God will lift up Christians “in due time”?

[5:6]

Peter wrote that God will lift up Christians "in due time" to say that when God chooses, he will bless or honor or reward them in some way. Many scholars think Peter spoke about God relieving Christians from suffering or hardship when he thinks best.

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

Why did Peter write “cast all your anxiety” on God?

[5:7]

Peter wrote "cast all your anxiety" on God to tell Christians to trust God instead of worrying about what is happening to them. Some scholars think that when Peter wrote this, he wanted people to pray and ask God to help people to stop worrying. That is, Christians need to remember that God knows everything and he is the only one who can calm Christians when they worry.

Why did Peter tell Christians to be “sober” and “watchful”?

[5:8]

Peter told Christians to be "sober" and "watchful." He wanted to warn them not to pay attention to any wrong ideas about God. There are many false teachers in the church who spread wrong ideas. Christians may be misled by people who talk about things in the world that do not honor God. Peter warned the Christian must not start believing wrong ideas about God and the Bible.

See: [Church](#)

How is the devil like a “roaring lion”?

[5:8]

The devil is like a "roaring lion" because he is very strong. Scholars think Peter used a metaphor to speak about how the devil wants to destroy any person who believes in Jesus. That is, the devil wants Christians to believe the wrong things and do the wrong things.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How can Christians “stand against” the devil?

[5:9]

Christians can "stand against" the devil when they keep trusting in Jesus no matter what happens. Some scholars think that to “stand against”(ἀνθίστημι/g0436) the devil is to oppose him. That is, Christians need to keep believing the right things. They need to reject things that are not taught in the Bible. They need to always speak against the devil. Other scholars think Peter encouraged Christians to trust God. That is, Christians need to trust that God gives Christians a way to resist the devil when the devil attacks them.

See: Ephesians 6:10-18; James 4:7

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What was "your community of believers"?

[5:9]

When Peter wrote "your community of believers," he spoke about the church. Some scholars think he wanted to speak about a group of Christians living in one place. Other scholars think he wanted to speak about all Christians everywhere.

See: [Church](#)

What were “the same sufferings”?

[5:9]

When Peter wrote "the same sufferings," he told Christians that they will experience the same kinds of sufferings as other Christians experienced in their lives. Peter wanted Christians to know that suffering is common for people who believe in Jesus.

See: [Suffer](#)

Why did Peter write “after you suffer for a little while”?

[5:10]

Peter wrote "after you suffer for a little while." He wanted Christians to know that when they suffer because they believe in Jesus, it will end. Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that only God knows how long every Christian can endure suffering. That is, God is the only one that knows how difficult the suffering will be for any Christian. So, he will make sure the person does not suffer more than that. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that Christians can expect to suffer while they live on this earth. However, when Jesus returns to the earth, Christians will not suffer anymore.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How will God "perfect" Christians?

[5:10]

Peter wrote that God will "perfect"(καταρτίζω/g2675) Christians. He wanted to say that in some way God will make Christians more like Jesus. Scholars think that God does something while Christians are alive to make them live in the same way Jesus lived. That is, they live in a way that honors God.

Some scholars think God will complete this before the person dies. Other scholars think that God will "perfect" Christians by doing something to them after Jesus returns to earth.

See: Romans 8:29; Philippians 1:6

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How will God "establish" Christians?

[5:10]

God will "establish" Christians. That is, in some way, God will help Christians them to trust in him more. Some scholars think that when Christians suffer, God uses the suffering to show them how to trust in God more. Other scholars think that God does this by showing people that his promises are true. He does this, even when the Christian is suffering.

How will God "strengthen" Christians?

[5:10]

God will "strengthen" Christians. That is, in some way, God will help Christians them to endure suffering. Some scholars think that when Christians suffer, God uses it to help them trust God's power more. That is, God uses his power to help them through their suffering. Other scholars think God uses suffering to prepare Christians to endure even more suffering.

See: [Grace](#); [Grace](#)

Who is the "woman who is in Babylon"?

[5:13]

Scholars disagree about the "woman who is in Babylon." Some scholars think the woman was Peter's wife. Other scholars think he used "woman" as a metaphor for the church. Other scholars think "Babylon" was the actual city of Babylon. Other scholars think "Babylon" was a metaphor for Rome.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Babylon; Rome

Book: 2 Peter

Introduction to 2 Peter

Overview

Peter wrote this letter to encourage Christians to help them live in the same way Jesus lived. That is, he wanted to help them live in a way that honors God. He wanted them to learn more about Jesus. Peter wanted them to do this because there were people who taught the wrong things about God, false prophets, and people mocked them. The false teachers tried to convince Christians to believe in them and to follow them instead of Jesus. Peter used the word “knowledge” sixteen times in this letter. He did this to make clear to Christians that if they learned more about Jesus and what Jesus taught, it would help them to reject the false teachers. Peter also wanted people to know about when Jesus will return to earth.

See: [False Prophet](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Who wrote this letter?

Peter wrote this letter. He was a servant and an apostle of Jesus who is the Messiah.

See: [Apostle](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

To whom did Peter write this letter?

Scholars think Peter wrote to the same group of Christians to whom he wrote his first letter (see: Introduction to First Peter). That is, he wrote it to the Christians who were scattered out into five different regions in what is now Turkey.

However, Peter also wrote this second letter to all Christians. That is, he knew other Christians would read this letter. So he wrote things to help all Christians. He wrote to “those who have received the same precious faith as we have received,” that is, all Christians.

See: [Faith \(Believe in\)](#)

What did Peter write about in this letter?

Peter wrote to encourage Christians. He encouraged the Christians to work very hard to learn more about Jesus. Peter spoke about trusting in God more than they did before.

Peter really wanted to know that true prophecy did not come from what people thought. Instead, it came from the Holy Spirit. He wrote this because there were many false teachers and false prophets. These people taught the wrong things about Jesus. Peter said these things destroyed a person’s trust in God. Peter warned the Christians to avoid the false teachers and prophets. He taught that the things they taught made people think bad things about Christians.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Holy Spirit](#); [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#)

Why did Peter write this letter?

Peter wrote this letter to encourage Christians. He wanted them to keep believing the right things about God. He wanted them not to be tricked into believing the wrong things the false teachers and false prophets said. Peter spoke about “knowledge” sixteen times in this letter. He wanted Christians to know Jesus very well. Then they can quickly recognize false teaching. They can reject the false teaching.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#)

2 Peter

Chapter 1

¹ Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received the same precious faith as we have received, faith in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

² May grace and peace increase in measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ By his divine power, all things for life and godliness have been given to us through the knowledge of him who called us through his own glory and excellence. ⁴ Through these he gave us precious and great promises, so that you might be sharers in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world that is caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this reason, do your best to add goodness to your faith, and to goodness add knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge add self-control, to self-control add endurance, to endurance add godliness, ⁷ to godliness add brotherly love, and to brotherly love add love. ⁸ If these things are in you and grow in you, they will keep you from being barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever lacks these things is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, do your best to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, you will not stumble. ¹¹ In this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

¹² Therefore I will always be ready to remind you of these things, although you know them, and although you are strong in the truth you now have. ¹³ I think it is proper for me, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by way of reminder. ¹⁴ For I know that the putting off of my tent will be soon, because our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed this to me. ¹⁵ I will make every effort to see that after my departure you may always be able to remember these things. ¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly invented myths when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father when a voice was brought to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with him I am well pleased." ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice brought from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ For we have the prophetic word made more certain, to which you would do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever brought by the will of man, but men spoke from God when they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1 Commentary

1:1-11

Why did Peter call himself a "slave"?

[1:1]

Peter called himself a "slave." This is a metaphor. He served and obeyed God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What was an "apostle"?

[1:1]

See: [Apostle](#)

Why did Peter write "the same precious faith"?

[1:1]

When Peter wrote "the same precious faith," he wanted people to know that all Christians shared the same kind of faith. That is, God did not give some Christians better faith than others. So, Peter did not think he had a different kind of faith because he was an apostle.

See: [Apostle](#); [Apostle](#)

Why did Peter write “faith in the righteousness of our God”?

[1:1]

When Peter wrote "faith in the righteousness of our God," he wanted Christians to know that God forgives their sins because he is righteous. This is the only reason God forgives people. So, God does not declare people to be “righteous” because of anything they have done.

See: [Sin](#); [Apostle](#); [Sin](#)

What was the “knowledge of God” about which Peter spoke?

[1:2]

Peter spoke about “knowledge”(ἐπίγνωσις/g1922). This was more than simply learning things about God, Jesus, and the Bible. Peter wanted Christians to study the Bible. When Christians do things they learn from scripture, they trust God more.

See: Philippians 3:8, 10

What were the “things concerning divine power”?

[1:3]

When Peter wrote about "things concerning divine power," he wanted people to understand how he knew what he wrote. Peter wanted Christians to know that Jesus is the source of the power that helps them to live in a way that honors God.

What is “life and godliness”?

[1:3]

Some scholars think “life and godliness” were two separate things. They think Peter wrote "life" to speak about eternal life. They think he wrote "godliness" to speak about how a Christian lives.

Other scholars think “life and godliness” was just one idea. They think Peter wanted to speak about how Christians can live in a way that honors God.

See: [Eternal Life](#); [Eternal Life](#)

Why did Peter write that God called people through his “glory and excellence”?

[1:3]

Peter wrote that God called people through his "glory and excellence" so people would know that God wants them to become Christians because God is good. God is glorious. The “excellence”(ἀρετή/g0703) of God is a way of speaking about God. God is good. This is why he calls people to believe in Jesus.

See: 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Ephesians 2: 4-9

See: [Grace](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Love](#); [Mercy](#); [Grace](#)

How are Christians “sharers in the divine nature” of God?

[1:4]

Peter wrote that Christians are "sharers in the divine nature" of God. That is, when people become Christians, God begins to make them like him in some way. However, people do not become gods.

See: 1 Peter 1:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

How do Christians escape “the corruption in the world”?

[1:4]

Christians escape "the corruption in the world" by obeying what Jesus taught. Before believing in Jesus, people cannot live in a way that honors God. This is because of sin. After believing in Jesus, people can choose to live in a way that honors God (see: Romans 6:12-14), that is things that honor God.

See: [World](#)

Why did Peter write that Christians should “add goodness” to their faith?

[1:5]

Peter wrote that Christians should "add goodness" to their faith so people would know that when they believe in Jesus, it should change how they live.

Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that Christians must try hard to be good and live in the same way Jesus lived.

How does a Christian add “knowledge” to his faith?

[1:5, 1:6]

A Christian adds “knowledge”(γνῶσις/g1108) by studying the Bible. When he studies the Bible, he will learn how to make wise decisions in life. By studying the Bible he learns how God wants his people to live.

See: [Wise \(Wisdom, Fool\)](#)

What is “self-control”?

[1:6]

"Self-control" is a way to speak about a person choosing to do the right things instead of the wrong things. Some scholars think a Christian who has “self-control” is a person who keeps himself from doing evil things. He does this even if he wants to do something wrong. Other scholars think a Christian who has “self-control” works hard to live in a way that honors God.

What is “endurance”?

[1:6]

“Endurance”(ὑπομονή/g5281) is to be patient even when hard things happen to you. That is, a Christian must continue living in a right way. He must keep trusting in God’s promises even when he is suffering.

What is “godliness”?

[1:6, 1:7]

See: [Godly \(Godliness\)](#)

Why did Peter write “brotherly affection”?

[1:7]

Peter wrote "brotherly affection" to say that Christians are commanded to love other Christians in the same way someone should love their own family.

Why did Peter write “you will not be barren or unfruitful” in the knowledge of Jesus?

[1:8]

When Peter wrote that Christians will not be “barren”(ἀργός/g0692), he said they would not be useless to God.

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

How can a person be “so nearsighted that he is blind”?

[1:9]

Peter wrote that a person can be "so nearsighted that he is blind." This is a metaphor. Peter was writing about people who could not understanding anything at all that God wants. Or perhaps they only understood some of what God wanted.

See: 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Why did Peter write that Christians need to make “your calling and election sure”?

[1:10]

Peter wrote that Christians need to make their "calling and election sure". That is, when Christians live in a way that honors God, it proves to themselves and other people that they are at peace with God. This is because God changes people after they believe in Jesus.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

Why did Peter write that Christians “will not stumble”?

[1:10]

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

What is the “eternal kingdom”?

[1:11]

The "eternal kingdom" is the Kingdom of God.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

1:12-21

What is the “tent” about which Peter spoke?

[1:13]

Peter spoke about a “tent”(σκήνωμα/g4638). This was a metaphor. He was speaking about his body.

See: [Soul](#); [Soul](#)

Why did Peter write that the “putting off” of his tent would be soon?

[1:14]

Peter wrote that the "putting off" of his tent would be soon. This is a metaphor. Peter wanted people to know that he was about to die.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:53-54

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did Peter write “after my departure”?

[1:15]

When Peter wrote “after my departure”(ἔξοδος/g1841), he spoke about after he died.

See: Luke 9:28-31

What were “cleverly invented myths”?

[1:16]

When Peter wrote about "cleverly invented myths", he spoke about stories other people told. These stories were untrue, but people made them sound as if they were true. Peter warned about false teachers who taught them the wrong things (see: 2 Peter 2:1-3).

See: [False Teacher](#)

What is the “power and the coming” of Jesus?

[1:16]

Scholars think that when Peter wrote about the “power and the coming” of Jesus, he spoke about when Jesus will return to earth. That is, people will know that Jesus is powerful when he returns (see: Matthew 24:30).

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

How were Peter and others “eyewitnesses of his majesty”?

[1:16]

When Peter said he and other disciples were "eyewitnesses of his majesty," he spoke about when Jesus was transfigured (see: Matthew 17:1-3). This happened in front of Peter, James, and John. This showed Peter, James, and John just how great Jesus is.

See: [Disciple](#); [Disciple](#)

What was the “majestic glory”?

[1:17]

Some scholars think Peter used the words “majestic glory” to speak about God who has great glory. Other scholars think Peter wrote about the bright cloud from which a voice spoke when Jesus was transfigured (see: Matthew 17:5).

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Who was the “beloved Son”?

[1:17]

The "beloved Son" was Jesus. The words “beloved”(ἀγαπητός/g0027) Son spoke about the highest kind of love that God the Father could express. Some scholars think the words also spoke about Jesus as the Messiah.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Son of God](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

What was the “holy mountain” about which Peter spoke?

[1:18]

The “holy mountain” about which Peter spoke was the mountain on which Jesus was transfigured. This happened in front of Peter, James, and John. So Peter wrote "we ourselves heard this voice" in verse 18.

See: [Transfigure \(Transfiguration\)](#)

What was the “prophetic word”?

[1:19]

When Peter wrote about the “prophetic word,” he spoke about the prophecies in the Old Testament. Many of these prophecies spoke about when Jesus came to the earth. Because Peter and the other apostles saw Jesus, the Old Testament prophecies “were made more sure”. That is, the apostles could tell people that Jesus fulfilled these prophecies. So they knew they were completely true.

See: [Apostle](#) ; [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Apostle](#)

What was the “lamp shining in a dark place”?

[1:19]

Peter wrote about a “lamp shining in a dark place.” This was a metaphor. He was speaking about the Old Testament. A lamp showed people where to go when they walked in the dark. In the same way, the Old Testament told people about Jesus, the Messiah.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was the “morning star”?

[1:19]

The “morning star” was a metaphor to speak about Jesus, who is the Messiah. The morning star was a bright star that rose just before dawn. It gave light at the end of each night. In some way, Jesus brought light to people. This was so that they might come to know God.

See: Revelation 22:16

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

What was “prophecy”?

[1:20]

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why did Peter write “no prophecy comes from someone’s own interpretation”?

[1:20]

When Peter wrote “no prophecy comes from someone's own interpretation”, he wanted people to know that prophets spoke what God told them. Some scholars think Peter said that none of the Old Testament prophets spoke by their own power. They did not speak about their own ideas. Instead, they spoke about what God told them to say (see: 2 Peter 1:21). Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that no person had the right to interpret the Bible according to their own ideas (see: 2 Peter 2:1).

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

Why did Peter write “the will of man”?

[1:21]

Peter wrote “the will of man” to talk about people who taught their own ideas instead of what God said. These people were sometimes called “false teachers” by the writers of the New Testament.

Peter wanted people to be certain that no prophecy in the Bible was what a prophet thought of, or what other people wanted him to say. God gave them the thoughts that they wrote.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Chapter 2

¹ False prophets came to the people, and false teachers will also come to you. They will secretly bring with them destructive heresies, and they will deny the master who bought them. They are bringing quick destruction upon themselves. ² Many will follow their sensuality, and through them the way of truth will be slandered. ³ In their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation has been coming for a long time, and their destruction is not asleep. ⁴ For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but delivered them into hell to be kept in chains of darkness until the judgment, ^[1]⁵ and if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others when he brought a flood on the world of the ungodly. ⁶ and if he reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes and condemned them to destruction as an example of what is to happen to the ungodly, ⁷ but delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the sensual behavior of lawless people— ⁸ for that righteous man, who was living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds— ⁹ if the Lord did these things, then he knows how to rescue godly men out of trials and how to hold unrighteous men in custody so they can be punished on the day of judgment. ¹⁰ This is especially true for those who walk after the corrupt desires of the flesh and who despise authority. Bold and self-willed, they do not tremble when they blaspheme the glorious ones. ¹¹ Angels have greater strength and power, but they do not bring insulting judgments against them to the Lord. ¹² But these people are like unreasoning animals, born for capture and destruction. They do not know what they insult. In destruction they also will be destroyed, ¹³ suffering harm as a reward for doing harm. They think that luxury during the day is a pleasure. They are stains and blemishes. They enjoy their deceitful actions while they are feasting with you. ^[2]¹⁴ They have eyes full of adultery; they are never satisfied with sin. They entice unstable souls into wrongdoing, and they have their hearts trained in greed. They are cursed children! ¹⁵ They have abandoned the straight way and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to receive payment for unrighteousness. ^[3]¹⁶ But he obtained a rebuke for his own transgression—a mute donkey speaking in a human voice stopped the prophet's insanity. ¹⁷ These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. The gloom of thick darkness is reserved for them. ¹⁸ They speak with vain arrogance. Through the lusts of the flesh, through sensuality, they entice people who are trying to escape from those who live in error. ¹⁹ They promise freedom to them, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For a man is a slave to whatever overcomes him. ²⁰ If they have escaped the corruptions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²² This proverb is true for them: "A dog returns to its own vomit, and a washed pig returns to the mud."

Footnotes

2:4 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

2:13 ^[2]Some ancient copies of the Greek text read,

2:15 ^[3]Many modern translations read

2 Peter 2

2:1-3

What were “false prophets”?

[2:1]

False prophets were people who said they were prophets but they were not. They said that God gave them things to say, but these people were lying.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

What were “destructive heresies”?

[2:1]

A “heresy”(αἵρεσις/g0139) is a teaching about God which is not true. These things harmed people. Perhaps these people believed they were at peace with God when they were not. They needed to believe the right things to be at peace with God.

See: [Heresy](#)

How did the false prophets and teachers “deny the master”?

[2:1]

Scholars disagree about how the false prophets and teachers “denied the master,” Jesus. Some scholars think Peter wrote about people who said they believed Jesus. However, they did not obey what Jesus taught. The things they taught were different from what Jesus taught. Other scholars think the false teachers denied Jesus by saying things about him that were not true. Some false teachers denied the gospel.

See: 2 Timothy 3:5

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did Peter write about “quick destruction”?

[2:1]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote “quick destruction.” Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote “quick”. They also disagree about why he wrote “destruction”.

Some scholars think Peter used the word “quick”(ταχινός/g5031) to say that some kind of punishment for the false prophets and teachers was going to happen soon. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God could judge all people who sin might happen at any moment.

Some scholars think the “destruction” about which Peter spoke was the final judgment of God. This will happen when Jesus returns to earth. Other scholars agree that Peter said the false prophets will be destroyed when God judges them. God will send them to hell when they die. However, these scholars think God will punish them before they die.

See: [Hell](#); [Prophet](#); [Sin](#); [Day of Judgment](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Hell](#)

Who were the “many” about which Peter spoke?

[2:2]

Some scholars think that Peter wrote “many” to speak about the false prophets and teachers from verse 1. Other scholars think Peter spoke about “many” people who claimed to be Christians. However, some of those people did not really believe in Jesus.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Teacher](#)

Why did Peter write “follow their sensuality”?

[2:2]

Peter said people will follow their “sensuality”(ἀσέλγεια/g0766). He was writing about people who did the evil things they wanted to do (see: 1 Peter 4:3).

What is the “way of truth”?

[2:2]

The “way of truth” is the way Jesus and the apostles taught Christians to live.

See: [Apostle](#)

How is the way of truth “blasphemed”?

[2:2]

When Christians did what the false prophets and teachers taught, it caused other people to say bad things about the things Jesus and the apostles taught. When they did this, they spoke against God. They said the things God taught were not true.

See: [Apostle](#); [Prophet](#); [Apostle](#)

How did the false teachers “exploit” Christians with “deceptive words”?

[2:3]

False teachers used “deceptive words.” They created stories so people would reject the gospel. Jesus permitted Christian teachers to make money from teaching and preaching the gospel. They could make money to live, but they should not try to become very rich. Scholars think the false teachers began to “exploit”(ἐμπορεύομαι/g1710) people and tried to become rich by teaching people (see: 1 Timothy 6:3-5).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Why did Peter write “their condemnation has not been idle”?

[2:3]

Peter wrote their “condemnation has not been idle.” He wanted people to know that God already decided to punish the false teachers. He wanted people to know that God will punish them soon.

See: [False Teacher](#); [Punish \(Punishment\)](#); [False Teacher](#)

Why did Peter write “their destruction is not asleep”?

[2:3]

Peter wrote that the destruction of the false teachers “is not asleep.” He wanted people to know that God already started to destroy the false teachers. Scholars think that just as God will certainly punish the false teachers, he will also destroy the false teachers.

2:4-9

Who were the “angels who sinned”?

[2:4]

When Peter wrote about “angels who sinned”, he wanted people to think of angels who rebelled against God. Scholars do not know when this happened. Jude wrote about angels who heaven (see: Jude 1:6). These angels are now called demons.

See: Genesis 6:1-4

See: [Heaven](#); [Sin](#); [Demon](#); [Heaven](#)

What were “chains of lower darkness”?

[2:4]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote “chains of lower darkness.” Some scholars think this was a metaphor. Peter was speaking about the angels who sinned and then were kept in darkness. Other scholars think the darkness itself was like a chain, because the angels could barely move because of the darkness. Those angels will be kept in this darkness until Jesus returns to judge the whole world.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Judge \(Judgment\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Angel](#); [Demon](#); [Sin](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Peter write that God “did not spare the ancient world”?

[2:5]

When Peter wrote that God “did not spare the ancient world,” he spoke about the world before the flood when Noah lived (see: Genesis 7:17-24). That is, Peter wanted people to think about how God used the flood to punish the people when Noah lived. He did this to punish them for their sins.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

How was Noah a “herald of righteousness”?

[2:5]

Noah was a “herald”(κῆρυξ/g2783) of righteousness. That is, he preached about righteousness. Scholars think that Noah obeyed God and this made other people think about the righteousness of God. God said that Noah was a righteous man (see: Genesis 7:1).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Where was Sodom and Gomorrah?

[2:6]

See: Genesis 14

See Map: Sodom and Gomorrah

Why did Peter call Lot a “righteous” man?

[2:7]

Peter called Lot a “righteous” man because Lot obeyed God even while Lot lived in Sodom. Sodom and Gomorrah were considered to be cities where people did evil things.

See: Genesis 14

See: [Righteous \(Righteousness\)](#)

See Map: Sodom and Gomorrah

Why did Peter write that God “knows how to rescue godly men out of trials”?

[2:9]

Peter wanted all Christians to know that God will help people who trust him when they are severely challenged. That is, just as God rescued both Noah and Lot, he can also rescue Christians from their trials.

See: 1 Corinthians 10:13

See: [Trial](#)

What was the “day of judgment”?

[2:9]

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

2:10-22**Why did Peter write “corrupt desires of the flesh”?**

[2:10]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote "corrupt desires of the flesh." Some scholars think Peter wanted people to know that there were evil people when Noah and Lot lived. There were also evil people and false teachers when Peter lived. Other scholars think Peter was writing about certain sins the people of Sodom did.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

How do people “despise authority”?

[2:10]

Peter wrote about people who “despise”(καταφρονέω/g2706) authority. He was speaking about people who hated leaders. Some scholars think Peter spoke about leaders who said they believed the things Jesus taught, but they did not obey Jesus. They also did not honor Jesus.

How were people “self-willed”?

[2:10]

When Peter wrote about people who were “self-willed” he spoke about people who always wanted to do whatever they wanted to do. They did not want to do what other people wanted to do. They did not obey leaders. Instead, they wanted other people to do the things they taught.

How did someone “blaspheme the glorious ones”?

[2:10]

Scholars disagree about how people "blasphemed the glorious ones." Some scholars think that Peter spoke about people who say evil things about someone in heaven. Some of these people even deny that these people exist. Fewer scholars think that Peter wrote “blaspheme the glorious ones” to speak about people who spoke evil against leaders in his church whom God has chosen.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

What were “insulting judgments”?

[2:11]

When Peter wrote "insulting judgments," he wanted people to know that these angels were strong and powerful, yet they did not judge people. Some scholars think the angels did not judge people in heaven. This is because the angels know that God is the only judge. Others scholars think Peter said the angels in heaven did not judge demons. Other scholars think that angels in heaven did not judge false teachers or religious leaders.

See: [Heaven](#); [Angel](#); [Demon](#); [Heaven](#)

Who did Peter call “unreasoning animals”?

[2:12]

Scholars think Peter called the false teachers and prophets "unreasoning animals." This is a metaphor. He was speaking about these false leaders. Animals live always do the things they want to do. Peter wanted to say that in some way these prophets and teachers only do the things they want to do. That is, they did not try to do the right things.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did Peter write “reward of their wrongdoing”?

[2:13]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote "reward of their wrongdoing." Peter spoke about the false teachers and prophets. Some scholars think Peter spoke about how God would punish them by sending them to hell. They would be punished for doing evil things and causing other people to sin. Other scholars think Peter spoke about how false teachers and prophets will be treated unjustly because they unjustly treated other people.

See: [Prophet](#); [Reward](#); [Prophet](#)

Why did Peter write “luxury during the day”?

[2:13]

Peter wrote about "luxury during the day." This was a common metaphor to speak about people who boldly do wrong things that other people can see. Most people who lived in a wrong way and did the wrong things in the evening. Because it was dark, they believed that no one really saw them doing evil things. However, the false teachers and prophets did evil things during the day. They did not care if anyone saw living in an evil way. This is because they thought they were living in the right way.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

How were the false teachers and prophets “stains and blemishes”?

[2:13]

Peter called the false teachers and prophets "stains and blemishes." This was a metaphor. He was speaking about the shame they caused themselves and other people. He wanted people to think about how a stain on a garment makes people no longer see it as beautiful. Scholars think that because of the wrong things the false teachers and prophets did, they were like “stains” on the Christian community. That is, they made people think bad things about Christians.

See: [Metaphor](#); [False Prophet](#); [Metaphor](#)

What were “eyes full of adultery”?

[2:14]

Some scholars think the words, “eyes full of adultery” describes a man who cannot look at a woman without having wrong thoughts about her. That is, he wants nothing but to have sex with her. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that the false teachers and prophets wanted to be with women so they could have sex with her. Other scholars think the words meant that these men thought every woman was an adulterer.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#); [False Teacher](#)

How did the false prophets and teachers “entice unstable souls”?

[2:14]

Peter wrote that the false prophets and teachers "entice unstable souls" to say that they tempted Christians in some way. They taught things that were close to the truth, but were really lies. By lying, they were able to make Christians follow them and to do the wrong things.

See: [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [False Teacher](#); [Soul](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#)

How did the false prophets and teachers have “hearts trained in covetousness”?

[2:14]

When Peter spoke about these false teachers and prophets having “hearts trained in covetousness”, he wanted people to know that everything the false teachers and prophets did was for themselves.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Teacher](#)

What was the “way of Balaam”?

[2:15]

Peter wrote "the way of Balaam" so people would think about the things Balaam did. The story of Balaam in the Old Testament spoke about a man who was greedy. He did all he could to get the people of Israel to live in a wrong way (see: Numbers 31:16). He did this because one of Israel's enemies promised him a large amount of money. In the same way, the false teachers and prophets did the same types of things Balaam did. They tried to get Christians to live in a wrong way. They did this to try to gain a lot of money.

See: [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#); [False Teacher](#)

What was the “gloom of thick darkness”?

[2:17]

The “gloom of thick darkness” spoke about the blackest kind of darkness. Scholars think God set aside the darkest places in hell for the false teachers and prophets.

See: [False Prophet](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#)

How did the false teachers and prophets speak with “vain arrogance”?

[2:18]

The false teachers and prophets spoke with “vain arrogance” in several ways. They spoke loudly. They used, big words. They spoke with great emotion in order to excite people. They spoke about promises that God never made. They could not make these promises happen. So, what they said was in "vain". That is, they had no real value. Also, they thought very highly of themselves. They were arrogant.

See: [False Prophet](#); [False Prophet](#)

What were the “lusts of the flesh”?

[2:18]

When Peter wrote "lusts of the flesh", he wanted people to think about how they can be tempted to sin.

See: [Sin](#); [Tempt \(Temptation\)](#); [Sin](#)

Who were the people who tried to “escape from those who live in error”?

[2:18]

The people who tried to "escape from those who live in error" were Christians. Scholars think Peter spoke about people who had just become Christian. That is, God only recently forgave their sins. So, they no longer lived in the wrong way. However, they knew people who were not Christians. These people still lived in sin. They would try to get these people to stop being Christians and to live in the way they used to live. These Christians needed to stop listening to the people they used to know.

See: [Sin](#)

Why did Peter write “slaves of corruption”?

[2:19]

When Peter wrote "slaves of corruption", he used a metaphor to speak about how powerful sin can be. People who were slaves were completely owned and controlled by other people. A person who is a slave to “corruption”(φθορά/g5356) is a person who does things that are evil when they are tempted. Their sins control them in some way.

Some scholars think the “corruption” about which Peter spoke is when someone obeys Satan. They do this because they think Satan will reward them. Really, Satan makes them think and do worse and worse things.

See: [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Sin](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#)

What was the “corruption of the world”?

[2:20]

Scholars think that when Peter wrote "corruption of the world", he spoke about how people who were not Christians often did evil things. The “corruption” was a result of wanting to sin (see: 2 Peter 1:4).

See: [World](#)

How can people “turn away from the holy commandment”?

[2:21]

When Peter wrote that people can "turn away from the holy commandment," he spoke about people who heard true things about God but not to believe them. That is, they believed the lies of the false teachers and prophets instead of the truth about God. Peter used the metaphor of someone turning away from a good thing. This would be like a person refusing a great gift. When he wrote about the “holy commandment,” he was writing about living in the right way.

See: [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ Beloved, this is now the second letter that I have written to you, and in both of them they are reminders to stir up your sincere mind ² so that you will recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command of our Lord and Savior given through your apostles. ³ Know this first, that mockers will come in the last days. They will mock and proceed according to their own desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is the promise of his return? From when our fathers fell asleep, all things have stayed the same, since the beginning of creation." ⁵ They deliberately forget that long ago by the word of God the heavens and the earth came to exist out of water and through water, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. ⁷ By the same word the heavens and the earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

⁸ It should not escape your notice, beloved, that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some consider slowness to be. Rather, he is patient toward you. He does not desire for any of you to perish, but for everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰ However, the day of the Lord will come as a thief: The heavens will pass away with a loud noise. The elements will be burned with fire, and the earth and the deeds in it will be laid bare. ¹¹ Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? You should live holy and godly lives. ¹² You should expect and hasten the coming of the day of God. On that day, the heavens will be destroyed by fire, and the elements will be melted in great heat. ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for the new heavens and the new earth, where righteousness will dwell.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you expect these things, do your best to be found spotless and blameless before him, in peace. ¹⁵ Also, consider the patience of our Lord to be salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom that was given to him. ¹⁶ Paul speaks of these things in all his letters, in which there are things that are difficult to understand. Ignorant and unstable men distort these things, as they also do the other scriptures, to their own destruction. ¹⁷ Therefore, beloved, since you know about these things beforehand, guard yourselves so that you are not led astray by the deceit of lawless people and you lose your own faithfulness. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the glory be to him both now and to the day of eternity. Amen!

Footnotes

3:10 ^[1]It is uncertain which Greek word is intended for the last word of verse 10, either

2 Peter 3

3:1-7

Why did Peter write "stir up your sincere mind"?

[3:1]

Peter wrote "stir up your sincere mind" to remind Christians to think the right things. Some scholars think Peter wanted to encourage Christians by remembering the words Peter wrote to them. To "stir up" was a metaphor to say he wanted the Christians to think carefully about the truth they had been taught.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who were the "holy prophets"?

[3:2]

The "holy prophets" were men who spoke to people for God. Peter wrote this about the prophets whose words are in the Old Testament.

See: [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#); [Old Testament \(Law and Prophets\)](#)

What was the command of the Lord that was given through the apostles?

[3:2]

Scholars think many things about the “command of the Lord” given through the apostles: Some scholars think Peter wrote this about all of the things that Jesus taught to the apostles. Some scholars think Peter wrote about when Jesus warned that false teachers and prophets would come. Some scholars think Peter wrote about the “appearing” of Jesus when he returns to earth.

See: [False Prophet](#); [Apostle](#); [Command \(Commandment\)](#); [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#)

Who were the “mockers” about which Peter spoke?

[3:3]

The “mockers” were people who laughed at Christians and ridiculed Christians. They did this because Christians believed Jesus was going to come back again. The mockers thought this was not going to happen. They thought they could laugh at Christians for believing it. Perhaps Peter was still speaking about the false teachers.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

What are the “last days”?

[3:3]

See: [Last Days](#)

How did the mockers live “according to their own desires”?

[3:3]

People who lived “according to their own desires” were people who rejected Jesus and did not live in a way that honored God. They sinned because they wanted to sin. They did not care about that God will judge people.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

Why did the mockers ask “where is the promise of his return”?

[3:4]

The mockers asked “where is the promise of his return” to accuse Christians of believing things that did not happen. Some scholars think that because Jesus had not yet returned, the mockers asked about the signs of his return (see: Mark 13:24-26). Because they had not seen the signs, they claimed that Jesus did not tell them the truth.

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

Why did the mockers say “our fathers fell asleep”?

[3:4]

When Peter spoke about someone falling asleep, he wanted to say they died.

How does a person “willfully forget” something?

[3:5]

When Peter said that some people “willfully forget” things, he wanted people to know that they wanted to reject something. They choose to believe other things, but these other things are false.

What was the “world of that time”?

[3:6]

Peter spoke about the “world of that time.” He was speaking about the earth when Noah was alive. That is, he spoke about the world with all its people and animals that were destroyed in the great flood. The only ones who did not die then were those saved on Noah’s ark. This event was one of the facts those who mocked Christians forgot. That is, they denied that it happened.

See: Genesis 7

Why did Peter write “reserved for fire by that same command”?

[3:7]

Peter wrote "reserved for fire by that same command" to say that God will end the world. When God created the heavens and the earth, he did it by a "command", that is by speaking. In the same way, he will one day speak a command. At that time, the world will be destroyed by fire. It will be destroyed when God speaks the command for it to be destroyed.

See: [Fire](#); [Fire](#)

What is the day of judgment?

[3:7]

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

How is it that “one day with the Lord is like a thousand years”?

[3:8]

Peter wrote that "one day with the Lord is like a thousand years" to tell people that God thinks differently about time than people do. Some scholars think that God does not count time in the same way people do. To God, one thousand years is not a long time. In the same way, one day is not a short time to God. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God thinks about everything at the same time. That is, God sees everything from the creation to the end of the world at the same time (see: Psalm 90:4; 1 Peter 4:7).

Why did Peter write “the Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises”?

[3:9]

Peter wrote "the Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises" to tell people that God will fulfill all his promises when he decides it is right. Scholars think Peter wanted to say that the Lord did not break his promises. Instead, all of God’s promises have a certain time when they will occur. That is, God fulfills each of his promises exactly at the time he wants them to be fulfilled.

See: [Fulfill \(Fulfillment\)](#)

What did it mean to “make room for repentance”?

[3:9]

When Peter wrote "make room for repentance," he wanted people to know that God wants all people to repent of their sins. That is, God wants everyone to change their mind about who Jesus is, and to stop living in a wrong way. God "makes room" for this to happen. That is, he allowed time for this when he planned the world.

See: [Sin](#); [Sin](#)

What is the “day of the Lord”?

[3:10]

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

How will the Lord “come as a thief”?

[3:10]

Scholars think that when Peter wrote the Lord will “come as a thief,” he wanted people to know that Jesus will return to earth suddenly. He will come when no one expects him to come. Jesus is not a thief.

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Why did Peter write “the heavens will pass away”?

[3:10]

Scholars think on the Day of the Lord, God will end or destroy the world. When this happens, there will be some kind of loud noise and the sky will disappear. Everything in the sky, that is to say the sun, moon, and the stars will be completely destroyed.

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

Why did Peter write that “the earth and the deeds in it will be revealed”?

[3:10]

Scholars disagree about why Peter wrote that "the earth and the deeds in it will be revealed." Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that God will expose the deeds that all people have done. God knows everything people do. He will judge the things people have done. Other scholars think Peter wanted to say that God will expose and destroy all things on earth. This will happen to things God created and to things that people built.

See: [Reveal \(Revelation\)](#)

How do people live “holy and godly lives”?

[3:11]

People live “holy and godly lives” when they live in a way that honors God.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

How can Christians “hasten the coming of the day of God”?

[3:12]

Scholars disagree about how Christians "hasten the coming of the day of God." Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that Christians should want Jesus to return to the earth soon. Other scholars think Christians must do certain things to make the Jesus return soon. If Christians pray and the gospel will be preached to all nations, then Jesus will return.

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Gospel](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

What is the “day of God”?

[3:12]

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

How will the heavens be destroyed by fire?

[3:12]

See: 2 Peter 3:10

What are the “new heavens and the new earth”?

[3:13]

Peter wrote "new heavens and new earth" to tell people that after God destroys the world, he will in some way create another world. The new world will include "heavens" and "earth." This new world will be a world of glory. That is, there will be no sin or death.

Some scholars think Peter wanted to say that God will in some way change the existing heavens and earth. God will do this after they have been destroyed by fire. Other scholars think that God will once again create out of nothing, a new heaven and a new earth.

See: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22

See: [Fire](#); [Sin](#); [Heaven](#); [Fire](#)

What is a place “where righteousness will dwell”?

[3:13]

When Peter wrote about a place "where righteousness will dwell," he was writing about the new earth. In the new earth everything will be good. People will only do things that are right. The earth and everything that will dwell on the earth will be perfectly holy, just as God is holy.

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

How can a Christian be “found spotless and blameless” before God?

[3:14]

A Christian who lives in a “spotless” (ἄσπιλος/g0784) lives in a way that God. A Christian who lives in a “blameless” (ἀμώμητος/g0298) way lives in a way so that no one can accuse him of doing wrong things. Why did Peter write “consider the patience of our Lord to be salvation”?

Peter wrote that God made it so that anyone can be saved from their sins. That is, God waits so people can repent and believe in Jesus. God is patient. Because God is patient, more people will be saved from their sins and go to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Why does Peter say that Paul’s writings were “difficult to understand”?

[3:16]

Peter said that Paul wrote things that were difficult to understand. He also said that there were other scriptures that were also difficult to understand. They contain things that people may not understand right away. Perhaps Peter wanted Christians to think carefully about the things the false teachers and prophets said.

See: [False Prophet](#); [False Prophet](#)

How does a Christian lose his own “faithfulness”?

[3:17]

When Peter wrote about a Christian losing his own "faithfulness," he spoke about how Christians need to keep trusting in Jesus. He warned Christians that if they listen to the mockers, false teachers, and prophets, they will begin to doubt what it says in the Bible. He warned them to always trust what Jesus, the apostles, and the Bible taught. He wanted them not to listen to the mockers and false prophets.

Advice to translators: A mocker is someone who insults other people.

See: [False Prophet](#); [False Teacher](#); [False Prophet](#)

How do Christians "grow in grace and knowledge"?

[3:18]

When Peter wrote that Christians should "grow in grace and knowledge," he wanted people to become live in a way that honors God more every day. Some scholars think Peter told Christians to always trust in Jesus, and to obey him. Then Jesus will in some way give favor to them. Other scholars think Peter encouraged Christians to work to be more and more like Jesus. That is, to do more of the types of things Jesus did.

See: [Grace](#)

How is "glory" given to God then, and forever?

[3:18]

Peter wrote that all "glory" was to be given to God. He wanted all Christians to praise God and honor God. When Christians do this, it glorifies God. Peter wanted Christians to always praise and honor God.

See: [Praise](#); [Praise](#)

Book: 1 John

Introduction to 1 John

Overview

John's first letter is very short. However, John wrote many things about God and mankind. John wrote this letter because some people in the church had spoken against what Christians should believe about God. John thought he had to explain again some of the things that Christians should believe. John did not want anyone to argue against these things.

Even so, John always wrote so that the readers knew that he loved them. Many scholars have noticed that John was both gentle and bold when he wrote. It would be well for everyone to write or speak in this way when talking about God and mankind.

Also, John wrote much about why Christians should love God. If someone loves God, he shows it by obeying God's commands. If someone is a friend of God, then they want to obey God. John taught that if a Christian is not at peace with another Christian, then he is not at peace with God either.

Who wrote this letter?

In his letter, the author did not say who he was. However, most Christians have always said that it was the Apostle John who wrote the letter. This is because many things in the letter are like things in John's gospel.

Did the same person write both 1 John and the Gospel of John?

Both the gospel of John and 1 John have many words that are the same, and they both say many of the same things. Scholars think that whoever wrote these two books wanted to say many of the same things (see: John 20:31 and 1 John 5:13). However, it is difficult to know whether the same person actually wrote both books. This is because 1 John does not help people to know very much about the person who wrote it.

Who did John write to?

John wrote his letter because there was trouble in some churches. However, scholars do not know exactly what that trouble was. They also did not know where these churches were. They do know that some people were teaching wrong things. John did not explain everything that these people believed. However, here is what some scholars think: these people believed many different things, but they usually thought that a person had to learn very special or secret things in order to please God. They said that people could become more like God if they learned these secrets. They also thought that God would favor them if they refused many things that most people enjoy, such as getting married, eating fine foods, and other things. Because they thought this, they wanted to stay away from these things. They also said that this world was evil, that is, nothing in this world could be good. They did not think that God would ever agree to come to this world, so they said that Jesus had not really been a human being. They did believe that Jesus was God, but not that Jesus was also a human being.

There are, however, other scholars who say that perhaps these teachers believed that everything in the physical world is evil. Therefore, they did not believe that Jesus was truly a human being.

John also wrote this letter to Christians in general. He did not write it to any particular person or church. He probably also thought that all Christians would read this letter. Jewish Christians would read his letter. Gentile Christians would also read this letter. This is because John did not copy any passages from the Old Testament. Gentile Christians did not know very much about the Old Testament.

Some scholars think that John may have written it to Christians who never saw Jesus while he was on earth. This is because John said very strongly that he personally saw Jesus and the things Jesus did.

John also repeated the words "from the beginning." Perhaps many years had passed since Jesus rose from the dead (see: 1John 1:1, 2:4, and 2:24).

John wrote to Christians who had not believed in Jesus for very long and who had much to learn. This is why he called his readers "little children." This shows that the audience did not know very much about how to follow Jesus.

John may have known these Christians by name. This is because he often wrote about loving his readers. John's letter also shows that he loved these Christians and cared for them very much.

See :[Heresy](#); [Gnosticism](#); [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What did John write about in this letter?

About remaining in Jesus

John wrote the Greek word "remain" or "abide" (μένω/#g3306) many times in this letter. He wrote this when he wanted to talk about people staying somewhere. He also uses it to say that something remains in a certain place. Perhaps he talks more about "remaining" in Jesus than anything else.

In this letter, John wrote "remain" when he wanted to say that Jesus' words remain in Christians. With "remain," John also said that Christians remain united to Jesus and to God. The Father remains in the Son, and the Son remains in the Father. The Father and the Holy Spirit also remain in Christians.

When using "remain" to say that Christians remain united to Jesus, it is possible that John was speaking about a Christian's ability to live together with God forever. It is also possible that John was speaking about one result of a Christian being saved from the penalty of sin. Regardless, if a believer does not remain in Jesus, he will not be able to live forever with him.

John also wrote that Christians are waiting for God to help them. To do this, John used the word uses "remain."

See: [Eternal Security](#)

Advice to translators: For "remaining" and "remain," translators should represent these ideas in the same way that they did when they translated the letter of 1 John.

About living in the Christian way

John often wrote about why Christians should honor God in their lives. He said that if Christians do this, they will have peace with God. John wrote that Christians must honor God and do things that please him. However, John knew that Christians cannot avoid sinning. In fact, if someone says that he does not sin, then he sins very badly by thinking in a wrong way. God knows that Christians will sin, but he still made a way to forgive them. He did this by causing Jesus to die for Christians.

God also made a way for Christians to come back to him after they sin. They do this by confessing their sin.

More than anything else, John wanted Christians to "do the will of God," that is, they must do what God wants them to do in their lives. They must honor and obey God.

See: [Fellowship](#); [Confess \(Confession\)](#); [Will of God](#)

About Christians who are very faithful to Jesus

A Christian is a person who believes in Jesus. However, some scholars believe that not all Christians are very faithful to Jesus. All Christians believe in Jesus, but only some Christians are very faithful to Jesus. That is, only some Christians obey him very well. If someone believes in Jesus, Jesus immediately saves that person. God will not punish him for having sinned. Christians who are very faithful to God obey him every day. However, all Christians should be very faithful to Jesus.

However, some scholars believe that Christians need to be completely faithful to God. If they are not, then they will not live together with God forever. Other scholars believe that God helps Christians to always obey him. Because of this, Christians must do their best to obey him.

Advice to translators: Faithful can be hard to signal in many languages. You might have to search hard for a way to do it.

About people who belong to God

John often wrote about people who belonged to God. He also wrote about people and things that belong to the world and the devil. Here, when John wrote "the world," he was thinking about everything in this world that is against God, everything that tries to stop God. John wrote that Christians could choose to

follow the things that oppose God. If they do this, they sin. However, Christians can instead choose to do the things God wants them to do. When they do this, they show that they belong to God, that they are doing his will.

See: [World](#)

About the people who live together with God forever

John wrote much about people who live with God forever. He wanted to say that people can start living “with” God now in this world, that is, they can serve God. They will continue to live with him forever. This is what John was thinking about when he wrote about eternal life.

God promised that believers in Jesus that they will live with him forever. Because he has promised this, believers can begin to live with God now, even in this world.

See: 1 John 1:2 and 5:20

See: [Eternal Life](#)

Why did John write this letter?

John wrote this letter to help a church that had false teachers, teachers who taught wrong things about God. Some of these false teachers said that Jesus had not truly been a human being (see: 1 John 4:2). Perhaps these teachers also refused to admit that they had sinned (see: 1 John 1:6-10 and 1 John 2:4). Also, perhaps John wanted to correct people who did not live in a way that honors God.

Scholars think that John wrote this letter for the same reason that he wrote his gospel (see: John 20:31). He wanted to encourage people to believe in Jesus, so they could have eternal life (see: 1 John 5:13).

See: [Eternal Life](#)

Outline of 1 John

1. Introduction (1:1-4)
2. Christian living (1:5-3:10)
3. The command to love one another (3:11-5:12)
4. Conclusion (5:13-21)

1 John

Chapter 1

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, concerning the Word of life— ² the life was made known, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to us. ³ That which we have seen and heard we declare also to you, so you also will have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ Also, we are writing these things to you so that our joy will be complete. ^[1]

⁵ This is the message that we have heard from him and are proclaiming to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his word is not in us.

Footnotes

1:4 ^[1]Some important ancient Greek copies read,

1 John 1 Commentary

1:1-4

John wrote about “the beginning.” When was this?

[1:1]

John wrote about “the beginning” in verse one. Some scholars think that this was the time when God created the world. They think this because the gospel of John and the book of Genesis began in a similar way (see: John 1:1, and Genesis 1:1).

Other scholars think that John was talking about the time when Jesus began to preach and teach. John wrote “the beginning” many times in this letter. These scholars think that John was always thinking of the time when Jesus began to teach (see: 1 John 2:7).

See: [Preach \(Preacher\)](#); [Preach \(Preacher\)](#)

Why did John say that he and the other apostles saw Jesus, heard Jesus speak, and touched Jesus?

[1:1]

John said that he and the other apostles saw Jesus, heard Jesus speak, and touched Jesus. John did this for several reasons. First, he did this to show that Jesus was a true human being. John did not want people to think that Jesus was only God pretending to be human. Second, John showed people that he saw Jesus. John knew Jesus because he had been with Jesus when Jesus was preaching and teaching.

Many scholars think that John wrote verse one in order to correct some false teachers. Those false teachers believed that Jesus was not truly a human being. Perhaps this is also why John said that he had seen, heard, and touched him.

In 1:1, who or what is the “word”?

[1:1]

Some scholars think that John was speaking about Jesus when he said “word or message (λόγος/g3056).” This was because John said that he and the other apostles saw, heard, and touched Jesus. In Scripture, only Jesus is called the “word.” If Jesus is the “word,” then he is also the “word of life ” (see: 1 John 5:20). That is, Jesus is the one who brings eternal life to anyone who believes in him.

Fewer scholars think that the “word” is the gospel. If this is true, then it referred to the message Jesus shared (see: Philippians 2:16). They think that in some way, Jesus is the gospel. He is the good news.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Advice to translators: Follow the wording used in your translation for “word” and “word of life.” Also, “word” and “message” are used in the same way here.

In 1:1, what type of life does John talk about?

[1:1]

In verse 1, John wrote about “life (ζωή/g2222).” Some scholars think that when John wrote that someone has life, he wanted to say that that person will live with God forever. Jesus gives this type of life to those who believe in him. Other scholars think John wanted to say that Jesus helps Christians to live in a new way in this world. This is because Christians have become God’s friends. Or perhaps “life” means both things at the same time.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Eternal Life](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

How is “fellowship” used in this passage?

[1:3]

When two people have “fellowship,” they are at peace with each other, and they are friends. When John wrote about fellowship, he wanted to say that Christians are at peace with God and with each other.

In this passage, John wanted to say two different things. First, he wanted to say that Christians are friends with each other. The second thing John wanted to say is that Christians are friends with God, because they are at peace with him. When a Christian is at peace with God, they want to be at peace with other people.

See: [Fellowship](#)

Christian are friends with whom?

[1:3]

In this passage, Christians have “fellowship” with other Christians, that is, they are friends with other Christians. They are also friends with God. A Christian is a friend of God when he trusts in God, prays to God, and honors him. Also, Christians are to be friends with other Christians. They are at peace with each other, help each other, and worship God together.

See: [Fellowship](#)

1:5-10

Why did John speak of God as if he were light?

[1:5]

In this passage, John spoke about God as if he were light. This is because light represents someone who always does right and who never sins.

However, scholars think different things about the darkness. Some think that when John wrote about darkness, he was thinking about evil. If this is true, then the people in the darkness are the Christians who live in this evil world. However, other scholars think that John wanted to say that God has not yet shown certain people that they are sinners. In other words, these certain people are in darkness because they do not understand the truth about themselves and about God.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Why does John make so many statements beginning with “if”?

[1:6, 1:7, 1:8, 1:9, 1:10]

John made five statements in this passage that began with “if (ἐάν/g1437).” Each statement said something that might be true. Each statement then said what would happen if that thing were true.

The first statement (1:6) explained that a Christian’s sin kept him from being a friend to God. But in this case, it was not permanent.

The second statement (1:7) was about a person who honored God. Such people were at peace with one another. They knew that God was no longer angry because they had sinned (see: Heb. 9:14 and 10:22).

The third statement (1:8) has caused scholars to disagree with each other. Some scholars think that verse 8 is about people who believe they do not sin very often. These people are not Christians. However, other scholars believe that verse 8 is about those who say they never sin. These people are lying to themselves and to other people.

The fourth statement (1:9) was about how Christians are friends with God. They become friends with him by admitting that they sin and then by repenting of their sins. If they do this, then their sins cannot separate them from God. They know that God is no longer angry with them for having sinned.

Advice to translators: People translate 1:7 in very different ways. Feel free to adapt the content to follow your local translation and clarify it.

Does God only forgive Christians when they lead a life that honors him?

[1:7]

God does not forgive someone because the person does things that please him. However, some translations may appear to say the opposite in 1:7.

The first part of this verse speaks of how Christians must honor God and do what pleases him. In the second part of the verse, John said that Jesus makes people clean or forgives sin. This, of course, is how people become Christians.

Scholars disagree about how these two ideas are connected to each other. Some think that a person must live in the “light,” that is, that he must honor God with his words and actions for God to save him. For these scholars, if someone fails to do this, God will not save him. However, other scholars think John is teaching Christians to live in a way that honors him.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

Why did John write 1:8?

[1:8]

Many scholars think John wrote this verse because false teachers claimed that they were able to not sin for a long time. However, because John uses “we” when he says, “If we say we have no sin,” John includes himself among sinners. Because of this, other scholars do not think John was arguing against false teachers. Instead, they think that some Christians did not understand what it meant that God saved them.

Can Christians avoid sinning?

[1:8]

John clearly says in 1:8 that Christians sin. It is a sin for someone to say that they do not sin.

However, scholars disagree about how someone “has sin.” Some think John meant that Christians sin from time to time, but they cannot constantly sin. If this is true, then Christians can stop sinning for a period of time. However, other scholars think John meant that all Christians sin, even if they do not know what sins they are committing.

Must a person confess his sins for God to save him?

[1:9]

It is not necessary for a person to “confess” or admit his sins to God in order for God to save him. Instead, God saves someone when he believes in Jesus, not when he admits his sin to God.

Why should a Christian confess his sins to God?

[1:9]

John said that it is important for a Christian to “confess (ὁμολογέω/#g3670),” that is, admit their sins to God. For a Christian to continue to be friends with God, he must be a friend of God in the right way. When a Christian sins, he is in danger of ceasing to be friends with God. He becomes a true friend of God again by admitting his sin to God.

When John said that God will “cleanse Christians” or “make Christians clean” from sin, he is using a metaphor. He is speaking of sin as if it were dirtiness. Christians continue to commit sin, which is like getting dirty again and again. However, each time they sin, they must admit their sin to God. Then, God continues to forgive or “cleanse” them.

See: [Justify \(Justification\); Justify \(Justification\)](#)

Chapter 2

¹ Children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous. ² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. ³ We know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ The one who says "I know God" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says that he remains in God should himself also walk just as he walked.

⁷ Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Christ and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. ⁹ The one who says that he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness until now. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother remains in the light and there is no occasion for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness; he does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

¹² I am writing to you, children, because your sins are forgiven because of his name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one. ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the arrogance of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desire are passing away. But whoever does the will of God will remain forever.

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, now many antichrists have come. By this we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not from us. For if they had been from us they would have remained with us. But when they went out, that showed they were not from us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. ²¹ I did not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it and because no lie is from the truth. ²² Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? That person is the antichrist, since he denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son also has the Father. ²⁴ As for you, let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ This is the promise he gave to us—eternal life. ²⁶ I have written these things to you about those who would lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you everything and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him.

²⁸ Now, children, remain in him so that when he appears we will have boldness and not be ashamed before him at his coming. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born from him.

1 John 2

2:1-2

Verse 1 has the word "if" in it. Is it like the statements in 1 John 1 that also have "if"?

[2:1]

John said five things using the word "if" (ἐάν/#g1437) in 1 John 1. In 1:1, he said something using the word "if" as well. He said the same thing that he said in 1 John 1 in a very short way. Here, he said that

when a Christian sin, God forgives them. However, bad things still often happen when Christians sin. Because of this, John wanted Christians to try hard to stop sinning. But when they sin, John wanted them to ask God to forgive them.

How does Jesus “help” Christians?

[2:1]

Jesus “advocates for” or helps Christians. Only John used this Greek word translated “help” to say what Jesus and the Holy Spirit do. John wanted to say that someone who helps is someone who does things for someone else. For example, if someone is accused of a crime, he helps by speaking to the judge for that person. Jesus goes to God, the judge, and speaks for Christians. Jesus also helps Christians live in a way that honors God.

See: John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, and 16:7

See: [Intercede (Intercession)] ([../articles/intercede.md](#))

When Jesus died, he suffered the punishment for the sins that Christians do. How could Jesus suffer for Christians?

[2:2]

Scripture says that if anyone sins, God must punish him. But Scripture also says that God punished Jesus in the place of sinners. He did this when Jesus agreed to die on the cross.

John wrote about what happened when one person, Jesus, died for everyone else. He was a “propitiation for our sins (ἱλασμός/#g2434).” This Greek word was only used twice in Scripture. Both times are in this letter. John wrote this word to talk about something that Jesus gave to God so that God would forgive the sins of mankind. However, God would only accept one thing, his Son should die. God must punish sin, so he punished Jesus instead of mankind. In other words, when Jesus died on the cross, God stopped being angry with people who trust in Jesus. However, he remains angry with the rest of mankind.

When people worshiped other gods in the ancient Near East, they often thought that their gods became angry for very small reasons. For example, they thought that these gods quarreled or fought among themselves and with mankind, the same way that people often quarrel with one another. However, John showed that God is angry for only one reason, that is, when mankind sins.

So some scholars think that when John wrote “propitiation for our sins,” he wanted to say that God was at peace with Christians, even after they have sinned. This is why God does not punish Christians.

See: [Atonement](#); [Atonement](#)

See: Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 4:10

Advice to translators: When God is angry with people, he is angry because he is just, not because he commits sin.

Did Christ die for the sins of all people?

[2:2]

Some scholars think that Jesus died for the sins of all people in the world. It was in this way that Jesus made it possible for people to live together with God forever. However, it is only those who believe in him who will live with him.

Other scholars think that Jesus only died for the sins of some people, that is, for those who would believe in him. They think Jesus only died for the people whom God has chosen. They think that John said that Jesus died for certain people everywhere in the world.

See: John 3:16

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

2:3-6

How does someone “know” God?

[2:3]

For John, when a person “knows” God, he does not only know who he is. He also knows that God is good, and he knows why God acts as he does.

John wrote that anyone who obeys the word of God knows God. When someone knows God, he wants to please him. That is why he obeys him. John wrote that a Christian must obey God. He also wanted to say that it is better to obey him than it is to know many things about him.

Some people in ancient times said that God secretly told them things. Therefore, they said that they knew secret things about God. Perhaps John was thinking about these people when he wrote that Christians must obey God.

What does John mean by remain or abide (μένω/#g3306)?

See: [Abide](#)

2:7-11

What are the old and new commandments?

[2:7]

John wrote that Christians should obey God. Perhaps John was thinking about the things that the apostles taught, when he wrote this. This is what some scholars think.

The old commandment that John was writing about was Jesus’ command to love other people. However, he says it is also new, perhaps he is telling it again to them.

See: Matthew 22:36-40

See: [Law of Moses](#); [Gospel](#); [Law of Moses](#);

What are the darkness and the light?

[2:8]

Perhaps John continued to speak about light in order to talk about God. He wanted to say that God always does what is right, and that he always says what is true. He is like light, which makes everyone able to see. This is what some scholars think.

John wrote about darkness in order to talk about sin. The writers of the Scriptures often say that the world is evil, and John himself said this world is “dark.”

John wrote in verse 8 that the darkness is passing away, going away, or disappearing. Perhaps he wanted to say that the gospel is causing people to believe in Jesus. This makes the world less evil, or “dark.” This is what some scholars think.

When John wrote about people walking in darkness, perhaps he was thinking about Christians who deliberately sin. Some scholars think so. Or, perhaps John was thinking about non-Christians. These people often live very wrongly. This shows that they are not Christians, and that they are living in darkness. They are very far from Christ.

See: [World](#)

Why should Christians love other Christians?

[2:9, 2:10]

John wrote that Christians should love other Christians. He was thinking about this when he wrote the metaphor about light and darkness. People who honor God are walking in the light because they love other Christians. People who do not love other Christians are not living in the right way. They are living as

they did before they became Christians. John says that these people are in the darkness. The darkness stops these Christians from knowing that they themselves sin.

Some scholars think that John was speaking about Christians who have difficulty loving certain other Christians.

John also wrote that Christians are brothers, because they are part of God's family. Families must love other people in their family. Also, Christians must love non-Christians.

See: Matthew 22:39-40

See: [Metaphor](#)

Advice to translators: Scripture often speaks about the way a Christian lives as walking. Express this idea in the same way that your local version of 1 John does.

2:12-17

What is the world?

[2:15]

Usually, when the writers of Scripture wrote about "the world," they were thinking about all of the people of the world. However, sometimes they were thinking about all the evil things of the world. That is, they were thinking about everything and everyone on earth that acts against God.

This is why John wrote that Christians must not love the world. Most of the people in the world do not honor God. They continually sin.

See: James 4:4

See: [World](#)

What things do people in this world like?

[2:16]

John wrote about three things that people like in this world. Each of these things is wrong. However, people still want these things.

(1) Lust of the flesh (2) Lust of the eyes (3) Arrogance of life

Perhaps these three things are really the same thing. If this is true, then John wrote these three things because he wanted people to think about the time when Satan persuaded Adam and Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden (see: Genesis 3:6). Adam and Eve proudly disobeyed God when they decided to eat the fruit that they wanted. Perhaps John was thinking about this when he was writing.

However, perhaps John was thinking about how Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness. This is what some other scholars think.

Or, perhaps John was thinking about when Satan rebelled against God (see: Isaiah 14). This is what some other scholars think.

See: [World](#)

2:18-25

How many antichrists are there?

[2:18]

Some scholars think that John used the word "antichrists" in two different ways. The first antichrist is a certain person, that is, the devil. He will come to earth and will look like a man. He will try to do the same things that Jesus did. This antichrist will oppose Jesus and his church. The second antichrist is anyone, in general, who opposes Jesus.

See: [Antichrist](#)

Who was John speaking about?

[2:19]

Some scholars think that John was writing about Christians in verse 19. These scholars think that some Christians left the larger group of Christians because they did not think in the same way at the larger group of Christians.

However, more scholars think that John was writing about non-Christians in verse 19. When these people left the Christians, they showed everyone that they were not truly Christians. These scholars think that there is a difference between those who say that they are Christians and those who are truly Christians, that is, people who will live together with God forever. Perhaps those who left the church decided to follow the false teachers.

See: [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#); [Save \(Salvation, Saved from Sins\)](#)

What is the anointing of the Holy Spirit?

[2:20]

See: [Anoint \(Anointing\)](#)

Who was John writing about when he wrote “all” in 2:20?

[2:20]

Some scholars think that “all” meant knowing all things or all the things about Jesus that you need to know. Other scholars believe that it is a reference to knowing all of the truth. This can be all of the truth about Jesus or the truth about the false teachers. Still others believe that it is “all” of the people know the truth.

Some scholars think that when John wrote “all,” he wanted to say that Christians know all the things they need to know about Jesus. However, other scholars think that John was talking about knowing all of the truth about Jesus or about the false teachers. Still others think that John wanted to say that all Christians know the truth.

2:26-29

How do Christians do what is right?

[2:29]

Scholars think different things about verse 29. Perhaps John wanted to say that Jesus saves Christians only if they live in the right way. Perhaps he wanted to say that if Jesus saved someone, that person would certainly live in the right way. Or perhaps he wanted to say that a person could not live in the right way if Jesus has not saved him. If this is true, then people who do not believe in Jesus sin even when they do good things.

Chapter 3

¹ See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and this is what we are. For this reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know him. ^[1]² Beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. We know that when Christ appears, we will be like him, for we will see him just as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure. ⁴ Everyone who sins is committing acts of lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that Christ was revealed in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who remains in him will keep on sinning. No one who continues to sin has seen him or known him. ⁷ Children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does righteousness is righteous, just as Christ is righteous. ⁸ The one who commits sin is from the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this reason the Son of God was revealed, so that he would destroy the devil's works. ⁹ Whoever has been born from God does not continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him. He cannot continue to sin because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ In this the children of God and children of the devil are revealed: Whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God, neither is the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹² We should not be like Cain, who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

¹³ Do not be amazed, my brothers, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. You know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. ¹⁶ By this we know love, because Christ laid down his life for us. We also ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world's goods, sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart of compassion from him, how does the love of God remain in him? ¹⁸ My children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in actions and truth. ¹⁹ It is by this we know that we are from the truth, and we assure our hearts before him. ²⁰ For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²² Whatever we ask we will receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing before him. ²³ This is his commandment: that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he gave us this commandment. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commandments remains in him, and God remains in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit whom he gave to us.

Footnotes

3:1 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies leave out,

1 John 3

3: 1-3

Who are the children of God?

[3:1]

John wrote that Christians are children of God. However, Christians are not the physical children of God. That is, God did not give birth to their bodies. He did not give birth to them as a mother gives birth to her children. Instead, Christians have been born a second time. John wrote that they are born "from" God (see: 1 John 2:29).

When John wrote about God, he showed that a person must be born a second time (see: John 3). If a person is not born a second time, John wrote that he is a child of the devil (see: 3:10). But if God gives birth to a person a second time, that person is at peace with God. He is a friend of God.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

How will Christians be like Jesus when he returns to the earth?

[3:2]

In 3:2, John showed that after a person starts to believe in Jesus, he begins to act more like Jesus. He begins to live more rightly, because he wants to honor God. God changes him little by little to be more like Jesus. God will continue to change him as long as he is alive in this world. When Jesus returns to this world, God will change the Christians to be like Jesus. God will unite them completely with Jesus. They will not sin anymore. They will no longer suffer or have pain. Nothing bad can hurt them anymore.

3:4-10

What is lawlessness?

[3:4]

In Scripture, God told his people to obey the laws or rules that he made for them. The devil and sinners work against God, so they are against the law, lawless, without the law, or outside of the law. When someone works against God, that is, they take a side against God and side with Satan. John said that they are “lawless.” The false teachers took sides for Satan and against God.

See: [Law of Moses](#)

Advice to translators: Translate “lawless” however your local version translates this idea.

When John wrote about sinning again and again, whom was he thinking about?

[3:6]

When John wrote about sinning again and again, he was thinking about the false teachers and anyone else who does the work of the devil instead of the work of Jesus.

See: 1 John 1:8, 10; Romans 7:20

Advice to translators: Many translations of 3:4 and 1 John 2:29 can appear to contradict each other. This note is an attempt to clarify this apparent contradiction. Not all translation will need this clarification.

3:11-17

Why did Cain kill Abel?

[3:12]

The book of Genesis showed that Cain and Abel were the sons of Adam and Eve. It also showed that Cain murdered Abel. It did not say why Cain killed him. It only said that God refused to accept what Cain sacrificed to him. Then Cain became angry at his brother (see: Gen 4). John showed how Cain was different from Christians, those who follow Jesus and honor him. They are different from those who follow the devil, that is, those who do not honor God.

Those who belong to the devil, they like to sin. This is why they hate those who live rightly, that is, those who want to honor God.

Children of the devil do evil things because they want to insult God, and because they hate God’s children. John wrote that anyone who hates another person is the same as one who murders him. He wrote this because often people murder others because they hate them.

Why does the world hate Christians?

[3:13]

Frequently, people who do not believe in Jesus go so far as to hate Christians. When someone sins because he wishes to do, he then wants to sin more. If he hates another person, there is nothing more to do than kill him. This is what happened to Cain.

See: [World](#); [World](#)

Advice to translators: In Scripture, the writers often write the word “world” when they want to speak about all of the sinful people in the world. Also, Scripture shows that a person can sin more and more unless he repents.

When John wrote “anyone,” who was he thinking of?

[3:15]

John wrote that “anyone” who hates another person would not get to live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars believe that Christians cannot murder another person. This is because God makes them new when they believe in Jesus. Others believe that Christians can still commit very evil sins. Murder is an example of this. However, when Christians do this, they are not doing the things that God wants them to do.

See: [Abide](#)

3:18-24

Why did John write that Christians belong to the “truth”?

[3:19]

Perhaps when John wrote that Christians belong to the “truth (αληθεια/#g225) or are from the truth, he wanted to say that they believe true things about God. This is another way of saying that Christians belong to God. They are different from those who belong to the devil. This is what some scholars think. However, perhaps John wanted to say that Christians obey God. It is those who obey God, they believe the right things about God and doing the right things.

Advice to translators: Translate “heart” the way your local version of 1 John translates it.

What is the heart?

[3:19]

When John wrote about the “heart” he was thinking that Christians know when they have sinned. They know this in their heart. The Jews thought that the heart was where they knew this. John wrote that Christians’ hearts can sometimes condemn them. He wanted to say that Christians know that they deserve for God to punish them for having sinned.

Perhaps John wanted to say that God wants Christians to completely obey him, even more than they think in their hearts that they should obey him. Some scholars think this.

However, more scholars think that John wanted to say that God knows Christians better than they know themselves. God knows the things that Christians really want to do. He knows how much they want to obey him. Therefore, only God can comfort Christians.

When John wrote that God gives Christians what they pray for, what did he want to say?

Here John wrote that Christians must obey what God commands. Christians should do the things that God desires. Therefore, Christians should ask for things that God wants. When they ask him for these things, God gives them these things. What does the Holy Spirit do for Christians?

Perhaps John wants to say that the Holy Spirit allows Christians to know that they will live with God forever. This is what some scholars think. Or, perhaps John wants to say that the Holy Spirit allows believers to know that God is with them now. This is because Christians cannot know this on their own, without the Holy Spirit making it known to them.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Chapter 4

¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit. Instead, test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you will know the Spirit of God—every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world. ^{1]}⁴ You are from God, children, and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God. Anyone who knows God listens to us. He who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. ⁸ The person who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ Because of this the love of God was revealed among us, that God has sent his only Son into the world so that we would live because of him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and that he sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also should love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us some of his Spirit. ¹⁴ Also, we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶ Also, we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in this love remains in God, and God remains in him. ¹⁷ Because of this, this love has been made perfect among us, so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because as he is, just so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. Instead, perfect love throws out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. But the one who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love because God first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God" but hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹ Also, this is the commandment we have from him: Whoever loves God must also love his own brother.

Footnotes

4:3 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 John 4

4:1-6

How do Christians test people who teach about God?

[4:1]

Some people teach others the truth about God, but other people teach false things about him. John did not want the Christians to accept what everyone teaches about God. Instead, Christians must find out who is teaching the truth, and who is teaching wrong things.

John wanted to say that whenever a person teaches others about God, either the Holy Spirit is showing him what to say, or Satan is showing him. Therefore, believers must try to find out who is showing that teacher what to say.

Satan does not want to say that Jesus came from God. Also, Satan does not want to say that Jesus was a human being, that Jesus is the Son of God, or that Jesus himself is God.

John wrote that Jesus Christ has come "in the flesh." Perhaps this means that Jesus came from God and was a human being in this world.

Satan did not want to say this. Therefore, if a teacher refused to say this, then the believers knew that Satan has shown these false teachers what to say. Only the Holy Spirit could have truly taught people

about God. It is the Holy Spirit and angels from God who speak the truth about God, because they want to honor him.

This is not the only test Scripture gives to determine whether something is from God. The Old Testament talked about how to test the messages that false prophets said that they got from God (see: Deuteronomy 13:2-3). In addition to this, John also said that spirits from God would teach the same things the apostles taught, that is the gospel. Those who reject God will be unable to teach the true, biblical gospel.

See: 1 Corinthians 12:3

See: [Gospel](#)

When John wrote about the antichrist, who was he thinking about?

[4:3]

When John wrote 4:3, he was not thinking about one person. However, in 4:4, John was perhaps thinking about a person whom he called the antichrist. All of these persons came from the devil. They follow the way of the devil. They all try to stop Jesus from working on the earth.

However, some scholars think that in 4:4 John was not thinking about any one person. They do not think that the antichrist is a person who will come later. Instead, they think that John was writing about the devil. It is the devil who can do evil in this world. It is the devil who tells people to fight against those who believe in Jesus.

The Spirit of God is different from the spirit of the antichrist. At the beginning of 4:2, the Greek word “spirit” means the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a person. However, the “spirit” of the antichrist is not a person, but rather the power of the devil. It means everything that fights against Jesus.

See: John 12:31; 1 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2

What is the Greek text of 4:3?

[4:3]

The oldest copies of 4:3 do not have the words “in the flesh (σάρξ/#g4561)”, so scholars think that someone added them much later. That person added them in order to explain what John wanted to say. In this way, he made this verse like 2 John 1:7 and 4:2. In those verses, John wanted to say that Jesus was truly a human being.

Most translators now do not translate these words in this verse.

4:7-12

When John wrote, “Everyone who loves is born of God,” what did he want to say?

[4:7]

John wanted to say that if anyone does not love other people, he does not know that God loves mankind. Also, he cannot be a friend of God. So he shows everyone that he is not a Christian.

However, John did not want to say that anyone who loves other people is a Christian. But he did think that Christians should love each other. John commanded them to do this. Some scholars think that 4:7 is the main idea of John’s whole letter.

When John wrote that Jesus is God’s one and only son, what did he want to say?

[4:9]

John wrote that Jesus is God’s “only” or “unique” Son. He wanted to say that Jesus is different from all Christians, who are also God’s children (see: 1 John 3:2). God made believers his children when he gave birth to them a second time. However, the Greek word “one and only” showed that Jesus is different. This is because he has always been God. He has always been the Son of God, because God the Father never gave him birth, that is, the Son of God has always existed, even before he became a human being.

How did God the Father send God the Son?

[4:10]

God the Son has the same power as God the Father, and he is just as great as the Father. Even so, God the Father sent the Son into this world (see: 4:9). Jesus is as great as his Father, but he came into the world when his Father told him to.

See: John 3:16

See: [Trinity](#); [Trinity](#)

Has no one seen God?

[4:12]

John wrote that no one has seen God. John wanted to say that no one can look at God and continue to live. No one who sins can live beside God. He will die if he sees God. God will destroy anyone who tries to go near him (see: Exodus 33:20).

It is true that Jesus is God, but he is also a human being. When people saw Jesus, Jesus was hiding most of his power. He was hiding most of what God is, so that people could be with him.

In the Old Testament, many people wrote about this. When John was writing this letter, perhaps he was thinking about people who said they had seen God directly. John wanted to say that no one can see God now. A time will come when believers will be able to see him.

4:13-16

Can a Christian know that God has saved him?

[4:13]

Perhaps John wanted to say here that Christians can know that they will one day live forever in heaven with God. They can know this because they have the Holy Spirit in them.

However, some scholars think that a Christian, one who trusts in Jesus now, can one day reject him. If he does that, they say that Jesus will refuse to save him any longer.

See: Ephesians 1:14

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

Is the Holy Spirit God?

[4:13]

In 4:13, Paul said that God “remains” or “abides” within Christians. It is God who comes to live in a Christian when he believes in Jesus. In Scripture, it is the Holy Spirit who lives within all Christians (see: 1Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19). The Holy Spirit is God.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#); [Trinity](#); [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

What must a believer accept about Jesus?

[4:15]

In 4:2, John wrote that spirits must accept that Jesus was truly a human being. If they do not say this, this shows that they do not come from God. In 4:15, John wrote that Christians must accept that Jesus is the Son of God. If a person does not accept this, he does not understand who Jesus is.

In this chapter, John wanted people to believe what is true about Christ, that is He is both fully God and fully human. Christians must believe both.

See: [Son of God](#)

Who should Christians “remain in this love” towards?

[4:16]

Christians should certainly “remain” or “abide” in love (see: 4:16). That is, Christians should continue to love, but John did not say whom they should love. Perhaps he wanted to say that they should continue to love other Christians. However, fewer scholars think that John was saying that Christians must remain or continue to love Jesus.

See : [Abide](#)

4:17-21

How can a Christian have confidence at the time when God will judge everyone?

[4:17]

When John wrote about confidence, boldness, or having a lack of fear, he was thinking about the time when God will judge everyone. Christians who honor God do not need to worry about this happening. They should look forward to Jesus returning to the earth. However, anyone who does not honor God should fear Jesus returning to the earth.

The Jews and the first Christians both believed that God would judge everyone at a future time. Some scholars think that John wanted to say that every Christian will see Jesus. At that time, every Christian will have to explain to him why he lived the way he did in this world. The place where this will happen is the Judgment Seat of God (see: 2 Corinthians 5:10). It is at this time that Jesus will give a reward to every Christian for how he lived in this world.

If Christians obey what John says they should do, they should not fear Jesus when he judges them.

However, other scholars think that John is not talking about a time when Jesus will judge the Christians. Christians do not need to fear that time, because God has punished Jesus for their sins. Instead, Jesus will judge only those who do not believe in him. He will separate them from the Christians. Then he will receive the Christians to himself.

God punished Jesus for Christians because he loved them and promised that he would save them. This is why Christians should trust that Jesus will receive them. God always keeps his promises. Truly, if a person is afraid of Jesus, perhaps this shows that this person is not a Christian at all.

See: 1 John 2:28

See: [Day of Judgment](#)

Advice to translators: Scripture talks about how a Christians should not fear God, but also that they should fear God. However, there are two different meanings of the English word “fear.” Christians should not be scared of God, but they should want to respect God and not want to be punished by God.

Chapter 5

¹ Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born from God, and whoever loves a father also loves the child born from him. ² This is how we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For this is love for God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For everyone who is born from God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world? The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. ⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ. He came not only by water, but also by water and blood. The Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood. These three are in agreement. ^[1]⁹ If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God that he has testified concerning his Son. ¹⁰ Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. ¹¹ And the testimony is this: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

¹³ I have written to you these things so that you will know that you have eternal life—to you who believe in the name of the Son of God. ¹⁴ Also, this is the confidence we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵ Also, if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask of him—we know that we have whatever we have asked of him. ¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not result in death, he must pray, and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not result in death. There is a sin that results in death; I am not saying that he should pray about that. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin that does not result in death.

¹⁸ We know that whoever has been born from God does not sin. But the one who was born from God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. ¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and we know that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰ But we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true. Also, we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life. ²¹ Children, keep yourselves from idols.

Footnotes

5:8 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

1 John 5

5:1-5

What must Christians believe about Jesus?

[5:1]

John wrote many things about Jesus. In 1 John 4:2, John wrote that Jesus was a true human being. If anyone does not believe this, he is not truly a Christian. He has rejected Jesus. In this passage, John continued to write about Jesus. John said that Christians must also believe Jesus is the messiah. Jesus is the one whom God had promised to send to Israel. Jesus is the one who will deliver Christians.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

Why did John write the metaphor about children?

[5:1]

John used a metaphor to describe Christians. He said that Christians were children. However, he was not writing about children born to their mother and father. Instead, John wanted to say that when anyone

believes in Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives that person new life. When this happens, a person is “born” a second time and God becomes that person’s new “father.” God had already created that person, but now for the first time he is that person’s father.

Because all Christians are children of God, they are brothers and sisters to each other. God is father to all Christians, and he loves all of them the same. Because of this, all Christians should love each other.

See: [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#)

How does John use “overcomes”?

[5:4]

In Scripture, Christians are described as having won something. This occurs when they believe in Jesus. They have “overcome,” “conquered,” or “defeated” (νικάω/#g3528) the world. This is a metaphor about how Christians have defeated Satan. Satan does not want people to believe in Jesus. These forces are at work on the earth. Why did John write that Christians “have overcome” the world?

John wrote that Christians have “overcome or defeated” (νικάω/#g3528) the world. When John wrote “the world,” he was thinking about all the people who love to do evil and who reject Jesus. Perhaps he was also thinking about Satan, because Satan is the one who tries to get people to sin. Christians defeat Satan when they trust in Jesus and obey him. This is also what John was thinking about when he wrote that Christians overcome the world.

See: 1 John 2:13-14, 4:4

See: [World](#)

5:6-12

Why did John write water and blood?

[5:6]

John wrote water and blood. John spoke about these things to make people think about what Jesus did while he was on the earth. Water and blood represented what Jesus did while he was on the earth. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in water. This is when Jesus began to do the work God sent him to do. When Jesus died on the cross, he bled, so the blood represented his death.

Other scholars think that John wrote “water and blood” because false teachers did not believe that Jesus was an actual human being. John said this because people have both water and blood in their bodies.

See: [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#); [Baptize \(Baptism\)](#)

Advice to translators: This may or may not be an issue for people in your local context. Feel free to omit this information if it would not be helpful to the local church.

What did John actually write in 5:7 and 5:8?

[5:7, 5:8]

In some old Greek copies of this letter, 5:7 and 5:8 have more words than in other copies of this letter. In other words, these two verses are longer in these copies. The longer verses have the words “God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

However, in most old copies of 1 John, 5:7 and 5:8 are shorter because they do not have these words. Today, when people translate this letter, they usually do not translate these words. But some people translate them and put them inside square brackets [...] to show that these words are not in the oldest copies of the letter.

Advice to translators: This may or may not be an issue for people in your local context. Feel free to omit this information if it would not be helpful to the local church.

Who is the Spirit of truth?

[5:7]

See: 1 John 4:6

5:13-17

When does God give Christians the things they ask him for?

[5:14]

When Christians pray to God, he gives them what they ask him for if:

(1) They pray for things that he wants to give them (2) They pray for things that God wants to help them with.

However, God does not give Christians everything they ask for.

See: [Will of God](#)

When John wrote about sins leading to death, what was he writing about?

[5:16]

Perhaps when John wrote about sins not “resulting in” or “leading to” death, he was writing about sins that can cause a person to die if he commits them. This is because God punishes that person immediately. Some scholars think this.

Other scholars think that John was writing about sins that God will punish by putting the sinner far away from himself forever. This is what the Scripture writers often call death. However, these scholars do not think that a Christian can sin in this way. People who sin in this way commit the sin that God will not forgive (see: Matthew 12:21-32; Mark 3:28-29; Luke 12:10).

See: John 17:9; Romans 6:23; James 5:19-20

5:18-21

How did John end this letter?

[5:18, 5:19, 5:20, 5:21]

Many scholars think that in these final verses John wanted people to think about everything he just wrote. Therefore, he said the same things in the strongest.

Did John write about people who sin many times, or was he writing about people who sin only one time?

[5:18]

John may have written about people who sin many times or people who sin only one time. Some people may have asked if Christians are able to live without sinning. All Christians can live without sinning, but no Christian does.

Some scholars think that Christians cannot keep doing the same sin many times. Perhaps this is what John wanted to say. Many translators think this, so this is how they translate this verse. Other scholars think that John wrote about even one sin.

Advice to translators: Many translators think that John wants to say that anyone born from God does not continue to sin or make a habit of sinning. Other translations think that John “sin” without saying anything else. This content may need to be adapted to follow your local translation.

What are idols?

[5:21]

Idols are false gods. Often people made statues or drawings that represented those false gods. In ancient times, most people worshiped false gods instead of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

John taught that if a person worshipped anything other than the true God, he worshipped an idol. This is because when a person sins, he is not obeying God; he is obeying something else.

When John wrote that the Christians should keep themselves from idols, perhaps he wanted to tell them not to sin, or perhaps he wanted to tell them not to worship actual idols.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

Book: 2 John

Introduction to 2 John

Overview

Although this letter is usually called "Second John," it was probably not the second letter that John wrote. However, it was the second letter wrote to a certain church. This first letter he wrote to this church is called "First John." In First John, John told people to reject certain false teachers. Some people obeyed him. Other people did not do the things John told them to do, so John this letter, known as Second John. In this letter, he told the Christians to separate themselves further from these false teachers.

See: [Fellowship](#); [Heresy](#)

Who wrote this letter?

The letter said the "elder (πρεσβύτερος/g4245)" wrote this letter, but it did not say who wrote it. However, scholars think that the apostle John was the "elder." When this letter was written, John was very old and a leader in the church. This is because it says many of the same things in the same way as the gospel of John and the book of First John.

See: [Elder](#)

Who did John write to?

This letter was written to a woman and her children (see: 1:1). In this verse, the word "lady" was a respectful way to address a woman. Some scholars think that this letter is simply addressed to a certain woman and her family. Other scholars think that John did not write to a certain woman. Instead, John wrote to a certain church. This is because Scripture often spoke about the church as if it were a woman, that is, the "Jesus' bride."

Who were the people John spoke against?

John spoke against certain false teachers. They taught the wrong things about Jesus. Perhaps they taught that Jesus was God but that he was not really a human with a physical body on earth. Some scholars also think that they also believed that the physical world was evil.

What did John wrote about in his letter?

Hospitality

Hospitality is being friendly towards a guest and helping him. When someone is away from their home or not part of your family, then Christians are to be friendly to them. In ancient Israel, people were expected to welcome others and show them hospitality. John wanted Christians to treat guests well and welcome them into their homes. This is because false teachers are dangerous.

Commandments

John wrote about the "truth (ἀληθεια/g4245)" in this letter. The commands that Christians must defend and obey are the "truth." When Christians obey God's commands, they obey God. When they obey God, it is because they love God.

Abiding or Remaining in Jesus

John often wrote about Christians "abiding (μένω/g3306)" or "remaining" in Jesus. John used this word in different ways: 1. The things that Jesus said are to "remain" in Christians. 1. Christians are said to "remain" in Jesus and in God. 1. Christians are to "remain" in Jesus' love. 1. God the Father "remains" in Jesus. 1. Jesus "remains" in God the Father. 1. Jesus "remains" in Christians. 1. The Holy Spirit "remains" in Christians.

Advice to translators: Many translators will find it impossible to represent "remaining" in their languages in exactly the same way as John.

Why did John wrote this letter?

John wrote this letter to tell Christians not to welcoming certain false teachers. While Christians must love others and welcome them into their homes, they are not to do this for these certain false teachers. This is because these false teachers were dangerous and they were teaching the wrong things to Christians. John also wanted Christians to reject the things people taught or said that were not the same as the things written about in Scripture.

Outline of 2 John

1. Greeting (1:1-3)
 2. Encouragement and the greatest commandment (1:4-6)
 3. Warning about false teachers (1:7-11)
 4. Greetings from fellow believers (1:12-13)
-

2 John

Chapter 1

¹ From the elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth—and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth— ² because of the truth that remains in us and will be with us forever.

³ Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

⁴ I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received this commandment from the Father. ⁵ Now I plead with you, lady—not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but one that we have had from the beginning—that we should love one another. ⁶ This is love, that we should walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world, and they do not confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸ Look to yourselves, that you do not lose the things for which we have labored, but so that you may receive a full reward. ⁹ Whoever goes on ahead and does not remain in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in the teaching, this one has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not greet him. ¹¹ For the one who speaks a greeting to him participates in his evil deeds.

¹² I have many things to write to you, but I did not wish to write them with paper and ink. However, I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that our joy will be complete.

¹³ The children of your chosen sister greet you.

2 John 1 Commentary

1:1-3

Who are the “elder (πρεσβύτερος/g4245)” and the “chosen (ἐκλεκτός /g1588)” lady?

[1:1]

See: Introduction

See: [Elder](#)

How does one love in truth?

[1:1]

Christian love is different than many other types of love. It is similar to the love family members show to one another. A Christian should put the needs of others above his own desires. It is a strong or loyal bond between people. Perhaps this is what John wanted to say that Christians should “truly” love others when he wrote Christians are to love “in truth (αληθεια/g225)” or “with sincerity.” Other scholars think that John wanted Christians to love others in a certain way. This love is “true,” that is true to God. They think that John wanted Christians to love God by doing the things that are taught in Scripture.

Is the truth a metaphor for Jesus?

[1:1, 1:2]

Most scholars think this passage contains several different metaphors. Christians were spoken about as if they were a “chosen (ἐκλεκτός/g1588)” or “elect” lady. Perhaps this is a certain group of Christians. Or perhaps it is all Christians in a given area. Or perhaps it is a certain woman.

John also said Christians are people who know the truth. John refers to Jesus as the “truth (αληθεια g225)” (see: John 14:6). Because of this, John may have spoke about all Christians or a certain group of Christians.

In this passage, John also spoke about Christians having a “true” knowledge about Jesus. Perhaps John spoke about the “true” things that God told mankind about himself.

See: [Metaphor](#)

1:4-11

Who are the children?

[1:4]

The children in 1:4 were the children of the lady John talked about in 1:1. They think that John spoke about new Christians in this church. Other scholars think that the lady is a certain woman, and John talked about her children.

Who are the false teachers?

[1:7]

John calls certain people “deceivers,” that is, false teachers. However, John did not write what they taught. Perhaps, they taught that Jesus was not a man or that God did not come to earth as a man named Jesus. They also taught these things because another false teacher gave them permission to teach. This was the antichrist. An antichrist is someone who opposes Jesus.

In this passage, some scholars think that John talked about a certain person called the antichrist, that is, the devil. He rules the earth and opposes Jesus.

Other scholars think this is the “spirit” of the antichrist who is still to come, that is, people who oppose Jesus. These people share the same goals as the devil. Because of this, they do the same types of things that the antichrist does.

Other scholars think John wanted to insult certain people. It was insulting because he called the devil.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How does one remain in Jesus?

[1:9]

John often wrote about Christians “remaining (μένω/g3306)” or “abiding” in or with Jesus. This is because Christians are united with Jesus in a special way.

In 1:9, John wrote that Christians “remain” in the things Jesus taught. Some scholars think John wanted to say that Christians cannot “leave” Jesus’ teachings, that is, they cannot teach things that are different from the things that Jesus has taught.

Others scholars think that a Christian can stop teaching the things that Jesus taught. If he stops teaching the things that Jesus taught, then God will not reward him. This is because God only rewards Christians who honor him (see: 1:8).

See: Introduction

What have Christians worked for or achieved?

[1:9]

Christians “work (ἐργάζομαι/g2038)” for something. Some scholars think that Christians work hard so that they will one day live together with God in heaven forever. Other scholars think that Christians work hard to get rewards from God.

Should Christians respect other religions?

[1:10]

In 1:10, John commanded Christians not to welcome certain people into their homes. He told them not to even greet them. This would have been shocking to John’s readers. In the ancient world, it was very insulting not to greet someone who came to your home. Some scholars think that John wrote this because certain people who came to the homes of Christians were false teachers. These false teachers said that they were Christians. Perhaps they kept asking Christians for help so that they could teach them the wrong things.

Other scholars think that John did not write to a certain religious teacher. However, many religious teachers do not teach the right things about God.

All false teachers do not teach the right things about God, even if they say, “I am a Christian.” Because of this, false teachers are dangerous to people. God wants people to know about him and live with him in heaven forever. If people do not believe the right things about God, they might not be able to live together with God in heaven. When John wrote about Christians not welcoming these people into their homes, he did not want them to start believing in things that the false teachers taught. However, Christians also need to speak against the false teachers in a loving way (see: Ephesians 4:5).

1:12-13

Why did John want to talk to these Christians in person?

[1:12]

John wanted to talk to these Christians when he was with them. Perhaps he did this so that other people could not read his letter and know who he wrote to. Some scholars think that John did this to protect Christians. At this time, people wanted to hurt or kill Christians. Therefore, John made a very short letter and only wrote about things that could not wait until he saw them.

Perhaps he did this to be polite. There may have been things to talk with these Christians about that it would not have been polite to talk about in a letter.

Perhaps John was going to visit these Christians in the near future. Therefore, he wrote a short letter and waited for his visit to speak with them. Because of this, 1:12 was a normal greeting. Other scholars believe this is a just a common greeting.

Who is the sister John talked about?

[1:13]

John talked about a “chosen (ἐκλεκτός/g1588)” or “elect” sister. This is the sister of the chosen lady (see: 1:1). Perhaps John was writing from another church and said that this church was the “sister” of the church he wrote. Fewer scholars think that John wrote to a certain woman and was with this woman’s sister.

The Meaning of Greek Words

g225 (αληθεια) Truth Something that is αληθεια is true. It often describes something, that is, an αληθεια is a thing. Therefore, an αληθεια is something that is true However, it is also used in different ways with this same type of meaning. It is used to speak a certain thing that is true. It is used to speak about many or all things that are true. It is sometimes used in this way to speak about all true things or teachings about God. It is also used to speak about the gospel. It is used to describe a person. The person who is αληθεια does not lie or lives in the right way.

See: [Gospel](#)

g1588 (ἐκλεκτός) When someone has been ἐκλεκτός, they have been chosen or selected.

This word is often used to speak about God choosing someone or something. God only chose certain people and certain things. This was a great honor. God chose Israel, angels, and Christians.

g2038 (ἐργάζομαι) When someone ἐργάζομαι, they work very hard at something. They may work at their job or work to complete or finish something. Sometimes translators choose to translate this word as “earn” because someone’s hard work can cause something to happen or result in a reward (see: 2 John 1:8).

g3306 (μένω) Stay, remain, abide When someone μένω in a place, they do not leave that place. It is also used in other ways. However, scholars do not agree about what it means. (1) Someone μένω in Jesus. Some scholars think this means that Christians can stop being friends with God and will not live together with God in heaven forever. More scholars think this means that Christians stop doing the things that Jesus wants them to do, that is, they do not live in a way that honors God. μένω is also used to say that some people stop teaching the things Jesus and the apostles taught.

g4245 (πρεσβύτερος) An elder, that is, someone who is old. Often, a πρεσβύτερος was an old man. A title given to a leader in the church, a πρεσβύτερος was a mature Christian, that is, a Christian who honored God.

This word is often used as a technical term for a position in the church. Some scholars think that this is the same position as G4245 (πρεσβύτερος). Other scholars think that these are different positions, that is, these leaders serve the church in different ways.

Book: 3 John

Introduction to 3 John

Overview

There are three letters John wrote that are in Scripture. Some scholars think that each letter was written to the same church over a period of time. They think John heard about the church, then wrote a letter. After a while, he heard about the church again and wrote a letter. Then, he heard about the church and wrote this letter. In his first letter, John told the Christians to reject the things that the false teachers taught. Some people did not obey the things that John taught. Therefore, John told the Christians not to welcome or be friends with the false teachers. In this letter, John wanted Gaius to welcome Demetrius. This is because another church leader refused to welcome Demetrius and other people who were visiting the church.

In his first letter, John wanted Christians to welcome other people who visited their church. However, the Christians welcomed false teachers. Therefore, John told them not to be friends with the false teachers in the same way they were friends with other Christians.

Then in his second letter, John told the Christians to reject the false teachers. They were also to separate themselves from these false teachers. However, these Christians stopped being friends with anyone they did not know. In his third letter, John wanted the Christians to welcome other Christians they did not know.

Fewer scholars think that John wrote each letter to a different church. However, they still think that John wrote this letter to tell some Christians to welcome other Christians who they did not know.

Who wrote this letter?

The “elder (πρεσβύτερος/g4245)” wrote this letter. This means that the author was old or was a leader within the church. However, the name of the author is not in this letter. In the Ancient Near East, a person could be considered “old” after they were 40 years of age. Most scholars think the apostle John wrote this book. Scholars think that the apostle John lived to be very old, perhaps 90 years of age. Also, John wrote many of the same things in this letter and the gospel of John.

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

Who did John write to?

This letter was written to Gaius. Scholars do not know much about this man. He is not written about anywhere else in Scripture. John loved him. John could have also written to Diotrephes and Demetrius. This is because John also wrote about them. Like 2 John, John also wrote this letter to help a certain church.

What did John write about in his letter?

Helping people who are away from their home

In the Ancient Near East, it was important for a person to be friends with anyone who was away from their home. A person was to help these people if they needed to be helped. However, John did not want Christians to help false teachers.

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

Why did John write this letter?

John wanted to tell Gaius what to do. This is why he wrote this letter. Scholars also think that a certain false teacher was about to lead Gaius' church. They think that John wanted to stop this because Diotrephes did not honor God and he did not help the church. Because of this, they were not able to help certain Christian teachers who visited them.

Outline of 3 John

1. Introduction (1:1)
 2. Helping people (1:2-8)
 3. Diotrephes and Demetrius (1:9-12)
 4. Conclusion (1:13-14)
-

3 John

Chapter 1

¹ The elder to beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

² Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be healthy, just as it is well with your soul. ³ For I rejoiced greatly when brothers came and bore witness to your truth, just as you walk in truth.

⁴ I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children walk in the truth.

⁵ Beloved, you practice faithfulness whenever you labor for the brothers and for strangers ⁶ who have borne witness of your love in the presence of the church. You do well to send them off on their journey in a manner worthy of God, ⁷ because it was for the sake of the name that they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸ We therefore should welcome such as these so that we will be fellow workers for the truth.

⁹ I wrote something to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us. ¹⁰ So if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing, falsely accusing us with wicked words. Not satisfied with that, he not only refused to welcome the brothers himself, but he also stops those who want to welcome them and drives them out of the church. ¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the evildoer has not seen God. ¹² Demetrius received a good testimony from everyone and by the truth itself. We also testify about him, and you know that our testimony is true.

¹³ I had many things to write to you, but I do not wish to write them to you with pen and ink. ¹⁴ But I hope to see you soon, and we will speak face to face. ¹⁵ May peace be with you. The friends greet you. Greet our friends there by name.

3 John 1 Commentary

1:1-4

How did John begin this letter?

[1:1]

The first verse is a type of greeting. Many letters in the Ancient Near East began in the same way. John the Elder said that he wrote this letter John also said that he wrote it to his friend Gaius.

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

When John wrote, “whom I love in truth,” what did he want to say?

[1:1]

John wrote that Christians are to love in “truth (ἀληθεια /g0225).” Perhaps John wanted to say that he loved Gaius truly, that is, he was not lying when he wrote this. This is what some scholars think. However, other scholars think John loved Gaius because John knew the truth, that is, because Jesus is truly God’s Son. What God says in the Bible is true; it is why John loved Gaius. It is also why John obeyed God.

Advice to translators: If your context is familiar with the concept of the prosperity gospel, then this can be substituted for the phrase “about wealth.”

Who is Gaius?

[1:1]

Gaius was a man who honored God. In Verse 2, John talked about Gaius' "health." Perhaps Gaius was sick or perhaps this was the way people greeted other people. Also, Many scholars believe there was more than one man in scripture with the name of Gaius.

Some Christians also think that John wanted to talk to Gaius about money. These Christians believe God wants Christians to be rich or successful in everything they do. They also believe God promised Christians that they will have everything they want if they obey him. Most scholars do not believe these things.

See: Acts 19:29, 20:4; Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14

How did John use the word "truth"?

[1:1, 1:3, 1:4]

John used the word "truth (αληθεια/g0255)" many times and in many different ways in this letter.

1. In verse 1, John talked about someone loving someone else "in truth." The truly, greatly, or really love someone, that is, they love someone as much as they can.
2. In verse 2, John talked about some who "truly" loves God, that is, they obey God. They "walk in truth." They live in the way that Jesus wanted them to live.
3. John also said that Jesus was the "truth" (see: John 14:6). He may speak about Jesus in the same way in this letter.

1:5-8

What is hospitality?

[1:5]

Hospitality is showing kindness to visitors, strangers, or those in need. Hospitality was very important to the Jewish people and others living in the Ancient Near East (see: 2 John 1:10-11). John asks his readers to show hospitality to Christians, but not to false teachers.

See: [Hospitable \(Hospitality\)](#); [Hospitable \(Hospitality\)](#)

How should Christians support a ministry?

[1:6]

This passage explained to a church how a travelling teacher or missionary should be supported. It also explains how people should be given money to certain leaders in the church. During this time, there were few Christian leaders so they had to travel long distances to visit different churches. They needed some money from the churches to help them travel so they could continue to serve God in this way.

Some scholars think that these church leaders should not to accept money from Gentiles, that is, from people who were not Christians. Other scholars think John talked about church leaders not taking money from the non-Christians who they were trying to get to believe in Jesus. They think that John reject this because many other religious teachers did this in the Ancient Near East.

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

1:9-10

What did John previously write to the church?

[1:9]

John wrote three letters or more. It is not clear which letter John talked about in #v9. John may have been writing about Second John or another letter that is lost.

What was Diotrephes doing?

[1:9]

These verses could be a metaphor showing that Diotrephes did not have humility. He was a leader in Gaius' church, but Diotrephes was not a good leader. Diotrephes may have wanted to be seen as the greatest person and tried to force others to do what he wanted done in the church. This was not a way to honor God. John wrote that Diotrephes needed to be corrected. He did not accept what John and the apostles taught. Diotrephes have spoken against them. Perhaps he taught that God did not give the apostles permission to teach others. Because of this, Diotrephes rejected God.

See: [Apostle](#)

1:11-12

Who was with John?

It is not clear who was with John when he wrote this letter. Some scholars think John was with the other apostles. Other scholars think John was with other people when he wrote the letter. Fewer scholars think that John was alone when he wrote this letter.

Advice to translators: Different cultures may have different ways to describe removing someone removing people from the church. Some now call this "excommunication."

Does everyone who does good things belong to God?

[1:11]

John often talked about belonging to God. Some scholars think that verse 11 is about those who do good things and the things that God wants them to do. When someone does the wrong thing or something that God does not want them to do, John said that they are "of the world" and "of the devil." Those who do not want to do evil things do not belong to God. However, John taught that if Christians decide to do what God wants, they belonged to God.

While John tried to help Christians, he may have also been insulting Diotrephes. Perhaps this verse may be talking about Diotrephes and what he did. If this is true, then John said Diotrephes was evil and he did not think that Diotrephes was a Christian. This is because Christians do good things because they love God and do the things that God wants them to do. People who are not Christians do things for the wrong reasons.

1:13-15

What is the last verse about?

[1:15]

Verse 15 is end of John's letter. This was a common way of ending a letter in the ancient Near East. It was a personal greeting and closing. John wanted to visit the church soon so the letter was not long.

Why does John use the word "friend"?

[1:15]

Some scholars think John spoke about Christians when he said "friends." They think that Christians called each other friends. Perhaps this was because Jesus died for his friends (see: John 15:13). Other scholars think John was speaking about the friends of Gaius. Perhaps he greeted Gaius' friends.

See: John 15:14-15

The Meaning of Greek Words

g1544 (ἐκβάλλω) To remove, toG throw out, to force someone to leave a group of people When someone is ἐκβάλλω from a group of people, they are removed from the group of people and they are not allowed to return. This word is used when speaking about the church.

g4245 (πρεσβύτερος) An elder, that is, someone who is old. Often, a πρεσβύτερος was an old man. A title given to a leader in the church, a πρεσβύτερος was a mature Christian, that is, a Christian who honored God.

This word is often used as a technical term for a position in the church. Some scholars think that this is the same position as G4245 (πρεσβύτερος). Other scholars think that these are different positions, that is, these leaders serve the church in different ways.

Book: Jude

Introduction to Jude

Overview

Jude wrote a letter to a certain church. However, nobody today knows where the church was located.

There were false teachers in this church. Jude warned these false teachers that God would punish them for their sins. He will judge them at the end of the world. He will declare them guilty, and he will punish them forever.

Jude also wrote metaphors in order to make the readers think in the right way about what he was telling them. Prophets often did this, and men who wrote about the end of the world also did this. In sum, Jude commanded his readers to reject the false teachers and to live in a way that honors God.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Last Days](#)

Who wrote this letter?

Many men in ancient Israel had the name "Jude." Jude's name is also translated as "Judah" and "Judas." The author was the brother of James (see: Jude 1:1). However, many men in ancient Israel had this name, and there were, in fact, four different people named James in Scripture. Two of these men were apostles.

Some scholars think that the man who wrote this letter was Jude the apostle, who was also called Thaddeus. However, Jude did not say that he was an apostle. Because of this, more scholars do not think that the author of this letter was an apostle. They think that the author of this letter was a son of Mary and Joseph. These scholars think that Mary and Joseph had children after Mary had Jesus. Therefore, Jude was a half-brother of Jesus.

See: [Family of Jesus](#)

Who did Jude write to?

Jude wrote to Christians (see: Jude 1:1). Jude also talked about many things that happened to the people of Israel in the past. Because of this, some scholars think that he wrote it to Jewish Christians. However, he also wrote about some trouble in the church. That is why scholars think that Jude wrote to one certain church or to a group of churches. This church had false teachers. These false teachers had come among the believers, but no one tried to stop them.

What did Jude write about in his letter?

False teachers

Jude spoke against certain false teachers. They did not teach the right things about Jesus. These false teachers also lived in a way that did not honor God. Jude declared that these false teachers were not honoring God and that God would judge them. Some scholars think that perhaps these false teachers were the same false teachers that Peter talked about in the letter called 2 Peter.

Some scholars think that the false teachers taught that Jesus was completely God but that he was not really a human being. These false teachers did not believe that Jesus had a real human body while he was on the earth. They thought that the world you can see and touch is evil. Other scholars think that these false teachers taught that a person could worship God without having to obey him. They taught that a person could live forever, even if he acted any way he wanted to. They said that if a person honors God by saying right things, he did not have to honor God by living in the right way.

Some scholars think these false teachers were Christians who were sinning a lot. However, more scholars think that these false teachers were not Christians at all. This is because Jude said that they God would punish them forever in hell.

See: [Hell](#)

Deliverance and punishment

Jude wrote that Christians have many difficulties, but that God will protect them and will rescue them from this evil world. However, God will punish anyone who rejects Jesus. Jude also said that Christians must remember the great things that God has done in the past. He rescued the people of Israel when they had difficulties.

Ancient Jewish Writings

Jude wrote about things that happened that the Old Testament did not talk about. These were things that were in other Jewish books. There were many of these books during Jude's time. Many of the metaphors that Jude wrote, and many things he said, came from these other books.

In these other old Jewish writings, they said many things about angels that the Old Testament did not say. Jude apparently knew these things because he had read these other books. Because of this, Jude wrote more about the angels than the Old Testament says. Also, Jude frequently talked about angels and wrote that they do many things around human beings, even though people cannot usually see those things.

See: [Ancient Writings](#)

Why did Jude write this letter?

Jude warned churches, Christians, and false teachers. Jude did not want the Christians to stop believing the things that Scripture taught. In order to do this, they must be able to tell why what they believe about God is true. They must also live in a way that honors God, even though God will forgive them if they sin.

Outline of Jude

1. Introduction (1:1-2)
2. Warning against false teachers (1:3-4)
3. Things that the Old Testament taught (1:5-16)
4. How to obey the things that Jude wrote to do (1:17-23)
5. Praises to God (1:24-25)

Jude

Chapter 1

¹ Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

² May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

³ Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I had to write to you to exhort you to struggle earnestly for the faith that was entrusted once for all to God's holy people. ⁴ For certain men have slipped in secretly among you. These men were marked out for condemnation. They are ungodly men who have changed the grace of our God into sensuality, and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

⁵ Now I wish to remind you—although once you fully knew it—that the Lord saved a people out of the land of Egypt, but that afterward he destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ Also, angels who did not keep to their own position of authority, but who left their proper dwelling place—God has kept them in everlasting chains, in utter darkness, for the judgment on the great day. ⁷ So also Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them gave themselves over to sexual immorality and perverse sexual acts. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. ⁸ Yet in the same way, these dreamers also defile their bodies. They reject authority and they slander the glorious ones. ⁹ But even Michael the archangel, when he was arguing with the devil and disputing with him about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous judgment against him, but he said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ But these people insult whatever they do not understand; and what they do understand naturally, like unreasoning animals, these are the very things that destroy them. ¹¹ Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain and have plunged into Balaam's error for profit. They have perished in Korah's rebellion. ¹² These people are dangerous reefs at your love feasts, feasting with you fearlessly—shepherds who only feed

themselves. They are clouds without rain carried along by winds; autumn trees, without fruit—twice dead, uprooted. ¹³ They are violent waves in the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of complete darkness has been reserved forever. ¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord is coming with thousands and thousands of his holy ones. ¹⁵ He is coming to execute judgment on everyone. He is coming to convict all the ungodly of all the works they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the bitter words that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." ¹⁶ These are grumblers, complainers, following their evil desires. Their mouths speak loud boasts, flattering others for profit.

¹⁷ But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken in the past by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last time there will be mockers who will follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹ It is these who cause divisions; they are worldly and they do not have the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith, and pray in the Holy Spirit. ²¹ Keep yourselves in God's love, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that brings you eternal life. ²² Be merciful to those who doubt. ²³ Save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

²⁴ Now to the one who is able to keep you from stumbling and to cause you to stand before his glorious presence without blemish and with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time, now, and forever. Amen.

Jude 1 Commentary

1: 1-2

What did Jude call himself?

[1:1]

Jude called himself a servant (δοῦλος/g1401) of Jesus, even though he was not owned or in debt to anyone.

See: [Serve \(Servant, Slave\)](#)

Why did Jude speak about Jesus in this passage?

[1:1]

Scholars do not agree about what Jude wanted to say in this verse. Perhaps Jude wanted to say that God keeps believers united to Jesus. Or perhaps Jude wanted to say that God watches over believers by means of Jesus. Or perhaps Jude wanted to say that God watches over believers so that Jesus will benefit.

Also, perhaps Jude was saying that it is God the Father who watches over the believers, or perhaps that it is Jesus who does that.

See: [Call \(Calling\)](#); [Call \(Calling\)](#)

1:3-11

Why should Christians try very hard to do?

[1:3]

Jude wrote to Christians and told them to fight for, that is, do everything they could to work very hard to continue to believe what the apostles had taught them about Jesus. False teachers were trying to make them believe things that were different than what they had been taught. In fact, they were the opposite of what they had been taught. Therefore, Jude told the Christians that they needed to "fight" or "work very hard" to keep believing in the things they had been taught about Jesus and how to live as a Christian.

How did these false teachers try to change what the Christians believed the apostles taught about the grace of God?

[1:4]

These false teachers tried to change what the Christians believed the apostles taught about the grace of God. The false teachers believed that they could sin, and that God would not punish them. They believed that they could continue to sin because God would continue to forgive them for doing so. Jude taught that they could not live in the way they wanted to live. God has mercy on Christians, but they should not then say that they could sin all they want. Anyone who thinks like this does not understand why God has mercy on people.

See: [Gospel](#); [Mercy](#); [Gospel](#)

Who is the only master?

[1:4]

When people were making copies of the New Testament in Greek very long ago, some of them said that the master or ruler (δεσπότης/#g1203) was Jesus. But some others said that the master was God.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

When did anyone write about the actions of the false teachers?

[1:4]

It is not known when someone wrote about the actions of the false teachers. Some scholars believe that God wrote in heaven about their wrong actions. Perhaps God did this before he made the world. Other scholars believe that Jude or another Christian leader wrote about these false teachers in another letter. Still other scholars believe that a Jewish prophet wrote about these false teachers long ago.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophesy\)](#)

In what way did these false teachers deny Jesus?

[1:4]

Jude said that these false teachers “denied (ἀρνέομαι/g0720)” or rejected Jesus. They may have denied that Jesus was God, or they may have denied something else about Jesus that is true. However, they may have also denied Jesus by living in a way that did not honor God. The scriptures speak about living in a way that does not honor God, so they reject God. However, God deserves for people obey him.

When did God announce that the false teachers were guilty?

[1:4]

No one knows when God announced that these false teachers were guilty. This word, “identified (προγράφω/g4270)” or “set aside,” is usually about something that someone wrote long ago. This did not happen in the recent past. Perhaps it happened in the Old Testament, or perhaps another Christian wrote it before Jude wrote his book. However, “set aside” does not have to say that someone wrote the names of these teachers in a book on earth. Perhaps someone wrote them in a book in heaven (see: Revelation 20:12). If this is so, this book is a metaphor for believers living with God forever.

Some scholars think that the false teachers had been teaching the Christians for a long time. When they began teaching the Christians, some found out that they were guilty. Other scholars believe that “set aside” shows that everyone will learn in the future that these false teachers were guilty. A few scholars believe that these false teachers were not Christians, and that God announced that they were guilty before they were born.

See: [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#); [Condemn \(Condemnation\)](#)

Did Jesus bring the Israelites out from Egypt?

[1:5]

Some very old Greek copies of the book of Jude said that it was Jesus who brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Other old copies have the word lord (κύριος/g2962). This word can mean either Jesus or God. More old copies have the word “Jesus,” but Jude probably did not write “Jesus.” This is because the Bible does not say that Jesus brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Neither does the Bible say that Jesus punished the Israelites in the wilderness for not trusting God.

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#))

Did many angels sin?

[1:6]

At some time in the past, some of the angels sinned. They rebelled against God and what he commanded them to do. The very first time that they disobeyed God, they became guilty forever. So God punished them for having sinned. They became the demons. They stopped working for God. He threw them out of heaven and put them into chains. Some scholars think that Jude wanted to say that these are chains from which the demons cannot escape. Others think that they are chains in which the demons will stay forever. In Jude’s time, many other people believed the same things Jude believed about what the angels did in Genesis 6.

See: Genesis 6:1-4 See: [Ancient Writings](#); [Demon](#); [Ancient Writings](#)

What did Jude want to say when he wrote “keep” in verse 6?

[1:6]

Jude wrote the same word twice in verse 6. The angels should have protected or guarded (τηρέω/g5083) the thing that God gave them to guard. However, they rebelled and did not do this. God is guarding them now because they did not guard the things that God gave them to guard. This is a type of irony. Because of this, God will punish them later for having sinned.

See: [Irony](#)

God has punished many people at many different times. What three times did Jude talk about?

[1:5, 1:6, 1:7]

Jude reminded his readers that God punished the Israelites who refused to trust in him, even after God brought them out of Egypt. Then, Jude reminded them that God will punish the angels who rebelled against him. Finally, he reminded them that God punished the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

See: Genesis 18 and 19

What is the “great” day?

[1:6]

Jude wrote about a “great” or significant day. This is the time when God will judge and punish all people. This is probably what scripture calls the Day of the Lord.

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

What was the strange flesh?

[1:7]

Jude said that the people in Sodom and Gomorrah wanted strange or other flesh or bodies (σάρξ/g4561). Some scholars believe that this means that the people were having sex with people of the same gender. Fewer scholars believe that the people were trying to have sex with angels.

See: Genesis 19

What is hell?

[1:7]

Hell is a place where God will punish people forever. Scripture often says that hell has a fire that never stops. Jude wrote about a fire that never stops as a type of punishment.

See: [Hell](#)

Who were the people who dreamed?

[1:8]

John said that the false teachers were people who “dreamed.” He said this, because people thought that it was God who made people dream. They thought that God showed people things through their dreams. However, these false teachers dreams and the things they taught did not come from God.

False teachers and false prophets often said that God gave them dreams or visions. When they said this, they wanted to say that God allowed them to tell people what they were supposed to do.

See: [Vision](#)

Who did the false teachers reject?

[1:8]

The false teachers rejected a group who was given permission to rule over something. Some scholars believe that it was God or Jesus whom they reject. Fewer scholars believe that it was angels who the false teachers rejected.

Who did the false teachers insult?

[1:8]

The false teachers insulted people or beings who deserved honor. Scholars believe that the false teachers insulted the angels who obeyed God. The Jews thought that the angels had brought Scripture to the people. When the false teachers insulted these angels, they also rejected the word of God.

Who is Michael?

[1:9]

Michael is an archangel or leader of the angels. He is an angel and is also a leader of angels or perhaps the most important angel. Michael is the only archangel that the Scriptures spoke about.

The books of Daniel and Revelation talk about Michael (see: Daniel 10:13, 20; 12:1, 7). Daniel called Michael a “great prince.” Some ancient Jews also believed that Michael took care of the place where Moses was buried. These ancient Jews often wrote about Michael.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:16

See: [Ancient Writings](#)

When Michael talked with the devil, what did he show believers?

[1:9]

When Moses died, the devil wanted to take his body. But Michael did not dare to insult the devil, even though the devil was the leader of the angels who had sinned. Michael refused to insult him, because it was God who would judge the devil.

The devil, and the angels that serve him, did not respect God. Despite this, Michael showed that he respected the devil, because he refused to insult the devil. However, the false teachers insulted the angels who still serve God.

The story that Jude mentioned did not come from the Old Testament. Instead, it was from another ancient Jewish book.

See: Deuteronomy 34:6; Zechariah 3:2

See: [Ancient Writings](#); [Ancient Writings](#)

Why did Jude talk about Cain, Balaam, and Korah?

[1:11]

Cain was the first person in the world to murder anyone. He did not love his brother. Instead, he killed his brother because he envied him. Cain also worshiped God in a false way. Balaam worked with enemies of God because Balaam was greedy for money. In Numbers, Moses showed that Balaam also encouraged the Israelites to sin against God (see: Numbers 31). As for Korah, he rebelled against the man whom God had chosen to lead the Israelites. In each of these cases, the people rejected God and rebelled against him. This is what the false teachers also did.

See: Genesis 4; Numbers 16; Numbers 22-24

Why did Jude write five metaphors in 1:12-14?

[1:12, 1:13, 1:14]

Jude wrote five metaphors to show his readers the errors that the false teachers made.

Jude said that the false teachers were like rocks hidden below the surface of the sea. Such rocks are dangerous to ships because they cannot be seen. The false teachers were dangerous, too, but many people did not know that these teachers could harm them.

Jude also said that the false teachers were like clouds that had no water to give to the earth. The wind quickly drives these clouds away in different directions. As for the false teachers, they are always thinking different things, and they are always teaching the people these different things.

These false teachers were also like trees that something has uprooted. So they have no fruit to give. The false teachers could not teach anyone how to live forever with God. God will announce that they are guilty, and he will punish them forever.

The false teachers were like the bubbles on the top of strong waves in the sea. These bubbles have no value. They are like false teachers, who can teach people things that will cause them nothing but shame.

These false teachers are like certain stars in the heavens that wander about, whose path no one can tell in advance. Because of that, no one can find their way at night by looking at those stars.

See: [Lord's Supper](#); [Lord's Supper](#)

Who was Enoch?

[1:14]

There are two men named Enoch in the Old Testament. One Enoch was the son of Cain. However, verse 14 is about Enoch, the son of Jared (see: Genesis 5). This Enoch honored God and did not die. Instead, God took him to heaven without dying. There is also an ancient writing about this Enoch. Jude was thinking about that writing when he wrote his own letter.

See: [Ancient Writings](#)

Who were the holy ones?

[1:14]

In verse 14, Jude talked about “people” who honored God. This was about the angels who honored God. Jude copied this verse and the next verse from an ancient book called “The Assumption of Moses.”

See: [Ancient Writings;Ancient Writings](#)

What type of judgment did Jude talk about?

[1:15]

The judgment that Jude talked about was the final judgment. In this judgment, God will announce who is guilty. He will do this in the last days. Then he will punish those people forever.

See: [Last Days](#)

When is the last time or last day?

[1:18]

Jude spoke about the “last time” or “last day.” Jude probably talked about the time near to when Jesus would return to the earth. It is the time when God will judge everyone. Some scholars believe that there will be many people at this time who do not honor God. Perhaps this is what Jude talked about in verses 18-19.

See: [Last Days](#)

What people do not have the Spirit?

[1:19]

In verse 19, Jude talked about people who do not have the Spirit. This is the Holy Spirit. It means they are not Christians.

See: [Indwelling of the Holy Spirit](#)

1:20-25

How does a Christian pray in the Holy Spirit?

[1:20]

Some scholars believe that Jude wants Christians to pray for the things that the Holy Spirit wishes them to pray for. However, fewer scholars think that Jude wants Christians to pray in a special language that the Holy Spirit gives them.

What is the Greek text of verse 22?

[1:22]

In verse 22, some early Greek copies have “to have mercy on a person.” Other early copies have “to convince or to correct.” The Greek words are very similar (ἐλεέω and ἐλέγχω).

See: [Differences in the Ancient Copies of the Bible](#)

How many groups are listed in verses 22-23?

[1:22, 1:23]

Some scholars believe that there were three groups of people in verses 22-23.

There were those who did not yet decide whether or not to believe the false teachers. Perhaps they could not know whether those teachers were false or not. They did not know what they should believe.

There were also those who followed the false teachers. Because of this, God will judge them. Here Jude might be talking about both Christians and non-Christians. Jude wanted these people to repent and to

believe that Jesus will return to earth. Some scholars believe this group is the same group described later in the verse. Others scholars believe that they were a different group.

Some scholars believe that a third group of people who began to follow the false teachers. These people were in danger of following these false teachers completely. Therefore, the Christian must avoid following this third group. Some scholars believe that the people in this group could not repent and believe in Jesus. Believers should have mercy on them because they ought to pity them.

Other scholars believe that these are three ways of describing the same group of people.

See: Zechariah 3:2-4

See: [Jesus' Return to Earth](#); [Jesus' Return to Earth](#)

Do Christians save other people?

[1:23]

Christians cannot save or free (σῶζω/g4982) other people from the guilt of their sins. However, God often works through other people so that they become friends with him. Only God can free people from their guilt. Jude said that this was like taking people out of the fire. This is a metaphor meaning that they God will not punish these people in hell (see: Amos 4:11)

1:24-25

What did Jude mean when he wrote about stumbling?

[1:24]

In verse 24, Jude told people not to follow false teachers. Some scholars believe that if Christians followed the false teachers, they could stumble or fall (ἁρτιστατος/g0679), that it, become separated from God forever. This is because in this verse, Jude also spoke about Christians standing before God's throne and God welcoming them. Other scholars believe that they might lose some reward in heaven when Jesus judges them.

See: [Walk](#); [Walk](#)

How does this letter end?

[1:24, 1:25]

In ancient times, most people ended their letters by greeting again the people to whom they were writing. However, Jude ended his letter by praising Jesus.

Book: Revelation

Introduction to Revelation

Overview

The Book of Revelation is about the time when God destroys the world and makes it new. When John wrote about a time when those who believe in Jesus are greatly persecuted. Some scholars think Revelation is about the entire time the Christian church exist. This is because the church has always been persecuted. Other scholars think Revelation is about events near the time of when Jesus returns to the earth. Other scholars think this book is about certain events that happened immediately after Jesus died and Israel was in a war with the Roman Empire.

Overall, the events in the Book of Revelation are about the wrath of God punishing mankind. During this time, the antichrist does things on the earth before he is eventually defeated. Ultimately, Jesus defeats his enemies. Then all who trust in him will live forever with him. John warns people and tells them that God is in control. Eventually, evil and sin will stop.

Advice to translators: When speaking about the book of Revelation, it matters how one speaks about it. When someone speaks about Revelation, they can say, "God did," "God is doing," and "God will do" something. However, each of these says something different about the meaning of the book. If you say "God did," then you say the things have already happened. If you say "God will do," then you are saying that these things have not happened yet but will happen in the future. This commentary tries to avoid writing "God did" and "God will do" to not say something has happened or will happen.

When Israel is used here, it can refer to either the people of Judah, or the people from the twelve tribes of Israel.

See: [Church](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ;[Last Days](#); [Wrath](#); [Antichrist](#); [Sin](#)

Who wrote this letter?

John wrote this letter (see: 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). However, there are at least 5 men named John in the New Testament. Scholars think that John, the son of Zebedee wrote this letter. He was an apostle. This is the same John who wrote the gospel of John and the three other letters named after John.

See: [Apostle](#); [Gospel](#)

To whom did John write?

For much of the book of Revelation is John writing about a vision. God gave John this vision. Therefore, this vision was about things that were going to happen in the future for John. However, chapters 1-3 are separate from the rest of the vision in chapters 4-22. Because of this, scholars disagree about to whom John wrote. Chapters 2 and 3 are written to seven churches in Asia Minor. These churches could be the same people to whom John wrote the whole letter. These seven churches could also be a metaphor for seven different types of churches. Because of this, some scholars think the letter was written to all of the Christian churches when John lived. Therefore, John wrote to all Christians.

When John lived, the Roman Emperor persecuted Christians. It is not certain how much he persecuted Christians. Some scholars think that he did not persecute them very much. Therefore, it was not bad enough for John to write about it in this letter. Therefore, these scholars think that some Christians persecuted other Christians. Other scholars think that the Roman Empire greatly persecuted Christians, and John wrote about it. It is helpful to know that the Jews fought with the Roman Empire about 40 years after Jesus returned to heaven. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed because of this war. More scholars think Revelation was written about 60 years after Jesus returned to heaven. Other scholars think that John wrote about a time near Jesus' return to the earth when Christians will be persecuted.

Some scholars think these prophecies are being fulfilled throughout history. Because Revelation prophecies some major events in the world's history, they think Revelation was written to the church throughout history. Therefore, John wrote it to all Christians, no matter when they live.

Some scholars think John's prophecies were fulfilled when John lived. They think that Revelation helped Christians to understand the things that happened when John lived. They think John wrote to these Christians. He might have written to the Christians who lived in Asia Minor.

Some scholars think that none of John's prophecies have been fulfilled. They think that John wrote to all Christians, but he really wanted to warn Christians who are alive when these prophecies will be fulfilled. Perhaps John wanted non-Christians to fear these things and believe in Jesus.

See: [Vision](#); [Metaphor](#); [Church](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Temple](#) See Map: Asia Minor

Things talked about many times in this book War

In Revelation, John wrote about a war between God and Satan. God will win. God will also fight against the antichrist. The antichrist works through the power of Satan, who gives him permission to rule on the earth. He tried to do the types of things that Jesus did so that people worship him instead of Jesus. Revelation prophesied about things that were still in the future when John wrote about them. During these events, Satan appears to win the war against God and Christians for a time. However, God's remains in control. In the end, God's defeats Satan, and John writes about the defeat as certain. That is, God will win, it has already been determined.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Antichrist](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

God judging people

Revelation is a book about God judging people and sin. It is about how God is powerful and he is perfect. All sin must be judged and punished. However, God allowed sin to remain in this world. This is because God is patient and gracious. He does not immediately condemn and punish every sin. However, Revelation is about when God punishes the sin of all those who do not believe in Him.

See: [Sin](#); [Grace](#)

Symbolism

Revelation is about a vision that God gave to John. Because of this, John wrote about what he saw in this vision. The book is full of symbols. Some of these symbols are people. This is common in prophecy, and especially writings about the end of the world. Some parts of Revelation are symbols of other things. However, scholars do not agree about the meanings of all these symbols.

See: [Symbol](#); [Vision](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Numbers

Revelation uses many different numbers. These numbers are often repeated and connected to other verses of the Bible. The numbers 4, 7, 1000, and 12 are used many times. While John wanted to use these certain numbers, it is not known why he used these numbers. Of the numbers John used, perhaps he wanted people to give special attention to 6 and 7. Typically, seven is a number used to talk about completion or perfection. Because of this, it is often connected to God. The number 6 usually was used to talk about being incomplete or imperfection. It is often connected to Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did John write Revelation?

The purpose of chapters 2 and 3 was to warn the seven ancient churches mentioned in these chapters. This purpose of these chapters is usually considered separately from the rest of the book. Some scholars think that the church was persecuted when John wrote this letter. Because of this, the letter was written because Christians were persecuted. The letter would have given these Christians great comfort. They knew the plans and power of God, even when his power could not be easily seen in the world. Revelation could have been written so that people would believe in Jesus. When non-Christians witnessed the fulfillment of Revelation's prophecies, it proved the power of God to them. Scholars think many different things about Revelation. Because of this, there are different views about the purpose of Revelation.

1. Some scholars think that these prophecies are being fulfilled throughout history. Because Revelation predicts some major events in world's history, they believe Revelation was written to the

church throughout history. Therefore, the letter was written to help comfort the church by showing God's control over the events of world history. God works throughout history, even when he cannot be seen.

2. Some scholars think John's prophecies were filled when John lived. They think that John wrote to help Christians to understand the events when they lived. John wanted to help Christians when they were persecuted. In these difficult times, God promised to rescue Christians. In the end, God will judge and punish those who persecute Christians. It did this by revealing God's ultimate plan for creation and all of human history.
3. Some scholars think that none of John's prophecies have been fulfilled. They think that John wrote to all Christians, but he really wanted to warn Christians who are alive when these prophecies are fulfilled. This is common for prophecies that predict the future. Perhaps John wanted non-Christians to fear these things and believe in Jesus. They think that the book serves as a warning to non-Christians and gives hope to Christians. It completely revealed God's plan to them, and completed the Bible. It also explains Israel's future and how God will eventually fulfill the covenants he made with Abraham and David. It also provides greater detail concerning the kingdom of God and what happens after the world ends.
4. Some scholars think that none of John's prophecies have been fulfilled. They think that John wrote to all Christians, but he really wanted to warn Christians who are alive when these prophecies are fulfilled. This is common for prophecies that predict the future. Perhaps John wanted non-Christians to fear these things and believe in Jesus. They think that the book serves as a warning to non-Christians and gives hope to Christians. It completely revealed God's plan to them, and completed the Bible. It also explains Israel's future and how God will eventually fulfill the covenants he made with Abraham and David. It also provides greater detail concerning the kingdom of God and what happens after the world ends.

See: Church; Persecute (Persecution); Prophecy (Prophecy); Covenant with Abraham; Covenant with David; Kingdom of God

Have the book of Revelation's prophecies been fulfilled?

Some scholars think all of the prophecies are being fulfilled

The prophecies of Revelation are being fulfilled. They think that these prophecies are being fulfilled over many years.

Some scholars think that none of these prophecies have been fulfilled

The prophecies of Revelation have not been fulfilled. The prophecies will be fulfilled during the years called the tribulation. After this period when God judges people, Jesus will return to the earth and establish his kingdom on the earth.

Some scholars think that the prophecies prophecies have been fulfilled

Some scholars think that some of the prophecies of Revelation have been fulfilled. They think that certain prophecies were fulfilled about 40 years after Jesus died. This is when the Roman Empire was at war with Israel. The rest of the prophecies will be fulfilled when Jesus returns. At this time, he will reign on the earth.

*Other scholars think that all of the prophecies have been fulfilled. *

They think Jesus rules over Christians' hearts or inner lives of Christians. That is, he control them in some way. He helps them to want to do things that honor God. In the future, Jesus will not return to reign on the earth. They think all of the prophecies were fulfilled about 40 years after Jesus died when Israel was at war with the Roman Empire.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Tribulation](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Israel](#)

Will Christ return for the church?

Some scholars believe that Jesus will return twice. The first time, he will return in secret. He will remove the church because he is not going to punish them (see: 1 Thessalonians 5:2). This is called the "rapture" (see: 1 Thessalonians 4:17). The second time, Jesus will return in glory (see: Romans 14:11; Philippians

2:10). Other scholars believe that Jesus will return to earth once. Other scholars do not think Jesus will return to the earth.

Jesus will return to the earth before the world is punished for seven years

Jesus will return to remove the Christians from the earth before the beginning of the seven years of tribulation. Christians are not present during the things written about in Revelation 4-19, unless they believe in Jesus after the rapture. They think Jesus can return at any minute.

Jesus will return to the earth in the middle of the seven years when he punishes the world

Jesus will return to remove Christians from the earth in the middle of the seven years of tribulation. This will occur before the so-called "Great Tribulation" (see: Matthew 24:12; Revelation 2:22; 7:14).

Jesus will return to the earth at the very end of the seven years when he punishes the world

Jesus will return to remove Christians from the earth at the end of the seven years of tribulation. Christians will leave the earth near the return of Jesus. In the Bible, there are many different numbers connected to the Great Tribulation. These are 1260, 1290, and 1335. It is possible that there is a period of up to 75 days at the end of the tribulation, prior to Jesus' return. These scholars think that Jesus will remove Christians at some point near the end of this seven years. However, they do not agree when this will be. They will leave before God punished people with his wrath.

See: [RaptureKingdom of God](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Tribulation](#); [Wrath](#)

Outline of Revelation

1. Opening (1:1-20)
2. Letters to the seven churches (2:1-3:22)
3. Vision of God in heaven, and a vision of the Lamb (4:1-11)
4. The seven seals (6:1-8:1)
5. The seven trumpets (8:2-13:18)
6. Worshipers of the Lamb, the martyrs, and the harvest of wrath (14:1-20)
7. The seven bowls (15:1-18:24)
8. Worship in heaven (19:1-10)
9. The Lamb's judgment, the destruction of the beast, the thousand years, the destruction of Satan, and the final judgment (20:11-15)
10. The new creation, the new Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)
11. Jesus' promise to return, the witness from the angels, John's closing words, Christ's message to his church, the invitation and the warning (22:6-21)

Revelation

Chapter 1

¹ This is the revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testified about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, all the things that he saw. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud this prophecy and those who listen to the words of this prophecy and who obey what is written in it, because the time is near.

⁴ John, to the seven churches in Asia: May grace be to you and peace from the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood— ⁶ he has made us a kingdom, priests for his God and Father—to him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look, he is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
including those who pierced him.
All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him.
Yes, Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." ^[1]

⁹ I, John—your brother and the one who shares with you in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Jesus—was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet. ¹¹ It said, "Write what you see in a book, and send it to the seven churches—to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." ¹² I turned around to see whose voice was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw seven golden lampstands. ¹³ In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a son of man, wearing a long robe that reached down to his feet and a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ His head and hair were as white as wool—as white as snow—and his eyes were like a flame of fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like polished bronze, like bronze that had been refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many rushing waters. ¹⁶ He had seven stars in his right hand, and a sword with two sharp edges was coming out of his mouth. His face was shining like the sun at its strongest. ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last ¹⁸ and the one who lives. I was dead, but look, I live forever and ever! And I have the keys of death and of Hades. ¹⁹ Therefore write down what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place after this. ²⁰ As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

Footnotes

1:8 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Revelation 1 Commentary

1:1-3

Why did John say "him"?

[1:1]

John said, "God gave him." He wanted to say "God gave Jesus."

When will these things happen?

[1:1]

John said that the things he talked about will occur soon. However, he wrote these things about 2000 years ago.

1. Some scholars think that these things can begin at any time. That is, these things did not occur yet, but it they will occur soon.
2. Other scholars think that the things John talked about will occur quickly once they begin to occur.
3. Other scholars think John wanted to say these things will definitely occur.
4. Other scholars think the things John talked about already occurred or already began to occur.

1:4-6

What were the seven churches?

[1:4]

John wrote the Book of Revelation to seven churches in Asia. This was not modern Asia. Instead, it was a place called "Asia Minor." That is, it is where the country of Turkey is today.

See Map: Seven churches of Revelation

Who “was,” “is,” and “is to come”?

[1:4]

John spoke about “the one who is, and who was, and who is to come.” Some scholars think this was God the Father. This means God is eternal. That is, he always lived, is currently living, and will always live. These words made the people think about God’s name. That is, the name he told Moses from a burning bush (see: Exodus 3:14). Other scholars think that John spoke about Jesus. That is, Jesus always lived, is currently living, and will always live. Fewer scholars think John wanted people to remember that Jesus has always lived, he came to the earth, he is now in heaven helping people to be at peace with God, and he will return to the earth.

Who were the seven spirits?

[1:4]

John said there were seven spirits who are always around God’s throne. In the Old Testament, Isaiah spoke about the Holy Spirit in seven different ways. Some scholars think John wanted people to think about Isaiah’s words. Therefore, John said the Holy Spirit is in front of the throne of God.

See: Isaiah 11:2

See: [Throne](#)

How did John talk about Jesus?

[1:5]

John talked about Jesus in several different ways.

1. He is the faithful witness. John wanted to say that Jesus was faithful to God. He told other people about God. He did the things God wanted, even when people killed him for doing those things God wanted him to do.
2. He was the first born from the dead. That is, he was the first to die and then be resurrected. (see: Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15:20).
3. He rules the kings of the earth. Jesus is more powerful than any king ruling on the earth.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What are the things Jesus does for Christians?

[1:5, 1:6]

John said Jesus did certain things for Christians.

1. He loved Christians.
2. He released Christians from their sins. He did this by dying for their sins.
3. He made Christians a kingdom. That is, Jesus rules Christians in a special way.
4. He made Christians priests. That is, they can talk to God directly without anyone else’s help.

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

1:7-8

How will Jesus come with clouds?

[1:7]

John talks about how Jesus returns to the earth. He said that Jesus comes with or on the clouds. Daniel also talked about this (see: Daniel 7:13-14). While this was still in the future for John, some scholars think that this already happened or is continually happening. That is, Jesus is not physically coming on the clouds, They think this is a metaphor for Jesus’ coming back to earth slowly. However, other scholars think that this did not occur yet. They think this will happen fast.

Who pierced him?

[1:7]

Some scholars think John wrote about the actual people who killed Jesus. Other scholars think John wrote about the Jews. That is, the Jewish leaders wanted the Romans to kill Jesus. Other scholars think John wanted to say that anyone who sinned killed Jesus. That is, Jesus died so that people who sinned will be given peace with God.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Why will people mourn or be sad when Jesus returns?

[1:7]

Some scholars think people will mourn when Jesus returns because they will regret treating him badly. They will be sad because they wanted him to die. Other scholars think people will mourn because Jesus will return to judge sin. People who do not believe in Jesus when he returns will go to hell. They will see what they did wrong, but they will not be able to change it. Therefore, they will be sad. Fewer scholars think that people will mourn because of what Jesus had to suffer while on the earth.

See: [Hell](#)

How is God “the alpha and the omega”?

[1:8]

John said that God is “the alpha and the omega.” That is, God is the beginning and the end. Alpha was the first letter in the Greek alphabet. Omega was the last letter of the Greek alphabet. John wanted to say that God was the beginning of the created world. He existed before the earth was created, and He created the world. God is the end because without God, creation would stop existing. That is, God caused all things to exist, and he causes all things to continue to exist. On the last day, God will destroy the world. That is, he will end the world. Therefore, God is both the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega.

See: [Last Days](#)

1:9-20

What does John share with Christians?

[1:9]

John said he shared certain things with the Christians to whom he wrote. That is, the same or similar things happened to him that happened to other Christians.

1. He suffered because he was a Christian. The Christians in Asia Minor also suffered because they were Christians.
2. He was part of God’s kingdom. So are Christians.
3. He was confident that God will fulfill his promises. Christians are also confident of this.

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

See Map: Asia Minor

Why was John on the island of Patmos?

[1:9]

John said he was on the island of Patmos because of “the word of God and the testimony about Jesus.” He was separated from society because he told other people about Jesus.

See Map: Patmos

How was John “in the Spirit on the Lord’s day”?

[1:10]

Some scholars think that John was speaking about the Day of the Lord. This is a special time in Scripture when Jesus returns. Therefore, the Holy Spirit took John to this time that did not happen yet. Other scholars think John was speaking about Sunday, which the Bible calls the “Lord’s day.” This was the day of the week Jesus rose from the dead. They think John was “in the Holy Spirit” on this Sunday.

See: [Day of the Lord](#)

Who is “the one like the son of man”?

[1:13]

Daniel talked about the “son of man” (see: Daniel 7:13). John was thinking about what Daniel said when he talked about the son of man. Therefore, John saw Jesus.

See: [Son of Man](#)

Why was Jesus dressed in the same way the high priest dressed?

[1:13]

Jesus was dressed in the way the high priest of Israel was dressed. Some scholars think that John wanted to say that Jesus was a priest. He was also a prophet and a king.

See: Exodus 28:4; 39:29

See: [Prophet](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Prophet](#)

How did what Jesus looked like affect John?

[1:17]

John talked about what Jesus looked like. Scholars think that it did not matter what Jesus looked like. Scholars do not agree about the exact meaning of the details of what Jesus looked like. However, John was in awe of Jesus, and Jesus looked very holy. This is why John fell at Jesus’ feet

See: Isaiah 53:2

See: [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#)

What are “the keys of death and of Hades”?

[1:18]

Jesus wanted to say that he controls where people go when they die. Therefore, he said that he has “the keys of death and Hades.” This was a metaphor. Hades is a place where many people go when they die. Those who believe in Jesus do not go to Hades. They go to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Hades \(Sheol\)](#); [Heaven](#)

Who were the seven angels of the seven churches?

[1:20]

The Greek word, often translated as “angel” (ἄγγελος/g0032), can also be translated as “messenger.” Some scholars think God gave each church an angel to protect it. They think John was writing about those angels. Other scholars think that John was speaking about messengers. That is, he spoke about people. They were either the leaders of each of these seven churches, or they were the people who brought John’s letters to these seven churches.

Advice to translators: A messenger is a person who says something for someone else. Often, this is because they cannot go somewhere. So, they send someone else to say certain things for them. The messenger does not say what he wants. He says what the person who sends him wants him to say.

See: [Angel](#)

Chapter 2

¹ "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

"The words of the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands, ² "I know your deeds, your hard labor, and your patient endurance, and that you cannot tolerate those who are evil, but you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and you have found them to be false. ³ You are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name, and you have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have against you the fact that you have left behind your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first. Unless you repent, I will come to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place. ⁶ But you have this: You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

⁸ "To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

"The words of the one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead and who became alive again: ⁹ "I know your sufferings and your poverty, but you are rich. I know the slander of those who say they are Jews, but they are not. They are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Look! The devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you will be tested, and you will suffer for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death."

¹² "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

"The words of the one who has the sword with two sharp edges: ¹³ "I know where you live, there where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold on tightly to my name. I know that you did not deny your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, there where Satan lives. ¹⁴ But I have a few things against you: You have there some who hold tightly to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and be sexually immoral. ¹⁵ In the same way, you even have some who hold tightly to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Repent, therefore! If you do not, I will quickly come to you, and I will wage war against them with the sword in my mouth. ¹⁷ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone with a new name written on the stone, a name which no one knows but the one who receives it."

¹⁸ "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

"These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze: ¹⁹ "I know your deeds: your love and faith and service and your patient endurance. I know that what you have done recently is more than you did at first. ²⁰ But I have this against you: You tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her immorality. ²² Look! I will throw her onto a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great suffering, unless they repent of her deeds. ²³ I will strike her children dead, and all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out thoughts and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. ²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyatira, to everyone who does not hold this teaching and does not know what some call the deep things of Satan—to you I say, 'I do not put any other burden on you.' ²⁵ In any case, you must hold on tightly until I come.

²⁶ The one who conquers and does my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.

²⁷ 'He will rule them with an iron rod,
like clay jars he will break them into pieces.'

²⁸ Just as I have received from my Father, I will also give him the morning star. ²⁹ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

Revelation 2

2:1-7

Why did John write seven letters inside of one letter?

[2:1]

John wrote seven letters to seven different churches in chapters two and three. These seven churches were in a place called Asia minor. that is, they were in the country now called Turkey. Some scholars think these letters were a special type of metaphor. They think these seven churches represented seven different types of churches. That is, they represented groups of Christians in certain areas. Fewer scholars think that they represent different periods of time since Jesus died. More scholars think that these were simply seven letters to seven churches when John lived.

See: [Metaphor](#)

See Map: Seven churches of Revelation

Where was Ephesus?

[2:1]

See Map: Ephesus

Who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands?

[2:1]

Jesus holds the seven stars in his right hand. He wanted to say that Jesus rules the seven churches to whom John wrote. Or he wanted to say that Jesus controls the seven angels who protect each of these churches. He also walks among the seven golden lampstands. He wanted to say that Jesus is with his church on the earth in some way.

See: 1:20

See: [Angel](#)

How did Jesus talk about the Ephesians?

[2:2, 2:3, 2:4]

Jesus said the Ephesian Christians “have left behind their first love.” This was a metaphor. Some scholars think Jesus wanted to say the Ephesians stopped loving Jesus. Other scholars think Jesus wanted to say that the Ephesians stopped loving one another and they stopped loving Jesus. Jesus also said they had “fallen.” That is, they stopped doing what Jesus wanted them to do.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What does it mean to repent?

[2:5]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How will Jesus remove the church from its place?

[2:5]

Jesus said, “I will remove your lampstand from its place.” This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that he will punish the church. He would take away the church in Ephesus because of their sinning. Today, the city of Ephesus no longer exist. Therefore, there is not a church in Ephesus anymore.

Advice to translators: A lampstand is something that holds candles.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who were the Nicolaitans?

[1:6]

Scholars do not know much about the “Nicolaitans.” This Greek word means “to conquer the people.” They were false teachers who did the same things non-Christians did. Some scholars think they were a group of people who did not honor God. Many Christians in Ephesus began to do the things that they did. Other scholars think they were a group of people who said they were Christians, but did not honor God.

See: Revelation 2:15, Numbers 25

Why did John say “he who has an ear, let him hear”?

[1:7]

John said “he who has an ear, let him hear” because he really wanted people to listen to the things that he said. John said that it was the Holy Spirit who said these things. When Jesus spoke, the Holy Spirit also spoke.

See: [Trinity](#)

Was Jesus speaking only to the church in Ephesus or to all churches?

[2:7]

In this passage, Jesus spoke to the church in Ephesus. However, in 2:7, Jesus also spoke to many churches. Perhaps this was all churches. Or perhaps he was speaking specifically to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3.

What is the tree of life in the paradise of God?

[2:7]

John said that the “one who conquers” will get to eat from the tree of life in the paradise of God. That is, they will live together with God in heaven forever.

See: Genesis 2:9; 3:2

See: [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#)

2:8-11

How is Jesus the first and the last?

[2:8]

When John said Jesus was the first and the last, he wanted to say that Jesus always lived and will always live. Also, John wanted to comfort the people. The Christians in Smyrna were being persecuted. Because of this, John wanted to comfort them. He reminded them that any problems they had in this world were only temporary. Jesus is in control of all things.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

See Map: Smyrna

How were the Christians in Smyrna both rich and poor?

[2:9]

Christians in Smyrna were poor because they did not have much money. However, Jesus said that they were rich. This is a metaphor. They had the one thing that all people want. They had peace with God, and they will live with him forever in heaven.

See: [Metaphor](#)

See Map: Smyrna

Who were the people saying they were Jews?

[1:9]

Smyrna had many Jewish people. Jesus said there were some people who said that they were Jews. However, they were a “synagogue of Satan.” These people were born Jews, but they did not honor God. Jesus said that they honored Satan instead.

See: [Synagogue](#)

Why will the Christians in Smyrna suffer for ten days?

[2:10]

Jesus said that the Christians in Smyrna “will suffer for ten days.” Scholars do not agree why Jesus said this.

1. Some scholars think that Jesus meant these Christians will suffer for a short time. Perhaps for 10 days.
2. Some scholars think Jesus was talking about 10 different Roman Emperors who persecuted the church after Jesus said this.
3. Some scholars think Jesus said that there will be 10 different times when Christians will be severely persecuted.
4. Some scholars think that they were going to suffer within ten days.
5. Some scholars think John wanted to say that God was going to completely test the Christians in Smyrna. This is because 10 is a symbol of completeness in Scripture.

See: [Symbol](#) ;[Symbol](#)

Who is the one who conquers?

[2:11]

God will give to the one who conquers a crown. When Jesus spoke about the “crown of life,” he wanted to say that these Christians will live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars think that only those who continued to believe in Jesus when they suffered will live with God forever. More scholars think this is a special reward for Christians who suffered for Jesus, or those who were killed because they were Christians.

See: [Reward](#); [Crown](#);[Reward](#)

What is the second death?

[2:11]

Death is something that separates people from something. The first “death” separates a person’s soul from their body. The second “death” separates a person from God forever. Those who believe in Jesus live together with God forever. Those who do not believe in Jesus live forever without God in hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

2:12-17

Where was Pergamum?

[2:12]

See Map: Pergamum

Why did Jesus say that he has “the sword with two sharp edges”?

[2:12]

Pergamum was the capital city of one part of the Roman Empire. In ancient times, the government was said to hold a type of sword. This is a metaphor meaning that they were able to kill someone. Here, Jesus said that his sword had two edges. Perhaps this means he can make someone die two times. The first time he makes their body die. The second time, he separates them from God forever. Therefore he said going to hell was the second type of death.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

What was Satan’s throne?

[2:13]

A throne was a type of chair. It was where a ruler sat and told people what to do. Some scholars think Jesus spoke about the people of Pergamum worshipping a false god. That is, he spoke about the leader of the Roman Empire. Fewer scholars think Jesus spoke about the throne of a certain false God.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How did the Christians in Pergamum hold tightly to Jesus’ name?

[2:13]

Jesus said the Christians in Pergamum held tightly to his name. He wanted to say that they did not reject Jesus and worship a false god. Who were Balak and Balaam?

See: Numbers 22-25; 31

What was a “stumbling block”?

[2:14]

See: [Stumble \(Stumbling Block\)](#)

What was food sacrificed to idols?

[2:14]

See: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 10:14-33

See: Sacrifice; [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

What was sexual immorality?

[2:14]

See: [Sexual Immorality](#)

Who were the Nicolaitans?

[2:15]

See: Revelation 2:6

Why did Jesus say that he might go to Pergamum?

[2:16]

Jesus said that he will “make war” with the Christians in Pergamum with the “sword from his mouth.” Jesus used two metaphors to warn the church in Pergamum that he will go there to punish them if they did not repent. Because Pergamum does not exist anymore, there is no church in Pergamum today.

Therefore, some scholars think that Jesus already punished this church. Fewer scholars think that Jesus was talking about punishing the church in Pergamum when Jesus returns.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#) [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did John say, “he who has an ear, let him hear”?

[2:17]

See: 2:7

What was the “hidden manna” Jesus gives to certain people?

[2:17]

Jesus promised to give certain Christians in Pergamum “hidden manna.” He promised this to those who “conquer.” Some scholars think that Jesus wanted to say that he will help Christians. They think this was a metaphor meaning that Jesus gave them things they need, but cannot see. That is, he gave them the they needed to honor God.

Other scholars think Jesus promised that they will eat manna at a special feast when he returns. In ancient Israel, some Jews believed that the prophet Jeremiah hid some manna in the ark of the covenant. They thought they will eat this manna when the messiah rules.

Fewer scholars think Jesus wanted to say that those who conquer will get to live with Jesus forever.

See: Hebrews 9:4

See: [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Prophet](#); [Ark of the Covenant](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#)

Why did Jesus promise to give white stones to certain people?

[2:17]

In the Ancient Near East, when someone was charged with a crime, a jury decided whether the person was guilty or innocent. They did this by putting a white or black stone into a jar. The white stone meant that they thought the person was innocent. Perhaps Jesus was thinking about this when he promised to give white stones to certain people. In some places, the judge gave the innocent person a white stone.

In the Ancient Near East, white stones were also used as a type of ticket to enter a feast or festival. Perhaps Jesus was thinking about this when he promised to give white stones to certain people.

Advice to translators: A jury is a group of people who decide whether someone accused of a crime is guilty or innocent. If the jury thinks they are guilty, then they are punished. If they do not think they are guilty, then they are not punished.

See: [Wedding](#); [Wedding](#)

Why was there a new name on the white stone?

[2:17]

Some scholars think that Jesus will give Christians a new name when they go to heaven (see: Isaiah 62:2). Other scholars think that Jesus will tell them the name of God when they go to heaven. Other scholars think that they get to be called by Jesus’ name. Fewer scholars think that Jesus will have a new name (see: Revelation 3:12).

No one knows what this name is except the person to whom Jesus gives the name. Some scholars think that Jesus will give all Christians a name only the Christian and Jesus know. Other scholars think that this is a special name for Jesus, which allows them to go into Jesus’ feast.

See: Exodus 3

See: [Wedding](#); [Wedding](#)

2:18-28

Where was Thyatira?

[2:18]

See Map: Thyatira

Why did Jesus say he had “eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze”?

[2:18]

Jesus said he had “eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze.” These were both metaphors. Jesus wanted to say that he will judge people. Perhaps he spoke about his eyes because he can see everything. Or perhaps, he said this because he hates all sin, and he sees all sins. When Jesus spoke about his bronze feet, perhaps he was thinking about making wine. When people made wine, they stepped on, or crushed, grapes with their feet. Therefore, Jesus wanted to say that he will “crush” or punish evil.

See: 1:12-15; 14:19

See: [Wine \(Winepress\)](#); [Wine \(Winepress\)](#)

How did Jesus describe the church in Thyatira?

[2:19]

Jesus said that the church in Thyatira was growing. That is, they stopped doing many evil things. They started to do the types of things that Jesus did. They began to honor God more and more.

See: [Grow in Faith](#)

What did Jesus mean when he said the Christians in Thyatira tolerated Jezebel?

[2:20]

The Christians in Thyatira allowed a false teacher in their church who claimed to speak for God. Some of the Christians obeyed this false teacher. Jesus talked about this false teacher in the same way as Jezebel. Jezebel was a false prophet from ancient Israel. She was one of the most evil people in Israel. She and her husband Ahab made Israel worship false gods (see: 1 Kings 16:33).

See: 1 Kings 18-21; 2 Kings 9

See: [Prophet](#)

How was Jesus going to punish this false prophet?

[2:22]

After giving this false teacher time to repent, Jesus said that he will punish him or her. He said that he will “throw her onto a sickbed.” Some scholars think that God promised to make this false prophet sick if he did not repent. Perhaps, he would even die. Other scholars think that God wanted to warn people that difficult times were coming for those who did not honor God.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What did Jesus say about adultery?

[2:22]

See: [Adultery](#)

Who were Jezebel’s children?

[2:23]

When Jesus spoke about Jezebel's children, he spoke about those who do the things that she wanted them to do. That is, they did not honor God.

How will God give to everyone "according to their deeds"?

[2:23]

God will give something to everyone "according to their deeds," that is, according to the things they did. Jesus will punish those who do not believe in him. They will go to hell. All Christians will live with God in heaven forever. Jesus will not punish them. However, he will give them rewards based on the things they did to honor God after they believed in Jesus. Jesus will know what they did and why they did what they did. He will know the things they thought about.

See: [Reward](#); [Reward](#)

What were the "deep things of Satan"?

[2:24]

Jesus talked about certain Christians not knowing the "deep things of Satan." Perhaps the false prophet thought he spoke for God. But he did not know that he was speaking for Satan and teaching them things that Satan wanted them to know.

See: 1 Corinthians 2:10

See: [Prophet](#)

Why did Jesus want the Christians in Thyatira to wait for him to come?

[2:25]

Jesus told the Christians in Thyatira to wait for him to come back. Some scholars think Jesus talked about his physical return to earth to take all Christians to himself. Therefore, he was not only speaking to the people of Thyatira. He spoke to all Christians. Other scholars think he wanted the Christians in Thyatira to live their life knowing Jesus might return any moment to judge them.

Who was the one who conquers?

[2:26]

Jesus will give the one who conquers permission to rule over nations. Some scholars think that God will give certain Christians permission to rule over other groups of Christians. This will happen when Jesus rules on the earth. It will be a reward for those who conquers. Other scholars think that certain Christians will reign in heaven with Jesus. However, some scholars think that all Christians will reign with Jesus in this way. Other scholars think that certain Christians will rule over the nations who did not believe in Jesus.

Jesus also talked about those whom he will give permission to rule. They will "rule them with an iron rod, like clay jars he will break them into pieces" (see: Psalm 2:9). That is, they will rule only because Jesus gave them permission to rule. Or perhaps, they will do certain things that Jesus wants them to do.

See: [Reward](#)[Reward](#)

What was the "morning star"?

[2:28]

Some scholars think this was a special place or position in heaven. More scholars think that to have the "morning star" meant Christians will have Jesus, or be with Jesus. These scholars also think they will be light in the world in the same way that God sent Jesus to be light in the world.

See: 22:16 and John 38:7

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#); [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Chapter 3

¹ "To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

"The words of the one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. "I know your deeds. You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up and strengthen what remains but is about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard. Obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come against you. ⁴ But you have a few names in Sardis who have not stained their clothes, and they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never wipe his name out of the Book of Life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. ⁶ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

⁷ "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

"The words of the one who is holy and true—
he holds the key of David,
he opens and no one shuts,
he shuts and no one can open.

⁸ "I know your deeds. Look, I have put before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have obeyed my word and have not denied my name. ⁹ Look! I will cause those who belong to the synagogue of Satan, those calling themselves Jews but are not, but rather liars—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will know that I love you. ¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is coming on the whole world, to test those who live on the earth. ¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold to what you have so no one can take away your crown. ¹² The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, the name of the city of my God (the new Jerusalem, that comes down out of heaven from my God), and my new name. ¹³ Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

¹⁴ "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

"The words of the Amen, the reliable and true witness, the ruler over God's creation. ¹⁵ "I know your deeds and that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to vomit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ For you say, 'I am rich, I have had many material possessions, and I need nothing.' But you do not know that you are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸ Listen to my advice: Buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and brilliant white garments so you may clothe yourself and not show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to anoint your eyes so you will see. ¹⁹ I rebuke and discipline everyone whom I love. Therefore, be earnest and repent. ²⁰ Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his home and will eat with him, and he with me. ²¹ The one who conquers I will give him the right to sit down with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.""

Revelation 3

3:1-6

Where is Sardis?

[3:1]

See Map: Sardis

What were the seven spirits of God and the seven stars?

[3:1]

Jesus said he holds “the seven spirits of God” and the “seven stars.” In the Old Testament, Isaiah spoke about the Holy Spirit in seven different ways. Some scholars think John wanted people to think about Isaiah’s words when he talked about the seven spirits. He wanted to say that Jesus has power over everything.

See: 1:4, 20; 2:1

See: [Seven \(Symbol\)](#)

Did Jesus speak only to Christians in this letter?

[3:1]

Jesus spoke to the people in the church in Sardis. Some scholars think that he spoke to people in Sardis who believed in Jesus. Other scholars think that Jesus spoke to people who said they were Christians, but who did not really believe in Jesus.

See: [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#)

How were the Christians in Sardis both alive and dead?

[3:1]

The Bible often speaks about people being alive or dead. People thought the Christians in Sardis were alive, but they were dead. That is, Christians normally did things that honored God. However, some Christians in Sardis did things that did not honor God. They did this in secret so that others were not able to see them. When Jesus said their deeds were not complete, he said that they did things that did not honor God. Jesus also used the metaphor of sleeping to talk about the way Christians in Sardis lived. When Jesus said they needed to wake up, he wanted to say they needed to stop doing things that do not honor God and do things that honor God.

See: [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#); [Born Again \(New Life, Regeneration\)](#); [Sleep \(Metaphor\)](#)

How will Jesus come in the same way a thief comes?

[3:3]

Jesus said that he will go to the church in Sardis in the same way that a thief enters into a house. When a thief enters a house, people do not know when they will come. A thief hurts the people he robs. In the same way, Jesus will punish those in the church who will not repent. Some scholars think that Jesus spoke about returning to the earth. Fewer scholars think that he spoke about coming to the church in Sardis to punish it.

See: Matthew 24:42-44

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

How did people in Sardis “not stain their clothes”?

[3:4]

The Bible says that doing things that honor God makes a person clean. Also, doing things that do not honor God makes a person dirty. In 3:4-5, Jesus said that those who honor God and conquer will become friends with God. They will live with him in heaven forever. Jesus will also give them white clothes. That is, they will be completely clean and will not sin anymore.

See: [Clean and Unclean](#); [White \(symbol\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

What is the “Book of Life”?

[3:5]

The Book of Life is the list of people who now live and who will live with God in heaven. Jesus said he will not remove or wipe a person’s name from this book. That is, he wanted to say they will live with God forever. They will never be separated from him. Jesus will also speak a person’s “name”(ὄνομα/g3686) to God the Father and the angels in heaven. Some scholars think he will tell God the Father and the angels about these Christians. Other scholars think he will tell the Christian their new name.

See: Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8

See: [Name](#)

Why did John say “he who has an ear, let him hear”?

[3:6]

John said “he who has an ear, let him hear” because he wanted people to listen to the things that he said. John said that the Holy Spirit said these things. When Jesus spoke, the Holy Spirit spoke too.

See: [Trinity](#)

3:7-13

Where was Philadelphia?

[3:7]

See Map: Philadelphia

What are the keys Jesus holds?

[3:7]

Jesus spoke about entering his kingdom in the same way people unlock a door with a key. He has the power to allow people to enter the kingdom of God or not allow them to enter the kingdom of God. In ancient Israel, the kingdom of Israel was also called the kingdom of David. A man named Eliakim was given permission to govern the king’s house when Hezekiah was king. That is, he allowed some people to see the king and did not allow other people to see the king. In a similar way, God gave Jesus permission to rule his kingdom. Jesus held the “key of David.” That is, he has complete control over God’s kingdom. God gave Jesus permission to allow certain people into the kingdom.

Jesus said that no one can close this door. Some scholars think there were Jews who tried to stop people from becoming Christians. These scholars think that no one can stop someone from believing in Jesus. He also wanted to say that no one can have peace with God without Jesus.

See: Isaiah 22:22

See: [Kingdom of God](#)

Who was the synagogue of Satan?

[3:9]

The synagogue of Satan was the group of Jews who did not believe in Jesus. In Philadelphia, there were many Jews who persecuted the Christians. They did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. Because they did not believe in Jesus, they rejected God. They did not worship God anymore. They served Satan.

Jesus also said that these Jews would one day know that he is the Messiah. They will know that they rejected the Messiah.

See: Philippians 2:10

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

How will Jesus keep these Christians from the “hour of testing”?

[3:10]

Jesus said that he will keep the Christians in Philadelphia from the “hour of testing.” Scholars think many different things about the meaning of these words:

1. Christians will not suffer during the difficult times John prophesied in Revelation 6-19. That is, Jesus will not allow them to suffer. They think Christians will not have to suffer the seven years of tribulation that John prophesied.
2. Christians will endure the very difficult time at the end of the world when God will punish all those who do not believe in Jesus.
3. Jesus will protect Christians during these very difficult times. Some scholars think Jesus will protect Christians from physical harm or death. Other scholars think God will not protect people from physical harm or death. But, Jesus will protect Christians from being punished forever in hell.
4. The Roman Empire would not harm the Christians in Philadelphia. Some scholars think God protected the church. Although, some Christians suffered and died. They think this will be true for all Christians in the world. The church will be protected, but individual Christians might suffer and die.

See: [Hell](#) ;on)[Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Tribulation](#); [Hell](#)

Why did Jesus say no one will remove these Christians’ crown?

[3:11]

Jesus told these Christians that no one will remove their “crown.” People gave this type of crown to those who won races. They earned this crown. Because of this, Jesus wanted to say that no one can remove a Christians’ reward if they conquer.

See: [Reward](#); [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#); [Reward](#)

Why will Jesus make certain people pillars in the temple of God?

[3:12]

Jesus said he will make certain Christians pillars in the temple of God. Jesus said many Christians will endure strong testing and suffering in their lives. However, the Christians who conquer and keep their belief in Jesus will made pillars in the temple of God.

Advice to translators: Pillars are the things that keep large buildings from falling down. They are tall poles.

See: 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 2:21-22

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why will the conquerors never go out again?

[3:12]

In ancient times, Philadelphia had many earthquakes. Because of this, the people left their homes. After some time, they returned to their homes. When Jesus said that the conquerors will never go out again, he wanted to say that they will live without fear, safe and secure forever with God in heaven.

See: [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#)

Why did Jesus say he will write the name of God on someone?

[3:12]

Jesus said he will write God’s name on those who conquers. In the ancient Near East, a master owned their slave, and the master’s name was written on the slave. This meant other people were not able to take their slaves from them. When Jesus writes the name of God on Christians, it means that nothing can take them from God.

See: 7:3, 14:1

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

Why did Jesus say he will write the name of the city of God on someone?

[3:12]

Jesus said that he will write the name of the city of God on someone. That is, the New Jerusalem. He wanted to say that these conquerors will be citizens of heaven.

See: Revelation 21

See: [Citizen](#); [Citizen](#)

Why did Jesus say he will write his new name on someone?

[3:12]

Some scholars think Jesus will give Christians a new name when they go to heaven. Other scholars think that Jesus will tell them the true name of God when they go to heaven. Other scholars think that they will be called by Jesus' name. Fewer scholars think that Jesus will have a new name.

See Revelation 2:17

See: [Heaven](#)

Why did John say, "he who has an ear, let him hear"?

[3:13]

See: 2:6

3:14-22

Where was Laodicea?

[3:14]

See Map: Laodicea

How did Jesus speak about himself in 3:14?

[3:14]

Jesus spoke about himself in different ways in 3:14.

1. Jesus is the "amen" (ἀμήν/g0281). Jesus used this word because he wanted something to occur.
2. Jesus is the "reliable and true witness." Some scholars think that Jesus wanted to say that the things he said to the Christians in Laodicea were true. Other scholars think that Jesus wanted to say that everything he says is true.
3. Jesus rules the whole universe.

How did Jesus speak about the Christians in Laodicea?

[3:15]

Jesus said the things the Christians in Laodicea did were the same as the water they drank. Near the city of Laodicea were two other cities, Heirapopolis and Colossae. Heirapopolis was known for its hot springs. Colossae was known for its cold, refreshing mountain spring water. However, Laodicea was known for its lukewarm water. This water was neither fresh, nor good to drink. It came to the city through large pipes from many miles away. The hot and cold water from Heirapopolis and Colossae were good. But lukewarm water from Laodicea made people sick. Jesus said this metaphor to say he wanted people to be hot or

cold. If people were hot, they were happy to honor God. If they were not hot, Jesus wanted them to be cold.

Some scholars think he wanted them to not believe in Jesus and not honor him. Other scholars think the cold water was refreshing. That is, this also meant he wanted people to be happy to do the things that honor God. However, Jesus did not want people to be lukewarm. That is, he did not want people to be uncaring or unconcerned about him. Some scholars think that this is because people who do not care or who are unconcerned do not think they need Jesus. They do not think they need any help to be good people. However, those who reject Jesus know they need him in order to be good people. While they may serve other gods, they just need to learn about the true God.

Other scholars think that Jesus was speaking about people who said they were Christians, but who do not believe in Jesus. They think that some people who say they are Christians do not really believe in Jesus and will not live with God in heaven forever.

Advice to translators: Lukewarm is neither hot or cold. It is the temperature of water if it is left outside.

See: [Ancient Near East](#); [Ancient Near East](#)

Was Laodicea a wealthy city?

[3:17]

The things done in Laodicea caused many people there to be very wealthy. Jesus said this because wealthy people often do not think they need anything. However, they still needed Jesus. Without Jesus, God thinks they are very poor. That is, they are spiritually poor. They do not have anything of value. Money will not help them go to heaven or be at peace with God. This is why Jesus said the things he said in 3:18.

How are non-Christians naked?

[3:17]

Jesus said non-Christians were naked. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they were naked. They did not know they were naked. They did not feel the need to cover their bodies. However, after they sinned, they were ashamed because God saw their sin. they were naked in front of God. That is, they were fully exposed in front of God. (see: 3:18).

Advice to translators: Here exposed means everything about Adam and Eve was uncovered in front of God. That is, they were unable to hide their sinning from him because God knows all things.

See: Genesis 3; Isaiah 47:1-4

Why did Jesus talk about medicine for a person's eyes?

[3:18]

In the ancient Near East, Laodicea was known for making a certain medicine for sicknesses in the eyes. Jesus said that people who rejected Jesus were blind. That is, they did not see the truth about Jesus. Therefore, Jesus said that he will give these people medicine so that they can see the truth, that is, believe in Jesus.

See: [Ancient Near East](#)

Why did Jesus say that he was standing at a door knocking?

[3:20]

Jesus said he stood at a door knocking and waiting for someone to open the door. When Jesus said this, some scholars think he wanted people to believe in him and be saved from sinning. They think that the door was a metaphor about entering into heaven. More scholars think Jesus wanted the Christians to welcome him into their church. Therefore, Jesus wanted to be friends with them even though they did not honor him.

When Jesus spoke about eating with him, some scholars think that Jesus spoke about the Lord's Supper. That is, Jesus spoke about people becoming Christians and remembering his death by eating bread together. Other scholars think he spoke about something the Bible calls the "wedding celebration of the lamb" (see: Revelation 19:6-9).

See: [Wedding](#); [Lord's Supper](#); [Wedding](#)

How will the conquerors sit on the throne with Jesus?

[3:21]

Jesus said that those who conquer will sit on the throne with him. He wanted to say that he will give permission to those who conquer to rule for him on the earth (see: 5:10). Some scholars think this is a metaphor for certain Christians who will rule on the earth with physical bodies. Scholars do not agree when this will occur.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did John say, "he who has an ear, let him hear"?

[3:22]

See: 2:6

Chapter 4

¹ After these things I looked, and I saw an open door in heaven. The first voice that I had heard was speaking to me like a trumpet, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after these things." ² At once I was in the Spirit, and I saw there a throne placed in heaven, with someone sitting on it. ³ The one who was sitting on it looked like jasper and carnelian. There was a rainbow around the throne. The rainbow was like an emerald in appearance. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, dressed with white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming lamps were burning in front of the throne, lamps that were the seven spirits of God. ⁶ Before the throne was a sea of glass, like crystal. In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes, front and back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸ The four living creatures each had six wings, full of eyes on top and underneath. Night and day they do not stop saying,

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and who is, and who is to come."

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before the one seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne, saying,

¹¹ "Worthy are you, our Lord and our God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created."

Revelation 4

4:1-3

How did John speak about something different in this chapter?

[4:1]

In 4:1, John spoke about something different. John began to prophesy about things happening in the future. John talked about these things in Revelation 4-19. Some scholars think all of these prophecies were already fulfilled. Other scholars think some of these prophecies were fulfilled and some will be fulfilled in the future. Other scholars think that none of these prophecies were fulfilled yet.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What is a vision?

[4:1]

John saw these prophecies in a vision. A vision are words or images that are seen inside of someone's mind. It is not seen by other people, only by the person having the vision. John described the things that he saw happen. These things did not actually happen when he saw them. God showed him things that were going to happen in the future.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What were "these things"?

[4:1]

Some scholars think “these things” were what John said was going to happen to the seven church in Revelation 2-3. They think John wanted to say that after these things happen, the things he was about to say will happen. Fewer scholars think that John was talking about what will happen after the time period of the church. They think God will take all Christians from the earth. The things John talks about will only happen after God takes all Christians from the earth.

See: [Church](#)

What was John describing in these verses?

[4:1, 4:2]

In his vision, John saw a place in heaven. In this place, there was a throne. This throne in heaven is the place where God the Father rules.

1. Some scholars think John spoke of a throne where a king ruled. On his throne the king led his people and made rules for people to follow.
1. Some scholars think John spoke of a throne where a judge ruled or judged people. They think John spoke of a place where Jesus judged people.
2. Other scholars think he spoke of rulers who persecuted Christians when John lived.
3. Some scholars think John spoke of things that are physically in heaven.
4. Other scholars think John spoke using metaphors. If this is true, then these things are not physically in heaven. They are a way to speak of what is in heaven in a way people on earth will know.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Heaven](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Metaphor](#)

What was a trumpet?

[4:1]

A trumpet was a loud musical instrument. It was made of metal, and it was a type of instrument called a horn. In ancient times, people used trumpets to tell other people that something or someone was coming. Someone or something which the people needed to know and to listen. John said God’s voice sounded the same as a trumpet. Some scholars think this was because he was about to say something that John needed to listen to.

How was John ‘in the spirit’?

[4:2]

In 4:2, John said he was “in the spirit.” Some scholars think John wanted to say that God gave him a vision. Since he already had a vision, this was another vision. Or it was a special part of the first vision. He said he was in the spirit because his physical body was not taken to heaven. He saw the things he wrote about, but he was not inside heaven. Other scholars think the Holy Spirit was with John in a special way.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

How did John describe God?

[4:3]

John saw God sitting on a throne in heaven. He used metaphors to describe God. However, he did not describe God, but the area around God. There are many opinions about the true meanings of these metaphors. However, God is described in the same way light is described. This light could be so bright that it makes someone blind if they looked at it (See: 1 Timothy 6:15-16). If this is true, then this is because God is so amazing, he cannot be looked at or approached.

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

4:4-5

Who were the 24 elders?

[4:4]

John said 24 men were near the throne of God in heaven. They had their own thrones. Some scholars think God gave them permission to rule something. Scholars think different things about who are these 24 men.

1. Some scholars think these are leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles.
2. Some scholars think there were 24 different groups of priests in the Old Testament (see: Ezekiel 8:16; 11:1; 1 Chronicles 24-25).
3. Some scholars think they were angels.
4. Some scholars think they are certain Christians. They may represent all Christians.

See: [Angel](#); [Apostle](#); [Angel](#)

How were the elders dressed?

[4:4]

The elders wore white clothes and gold crowns. In the Bible, white clothes meant that a person was holy, pure, or clean. In ancient times, a king wore a crown made of gold. They wore crowns because it showed people that they were the king.

1. Some scholars think God gave these elders permission to rule over something.
2. Other scholars think John spoke about a certain type of crown given to someone who won something. That is, they earned this crown.
3. Fewer scholars think that the angels wore these crowns. That is, they were given permission to judge people (see: 20:4).

See: [Angel](#); [Crown](#); [White \(symbol\)](#); [Angel](#)

Why did John describe a storm near God?

[4:5]

John described a storm near God. In ancient times, people thought the gods caused storms. This was because people did not control a storm. It was too powerful for them to control. Some scholars think this was what John was saying when he said these things. Other scholars think John thought about the storms when God met Moses on Mount Sinai (see: Exodus 19:16).

See: [Sinai](#)

See Map: Mount Sinai

What were the seven burning lamps in front of God's throne?

[4:5]

There were seven burning lamps in front of the throne of God. John said these were the seven spirits of God. Scholars think John spoke about the Holy Spirit. The number seven was used in the Bible many times. It was used when the writer wanted to say something was complete or perfect.

See: Revelation 1:4; Ezekiel 1:13

See: [Holy Spirit](#); [Throne](#); [Holy Spirit](#)

4:6-11

Why was there a sea of glass in front of God's throne?

[4:6]

Scholars do not know why there was a sea of glass in front of God's throne. This separated God from everything he made. They think Ezekiel also spoke about this (see: Ezekiel 1). Some scholars think John spoke about the separation of the waters when the world was being created (see: Genesis 1:7).

See: Exodus 24:10; 1 Kings 7:23; Revelation 15:2

See: [Throne](#)

What were these four creatures?

[4:6]

There were four "creatures" (ζῴον/g2226) around the throne of God. Some scholars think these creatures were angelic beings in the form of animals. However, they were not animals from the earth. They were alive and they had many eyes. John described these animals in the same way as animals from the earth.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why were these creatures around the throne of God?

[4:6]

There were four living "creatures" (ζῴον/g2226) around the throne of God. Ezekiel spoke of creatures in much the same way John spoke of them (see: Ezekiel 1). Scholars do not know if John wrote about them for a certain reason. Some scholars think each creature spoke about God, and how he works inside of his creation. Other scholars think John spoke about the four gospels and how they talked about Jesus in different ways. This helps people to know God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did these creatures speak?

[4:8]

The creatures near God said, "holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come." They always praise God. God has always been alive. God is alive. And God will always be alive. John wanted to say God will return to the earth.

See: [Praise](#); [Praise](#)

Chapter 5

¹ Then I saw in the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne a scroll written on the front and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" ³ No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to read it. ⁴ I wept bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to read it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ I saw a Lamb standing in the middle of the throne area and among the four living creatures and among the elders. He looked as though he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He went and took hold of the scroll out of the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. ⁸ When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of them had a harp and a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people. ⁹ They sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals.
For you were slaughtered,
and with your blood you purchased people for God
from every tribe, language, people, and nation.
¹⁰ You made them a kingdom and priests to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth."

¹¹ Then I looked and heard the sound of many angels who encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. Their total number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands. ¹² They said in a loud voice,

"Worthy is the Lamb, who has been slaughtered,
to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength,
honor, glory, and praise."

¹³ I heard every created thing that was in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea—everything in them—saying,

"To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise, honor, glory, and dominion
forever and ever."

¹⁴ The four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. [\[1\]](#)

Footnotes

5:14 [\[1\]](#)Some important and ancient Greek copies read,

Revelation 5

5:1-3

Who did John see?

[5:1]

John saw God sitting on a throne.

See: [Throne](#)

What did God hold in his hand?

[5:1]

God held a scroll in his hand. When John lived, people wrote on an old type of paper. This paper was rolled together. They did this to send messages to other people. Often, people sealed these scrolls with wax. The wax had a special symbol pressed into it. This was used for official things the government wanted to send to people. They used this seal to make sure that only certain people read the scrolls. If the seal was unbroken when someone was given the scroll, they knew no one read the scroll..

Often, these scrolls had writing on only one side. However, this scroll was written on both sides.

Advice to translators: Some may translate “scroll” as “book.” However, a scroll is rolled and a book has its pages stacked and bound on one side. It is important for people to know that John was speaking about a scroll because it was rolled.

See: [Scroll](#)

What are the seven seals?

[5:1]

Normally, people sealed a scroll once. However, this scroll was sealed seven times. Some scholars think these seven seals all sealed the edge of the scroll. Therefore, one needed to remove all seven seals to read the message. Other scholars think this scroll was sealed in different places throughout the scroll. After each seal was removed, a part of the message can be read.

Why was the number seven used so many times?

[5:1]

See: [Seven \(Symbol\)](#)

Why was the scroll sealed?

[5:2]

Only Jesus was able to open the seals on this scroll and read its message. However, scholars do not agree about why the scroll was sealed.

1. Only Jesus knows what will happen in the future. Only he can tell people what will happen in the future. Therefore, the scroll announced something.
2. This scroll told who will rule the earth after God punished it. In ancient Rome, people were given property in a scroll sealed seven times. Therefore, this scroll told people that God will control the earth once again. That is, Satan will not have permission to rule the earth anymore.
3. This scroll told people about God’s plan for the universe and everything in it.

Why could only a certain person open the scroll?

[5:3]

The angel said that only a certain type of person was able to open the scroll. This was someone who was “worthy.” That is, someone who earned the right to open it. Jesus is able to open it because he is perfect. Jesus earned the right to open the seals of the scroll because he died and came back from being dead.

Who is “under the earth”?

[5:3]

In Scripture, Satan and the demons are said to live under the earth. This is because people in ancient Israel spoke about the place where God lives as being in an upward direction. Living under the earth is the opposite of living “up” in the sky. Satan and the demons do not live underground.

See: [Philippians 2:10](#)

See: [Demon](#); [Demon](#)

5:4-6

Why did John cry?

[5:4]

John cried when no one was able to open this scroll and read it. Some scholars think John was sad that the things God planned would happen. Fewer scholars think John was overwhelmed by the things he saw. They think anyone would cry if they saw the end of the world.

Why was Jesus called different names?

[5:5]

One of the elders saw Jesus, and he called him by different names.

1. He is the “lion of the tribe of Judah.” The Old Testament prophesied that the rulers of Israel would come from the tribe of Judah (see: [Genesis 49:10](#)).
2. He is the “root of David.” This is the fulfillment of God’s promise to David that one of his descendants will rule forever (see: [2 Samuel 7:8-17](#); [Isaiah 11:1](#)).
3. He also looked like a lamb after being sacrificed to God. This is because Jesus sacrificed himself so that people could be at peace with God.

See: [Lamb of God](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Tribes of Israel](#); [Lamb of God](#)

What did Jesus conquer?

[5:5]

Jesus died so that people could be at peace with God. John speaks about this as a type of win or victory. Jesus “defeated” or “conquered” ([νικάω/g3528](#)) Satan. It is because of this that Jesus is able to open the scroll. It is also because of this that John saw Jesus defeating Satan forever. John wanted people to know that the things he saw will happen.

See: [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#); [Conquer \(Overcome\)](#)

Why did Jesus have the seven horns and eyes?

[5:6]

In Revelation, there are many different symbols. It is hard to know what these symbols mean. In the ancient world, horns were often a symbol of power. And perhaps the eyes were symbols of being able to see everything or know everything.

See: [Seven \(Symbol\)](#); [Seven \(Symbol\)](#)

Who were the seven spirits?

[5:6]

John said that there were seven spirits in front of the throne of God. In the Old Testament, Isaiah spoke about the Holy Spirit in 7 different ways (see: [Isaiah 11:1-2](#)). John might have wanted people to think about Isaiah’s words when he talked about the seven spirits. Therefore, John said the Holy Spirit is before, or in front of, the throne of God.

See: [Revelation 1:4](#)

See: [Throne](#); [Throne](#)

5:7-10

Why did Jesus take the scroll out of God's right hand?

[5:7] John said that Jesus took the scroll out of God's right hand. In Scripture, the right hand is a symbol of power. The right hand of the king symbolizes the power of a king. God gave Jesus the power to open the scroll..

See: [Symbol](#)

Who were the 24 elders?

[5:8]

John said 24 men were near the throne of God in heaven. God gave them their own thrones. This could mean God gave them permission to rule something. Scholars think different things about who these 24 men were.

1. Some scholars think these were leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles.
2. Some scholars think there were 24 different groups of priests in the Old Testament (see: Ezekiel 8:16; 11:1; 1 Chronicles 24-25).
3. Some scholars think they were angels.
4. Some scholars think they were certain Christians. They may represent all Christians.

See: [Angel](#); [Throne](#); [Heaven](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Apostle](#); [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#); [Angel](#)

What were these four creatures?

[5:8]

There were four "creatures" (ζῷον/g2226) around the throne of God. Some scholars think these creatures were angelic beings in the form of animals. However, they were not animals from the earth. They were alive and they had many eyes. John described these animals in the same way as animals from the earth.

See: [Angel](#); [Angel](#)

Why were these creatures around the throne of God?

[5:8]

There were four living "creatures" (ζῷον/g2226) around the throne of God. Ezekiel also talked about living creatures in a similar way (see: Ezekiel 1). Scholars do not know if John wrote about them for a certain reason. Some scholars think the creatures spoke of God and how he works with his creation. Other scholars think John thought about the four gospels and how they talked about Jesus in different ways. This helps people to know God.

See: [Gospel](#); [Gospel](#)

Why did John compare the prayers of the holy ones to a bowl full of incense?

[5:8]

In ancient Israel, people thought angels helped bring people's prayers to God. In the same way incense has a fragrant smell, John spoke about the prayers of people in the same way as a fragrant offering to God.

See: [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#); [Angel](#); [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#)

How did Jesus "purchase" people?

[5:8]

In his vision, John saw that Jesus purchased or bought people through his blood. That is, he purchased people through his death. Jesus freed people from being slaves to doing evil things. Jesus needed to die to make this happen.

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

How are Christians priests?

[5:10]

Christians help non-Christians to know about God. In Israel, a person came to God through a priest. Israel also helped the Gentile nations know about God. Because of this, they acted in the way of a priest to the Gentile nations.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

How will people rule on the earth?

[5:10]

The elders and creatures sang about people who will rule on the earth. When they said this, they were singing about all those who believe in Jesus. Scholars do not agree about how people will rule on the earth.

1. Some scholars think Christians will rule over their own lives after they believe in Jesus. They will no longer be slaves to Satan. That is, Satan will no longer rule over them.
2. Some scholars think that certain Christians will rule with Jesus when he returns to the earth.
3. Some scholars think that Christians ruling was a metaphor. The elders said that Christians make the world a better place.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

5:11-14

How did John describe what happened in the place where God rules in this passage?

[5:11, 5:12, 5:13, 5:14]

John described what happened in the place in heaven where God rules. He said that everything where God rules praises him and gives him honor. That is the purpose of the four living creatures and the twelve elders. That is, they praise and honor God continually.

See: [Elder](#); [Elder](#)

Chapter 6

¹ I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice that sounded like thunder, "Come!" ² I looked and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown. He came out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

³ When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse came out—fiery red. To its rider was given permission to take peace away from the earth, so that its people would slaughter one another. This rider was given a huge sword.

⁵ When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I saw a black horse, and its rider held a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶ I heard what seemed to be a voice among the four living creatures say, "A choenix of wheat for one denarius, and three choenices of barley for a denarius. But do not harm the oil and the wine."

⁷ When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ Then I saw a pale horse. The rider on it was named Death, and Hades was following him. They were given authority over one-fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine and disease, and with the wild animals of the earth.

⁹ When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God and the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "How long, Ruler over all, holy and true, until you judge those who live on the earth, and until you avenge our blood?" ¹¹ Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told that they should wait a short time longer until the full number of their fellow servants and their brothers who were to be killed, just as they had been killed, was made complete.

¹² When the Lamb opened the sixth seal, I watched and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as black as sackcloth, and the full moon became like blood. ¹³ The stars in the heavens fell to the earth, just as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a stormy wind. ¹⁴ The sky vanished like a scroll that was being rolled up. Every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the important people, and the commanders, and the rich, and the powerful, and everyone else, slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶ They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us! Hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the Lamb's wrath. ¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come. Who is able to stand?"

Revelation 6

6:1-2

How did John describe the seven seals?

[6:1]

In this passage, John said God punished people when Jesus, the Lamb, opened the seven seals from the scroll. After one seal is opened, something happens. This was a type of punishment from God. Some scholars think this punishment was for all people. Other scholars think this was a punishment for those who did not believe in Jesus. After this, the next seal opens and something else happens. Some scholars think these things happen at the same time or in a very short period of time. Other scholars think there was a lot of time between each of these punishments.

See: Revelation 5:1

See: [Seven \(Symbol\)](#)

Why did John speak of a white horse?

[6:2]

John spoke of something using the metaphor of a white horse. The rider had a bow. This means he had power, perhaps military power. The rider also had a crown. This means the rider ruled over people. In ancient times, people used horses for wars. Having many horses meant that a king had a lot of power. Therefore, horses are symbols of power. Scholars do not agree about the meaning of this white horse.

1. Some scholars think John spoke about the Romans. God gave them power to defeat their enemies. The Roman Empire did not have many wars because of their power. This helped Christians to tell other people about Jesus.
2. Some scholars think John also spoke about the Romans. However, God gave them the power to defeat Israel. They think John spoke about the Romans destroying the temple in Jerusalem. Before this happened, the Jews warred against the Roman Empire.
3. Some scholars think Jesus had the power to help people believe in him. By doing this, he was defeating Satan and their unbelief.
4. Some scholars think John spoke of the antichrist. In the rest of Revelation, God gave permission to the antichrist to rule and to punish people. Scholars think John's use of the white horse means God will use the antichrist to serve him.

Advice to translators: The rider had a bow. He had a bow and arrow. He did not have a piece of cloth in his hair, which is also called a bow.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [Crown](#); [Symbol](#); [Temple](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Antichrist](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

6:3-4

Why did John speak of a red horse?

[6:4]

John spoke about a red horse. Red is the color of blood and fire. Scholars think John spoke of someone bringing war and people would die. Some scholars think the war will be with the whole world. The rider might be the antichrist. Other scholars think the war will be in Israel. Therefore, the person riding the horse is a leader in the Roman Empire.

Also, some scholars think John spoke of the temple in Jerusalem being destroyed. Other scholars think John spoke of a period of time before Jesus returns to the earth. During this time, there will be many wars (see: Matthew 24:6).

See: [Antichrist](#)

What is the huge sword?

[6:4]

John said people will kill one another. He said this by saying the rider had a great sword. Scholars think the sword symbolized the power to take away peace from the earth. Some scholars think God gave the sword to the antichrist. Therefore, the antichrist will make people kill one another or kill Christians. Other scholars think that Satan gave the sword to the antichrist. This allowed him to kill Christians.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Antichrist](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

6:5-6

Why did John talk about a black horse?

[6:5]

In ancient times, black symbolized things dying. Breaking this seal made things or people die. Scholars think this was because of a famine.

The rider on this horse holds a scale. A scale is something used to compare the weight of one object to the weight of another object. It symbolizes justice.

Because of this, some scholars think John spoke of the Roman Empire increasing the taxes on its people. Other scholars think John spoke of the famine in Israel when they fought against the Roman Empire. Other scholars think John spoke of a famine during the time before Jesus returns to the earth.

Advice to translators: A famine is a period of time where there is not enough food.

See: Leviticus 26:26

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

What did the voice say?

[6:6]

The voice of the person John heard said there was going to be famine. This was because the price of the different foods were very high. These were the foods people needed to live. It was much higher than the normal cost of these foods. In general, this meant that a person had to work all day to get enough money to feed himself.

Advice to translators: A famine is a period of time where there is not enough food.

Why did John say that they oil and wine will not be harmed?

[6:6]

Oil and wine were not needed to live in the way that many other foods were needed for people to live. Some scholars think oil and wine were for wealthy people. Therefore, John wanted to say that the rich will have plenty, but the poor will not be able to live. Other scholars think John wanted to say that people did not have enough money for food or anything else. Still other scholars think the famine did not last for a long time. Therefore, it only affected certain crops. It did not harm other crops that took longer to destroy. Olive trees and grapevines were crops that took longer to destroy.

6:7-8

Why did John speak of a pale horse?

[6:8]

John spoke of a pale colored horse. The voice called this horse death. It causes people to die through war and because insects destroyed crops. 1. Some scholars think this happened in the Roman Empire 200 years after Jesus died. What happened during this time was similar to what John described in this verse. 1. Some scholars think John described Jerusalem. Jerusalem warred with the Roman Empire. This happened shortly after Jesus died. At this time, the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. 1. Some scholars think the things John spoke of have not happened. They think they will happen in the future (see: Matthew 24:21).

Advice to translators: The word "pale" can be a yellow and green color or a green and gray color. It was the color used to describe a dead person's body.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

6:9-11

Why were the martyrs under the altar?

[6:9]

God allowed the martyrs to be under the altar so they could ask God for justice. They waited for God to punish those who killed them. Some scholars think this was because the people who killed them were alive when John saw the martyrs. Other scholars think John spoke of the many Christians who will die in the time right before Jesus returns.

Some scholars think the Jewish leaders killed these people. Other scholars think that it was the Roman Empire which killed them.

See Leviticus 4:7

See: [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#); [Altar](#); [Justice \(Just, Unjust\)](#)

Why did the martyrs wear white robes?

[6:11]

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

Why did the martyrs have to wait until their number was completed?

[6:11]

The voice told these martyrs that they needed to wait a little longer. He wanted them to wait until all of the other people to be martyred were killed. Some scholars think he also wanted them to know that Christians will not be persecuted for a long time. This was because he spoke about a specific time when Christians were persecuted. After this time, the Roman Empire allowed Christians to worship God without being imprisoned or killed.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

6:12-17

What happened to the sun?

[6:12]

John said the sun became completely black. Some scholars think that the sun became or will become black. That is, a solar eclipse will occur. This is because, in scripture, there are often signs in the sky. These signs tell people something God wants people to give special attention to. Other scholars think this was a type of metaphor. They think John wanted to say that Jerusalem will be destroyed and the Jewish leaders will be punished.

Advice to Translators: An eclipse is when the moon passes between earth and the sun. When this occurs, the moon can completely block the sun and it will look black.

See: Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:31; 3:15

See: [Sign](#); [Sign](#)

What happened to the moon?

[6:12]

John said that the moon appeared to be blood. That is, it became red. It is not known how this will happen. Some scholars think this will be a lunar eclipse. Other scholars think that something will happen on the earth that causes the moon to look red.

Advice to Translators: A lunar eclipse is when the earth is between moon and the sun. When this occurs, the shadow of the earth can completely block the moon and it will look red.

See: Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:31; 3:15

See: [Metaphor](#)

What happened to the sky?

[6:13]

John said the stars of the sky fell. This is a type of metaphor. Some scholars think this meant there will be a meteor shower. Other scholars do not think John spoke about stars anyone can see in the sky.

Advice to Translators: A meteor shower is when the sky has streaks of light across it.

Why did the leaders hide?

[6:15]

The leaders hid because they were afraid of God. The leaders knew that only God can do these things. Because they rejected God, they were afraid of God. John wanted to say they knew they could not be at peace with God. Perhaps it was too late for them to believe in God because they already rejected him.

The things they said were a sad type of humor. The leaders thought that death could hide them from God. However, death will only make things worse for those who reject God.

What is the Day of the Lord?

[6:17]

John spoke about a great day. The Bible also calls this the Day of the Lord. When he asked if anyone will be able to stand, he wanted to say that no one will be able to stand when they saw Jesus. This is because he is God. When people see God, they must worship him. In Scripture, people often kneel when they worship God. In the ancient world, people also knelt before a king. While people can worship God while standing, John wanted people to know that everyone will worship God, whether they want to or not. They will honor him and know that he is the greatest ruler or king.

See: Malachi 3:2; Philippians 2:9-11

See: [Day of the Lord](#); [Day of the Lord](#)

Chapter 7

¹ After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, tightly holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind should blow on the earth, on the sea, or against any tree. ² I saw another angel coming up from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were given permission to harm the earth and the sea: ³ "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." ⁴ I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000, who were sealed from every tribe of the people of Israel:

- ⁵ twelve thousand from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Reuben,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Gad,
- ⁶ twelve thousand from the tribe of Asher,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Naphtali,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Manasseh,
- ⁷ twelve thousand from the tribe of Simeon,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Levi,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Issachar,
- ⁸ twelve thousand from the tribe of Zebulun,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Joseph, and
twelve thousand from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.

⁹ After these things I looked, and there was a huge multitude that no one could count—from every nation, tribe, people, and language—standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and they were crying out with a loud voice:

"Salvation belongs to our God,
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!"

¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne. They worshiped God, ¹² saying,

"Amen!
Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength
be to our God forever and ever!
Amen!"

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these, clothed with white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know," and he said to me, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ For this reason,

- they are before the throne of God,
and they worship him day and night in his temple.
The one who is seated on the throne
will spread his tent over them.
- ¹⁶ They will not be hungry again,
nor will they be thirsty again.
The sun will not beat down on them,
nor any burning heat.
- ¹⁷ For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will shepherd them,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 7

7:1-3

What were the four winds?

[7:1]

John spoke of the “four winds.” When John lived, the wind often destroyed things. Therefore, people spoke about something coming to destroy things in the same way they spoke of a strong wind. Scholars do not know why John spoke of the four winds.

1. Some scholars think it was a metaphor for Rome. They think John prophesied about the Roman Empire Being destroyed. Therefore, the winds were people or nations that would destroy the Roman Empire.
2. Some scholars think John prophesied about Jerusalem being destroyed. The winds were the four parts of the Roman Empire.
3. Some scholars think that John spoke about the four people riding on the four horses he spoke of earlier in Revelation.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What was the seal of the living God?

[7:2]

In the Bible, when God permanently protects someone, he seals them. Some scholars think God seals everyone who believes in Jesus. That is, he protects them and allows them to go to heaven. Or he protects them while they are on the earth. Other scholars think John spoke of a special protection God gave to Christians during the time period John prophesied about in Revelation.

It is unknown why this seal was on their forehead. Some scholars think this was a type of mark that people saw. They think it might contrast with the mark John spoke of from the beast (see: Revelation 14:9). Other scholars think this was a type of metaphor meaning God knows everyone who is his.

See: Ezekiel 9:4 and Ephesians 1:13

See: [People of God](#); [Heaven](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ;[Metaphor](#); [People of God](#)

Why was the angel not given permission to hurt the earth and the sea?

[7:2]

John said there were certain angels given permission to hurt or punish the earth and seas for God. However, John said these angels could not do this at the time he spoke. Some scholars think it was not time for God to punish the earth. They think that this punishment will occur after God has sealed the last person ever to be sealed. That is, he will not punish the earth until the last person who will believe in Jesus has believed in Jesus. Other scholars think John spoke of God protecting Christians during a certain, difficult period of time.

See: [Seal](#); [Seal](#)

7:4-8

Why did John speak of 144,000 people?

[7:4]

John spoke of God sealing 144,000 sons of Israel. Scholars do not agree on why he spoke of these people.

1. Some scholars think there will be many Israelites who repent and believe in Jesus. They think this will occur when the things John prophesied begin to happen. They will become witnesses that Jesus is the Messiah during this time. These scholars think Christians will be taken from the earth. Therefore, these Israelites will tell people about Jesus.

2. Some scholars think John spoke of Christians. They think God sealed many people. They think he was speaking of people in ancient times. Some think this happened after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire.
3. Some scholars think John spoke of how there were always some people in Israel who trusted God. They believed in Jesus, who is the Messiah.
4. Other scholars think John spoke of the Israelites who traveled to other countries when Jerusalem was destroyed. They think the number was a symbol. That is, many Israelites escaped Jerusalem from every tribe of Israel.

See: [Tribes of Israel](#), [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Symbol](#); [Tribes of Israel](#)

Are these the twelve tribes of Israel?

[7:5, 7:6, 7:7, 7:8]

John did not speak of the twelve tribes of Israel in the same way the Old Testament speaks about them (see: Genesis 49:2-27). He did not say anything about Dan. Instead of speaking of Dan, he spoke of Manasseh.

See: [Tribes of Israel](#)

Why does John not speak of the tribe of Dan?

John did not speak of the tribe of Dan with those whom God sealed. Scholars think this is because they were more evil than the other tribes. They often worshiped idols and rejected God. Some scholars think the antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan (see: Genesis 49:17).

See: [Antichrist](#); [Tribes of Israel](#); [Antichrist](#)

7:9-17

Who were the “huge multitude”?

[7:9] John spoke of many people standing in front of the lamb. That is, Jesus.

1. Some scholars think John spoke of all people from every nation and every generation who believe in Jesus. They think John spoke of the church becoming mostly Gentile Christians. The church began with Jewish Christians.
2. Some scholars think there will be many different Gentiles who believe in Jesus near the time of Jesus' return. They think the 144,000 sealed Israelites will tell the Gentiles from every nation about Jesus. This will allow these different Gentiles to believe in Jesus.
3. Some scholars think John spoke of people who died because they were Christians.

See: [Gentile](#); [Gentile](#)

Why were palm branches in their hands?

[7:9]

When Jesus entered Jerusalem before his death, people placed palm branches on the ground where he was going to walk. They worshipped their king. Perhaps this is what John spoke of when he said this.

See: John 12:13

Why did John speak of white robes?

[7:9]

See: [White \(symbol\)](#)

What is the great tribulation?

[7:14]

John spoke of a great tribulation. Some scholars think this is a time when Christians will be greatly persecuted. Other scholars think this is part of the time before Jesus returns to the earth. They think there will be tribulation for a period of seven years. The great tribulation is the last three and a half years of this time of tribulation.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What did God promise to these people?

[7:16]

God promised many things to the people he spoke of in this passage.

1. They will live together with God in heaven.
2. All things will be perfect for them. That is, there will be no more difficulties, suffering, or pain.
3. Jesus will care for them.
4. Jesus will lead them to the “springs of living water” (see: John 4:14; 7:38). That is, he will satisfy them or make them complete in the same way water does for the body.

See: [Heaven](#)

Chapter 8

¹ When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was a silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

³ Another angel came, holding a golden incense bowl, standing at the incense altar. Much incense was given to him so that he would offer it with the prayers of all God's holy people on the golden incense altar before the throne. ⁴ The smoke of the incense—with the prayers of God's holy people—rose up before God from the angel's hand. ⁵ The angel took the incense bowl and filled it with fire from the altar. Then he threw it down to the earth, and there were crashes of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

⁶ The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

⁷ The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood. It was thrown down onto the earth so that a third of it was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. ^[1]

⁸ The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea became blood, ⁹ a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰ The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a huge star fell from the sky, blazing like a torch, on a third of the rivers and springs of water. ¹¹ The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the waters that became bitter.

¹² The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, as well as a third of the moon and a third of the stars. So a third of them turned dark; a third of the day and a third of the night had no light.

¹³ I looked, and I heard an eagle ^[2] that was flying overhead calling out with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to those who live on the earth, because of the remaining trumpet blasts that are about to be sounded by the three angels."

Footnotes

8:7 ^[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies leave out,

8:13 ^[2]Some copies have the word

Revelation 8

8:1-5

Why was there silence for 30 minutes?

[8:1]

John said there was silence in heaven for 30 minutes. In heaven, people and angels continually sing praises to God. Therefore, silence was not normal. Scholars do not know why there was silence.

1. Some scholars think this was the time period when God sealed people (see:7:1-3).
2. Some scholars think this was the time period between the sixth and seventh seals.
3. Some scholars think John wanted people to know something serious. That is, something serious was happening or about to happen.
4. Some scholars think it was a type of metaphor. That is, it was about silence after the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.
5. Some scholars think the seventh seal is different from all of the other seals. They think all the other things John prophesied will happen after the seventh seal.

6. Some scholars think John wanted people to know that all things were about to end. That is, the world will end.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Angel](#); [Praise](#); [Seal](#); [Metaphor](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Why was a trumpet used?

[8:2]

Trumpets were used so people would give attention to something. Often, trumpets were used when kings were coming into a room or area. Also, they were used when something was going to happen and people needed to listen.

Why did the angels hold bowls of incense?

[8:3]

In ancient Israel, people thought angels brought prayers to God. In this verse, John said these prayers "rose up before God." John wanted to make known that God was going to do something because of their prayers.

See: [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#); [Fragrant Offering \(Aroma\)](#)

Why did the angel throw the bowl to the earth?

[8:5]

The angel threw the bowl to the earth because God was judging all people. He wanted people to know this.

See: [Angel](#)

8:6-12

Why did John speak of seven trumpets?

[8:6]

A trumpet is a musical instrument. It was often used to announce something. When a trumpet was used, people were to listen. Scholars do not know what these trumpets announced.

1. Some scholars think the trumpets were a prophecy. It was a symbol. John was talking about different people who fought the Roman Empire.
2. Other scholars think the trumpets were a different prophecy. It was a symbol. John was talking about the Roman Empire. The Roman empire fought the Jews and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.
3. Other scholars think the trumpets were a different prophecy. It was a symbol. John was talking about the things that will happen in the time before Jesus returns to the earth. These trumpets announced that God will punish the world.
4. Fewer scholars think the trumpets were a metaphor. John wanted to say that God punishes people who sin. Therefore, the trumpets told people to repent.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#) ; [Symbol](#); [Metaphor](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What did the first trumpet make known?

[8:7]

Something happened to the earth when the angel blew the first trumpet. This was something that would not happen on earth without God doing it. It rained hail, fire, and blood. Hail is large pieces of frozen ice. In the Bible, hail means God will punish people for sinning (see: Job 38:22-23).

Some scholars think this was a metaphor. John spoke of certain people who attacked the Roman Empire. They destroyed everything they attacked. Trees and grass were the church and its leaders.

Other scholars think John spoke of war between the Jews and the Roman Empire. This war happened a few years after Jesus died. Perhaps John spoke of the Roman Empire destroying the trees and grass near Jerusalem. Or perhaps John used a metaphor of trees and grass. Or perhaps he wanted to say that Christians will suffer also when God punishes non-Christians.

Other scholars think that it will actually rain hail, fire, and blood on the earth. This warned people to repent.

See: Exodus 9:18-27

See: [Fire](#); [Metaphor](#); [Repent \(Repentance\)](#); [Hail](#); [Fire](#)

What did the second trumpet make known?

[8:8, 8:9]

Something else happened on earth when the second angel blew his trumpet. This was also not something that would happen without God doing it. Some scholars think John used a metaphor. Other scholars think he spoke of something he saw.

Some scholars think John used a metaphor. John was talking about one of the times when the Roman Empire was defeated. In ancient times, people spoke of mountains when they wanted to say something or someone is powerful. They think this spoke of nations defeating the Roman Empire. They defeated them on the seas. Before this, no nation defeated the Roman Empire on the seas.

Other scholars think John used a different metaphor. Jerusalem was also called Mount Zion. This prophecy made known how the Roman Empire defeated Judah. They defeated Mount Zion.

Other scholars think John spoke of a meteor. A meteor appears to have fire around it when it goes from space to the earth.

Advice to translators: A meteor is a large rock that comes from space and falls to the earth. Space is the sky where the stars and other planets are located. The seas are the large open waters surrounding the land. Often, people fought wars with boats in the seas.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Zion](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

What did the third trumpet make known?

[8:10, 8:11]

Something else happened on earth when the third angel blew his trumpet. This was also something that would not happen without God doing it.

Some scholars think John used a metaphor. He wanted people to know about a certain nation becoming powerful. Other scholars think John spoke of the Roman Empire defeating Judah. During this war, there were many dead people in rivers.

Other scholars think John spoke of a meteor. A meteor appears to have fire around it when it goes from space to the earth.

Other scholars think John used a different metaphor. He spoke of how people poison the earth. That is, people hurt and destroy the earth.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What did the fourth trumpet announce?

[8:12]

Something else happened on earth when the fourth angel blew his trumpet. This was also something that would not happen without God doing it.

Some scholars think John used a metaphor. Perhaps John was speaking about the people who destroyed part of the Roman Empire. The main part of the Roman Empire was destroyed. However, the empire remained in power for many years after this.

Other scholars think John spoke about Rome defeating other nations. These nations were defeated near the time when the Roman Empire warred with Judah. The war happened a few years after Jesus died.

Other scholars think John spoke of a specific day. This day was different than any other day. They think the things John saw will happen on the earth before Jesus returns to the earth.

See: Matthew 24:22

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Metaphor](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

8:13

What was a “woe”?

[8:13]

A “woe” (ὠαί/g3759) announced that God was going to judge people. In this verse, John says “woe” three times. In Revelation, there were three woes announced. These had special meaning (see: Revelation 9:12; 11:14; 12:12).

See: [Woe](#)

Chapter 9

¹ Then the fifth angel sounded his trumpet. I saw a star from heaven that had fallen to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. ² He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the shaft like smoke from a huge furnace. The sun and the air were turned dark by the smoke from the shaft. ³ Out of the smoke locusts came on the earth, and they were given power like that of scorpions on the earth. ⁴ They were told not to damage the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree, but only the people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵ They were not given permission to kill those people, but only to torture them for five months. Their agony would be like the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a person. ⁶ In those days people will seek death but will not find it. They will greatly desire to die, but death will flee from them. ⁷ The locusts looked like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like crowns of gold, and their faces were like human faces. ⁸ They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. ⁹ They had breastplates like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like the sound made by many chariots and horses running into battle. ¹⁰ They had tails with stingers like scorpions; in their tails they had power to harm people for five months. ¹¹ They had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew was Abaddon, and in Greek he had the name Apollyon.

¹² The first woe is past. Look! After this there are still two disasters to come.

¹³ The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is present before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who had been bound at the great Euphrates River." ¹⁵ The four angels who had been prepared for that hour, that day, that month, and that year were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶ The number of the soldiers on horseback was 200,000,000. I heard their number. ¹⁷ This is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode on them: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur. ¹⁸ A third of the people were killed by these three plagues: the fire, smoke, and sulfur that came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails—for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflicted wounds on people. ²⁰ The rest of mankind, those who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, nor did they stop worshipping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—things that cannot see, hear, or walk. ²¹ Neither did they repent of their murders, their sorcery, their sexual immorality or their acts of theft.

Revelation 9

9:1-12

What did the fifth trumpet make known?

[9:1]

John talked about a star falling to earth. John called the star "him." This is how someone would address a person. Therefore, scholars do not think John was talking about a star. Instead, star was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think John was talking about another religion. John was talking about the leader of this religion.
2. Other scholars think that John was talking about certain teachers who did not teach the right things about God.
3. Other scholars think John was speaking about someone in heaven. Perhaps John was speaking about Satan. In the Bible, Satan is an angel who God removed from heaven (see: 2 Peter 2:4).
4. God will give this angel permission to cause bad things to happen on the earth.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Hell](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is the bottomless pit?

[9:1, 9:2]

John wrote about a bottomless pit. This was a type of prison. Nothing could escape out of it. Scholars think the bottomless pit is the place where Satan, the antichrist, and the demons live. John spoke about this pit as if it were a prison with a lock on it. Only God has the key to this lock. Only he can let people out of this prison. God imprisoned all the demons in the bottomless pit for a specific period of time.

See: Luke 8:31; Revelation 20

See: [Demon](#); [Antichrist](#); [Demon](#)

What are locust?

[9:3]

Locust are insects. They travel in large groups. They come into an area and eat all the plants. Some scholars think John was using a metaphor. They think he spoke about certain religions or nations. Other scholars do not think John was using a metaphor. Instead, he spoke about a large group of actual locusts.

See: [Locust](#)

What is a scorpion?

[9:3]

A scorpion is an insect that has a tail which can sting something. This sting can harm or kill people. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. They think John spoke about evil things in the world. These evil things harm people. However, God did not allow these evil things to harm Christians.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who has the seal of God on their forehead?

[9:4]

In Revelation, John says Christians have the seal of God on their foreheads. This means that God will protect them. Also, they are promised to live together with God in heaven forever. Some scholars think all Christians have this seal. They think it cannot be seen. Other scholars think only the Christians living during the time John prophesied will have this seal. They think it will be a mark that can be seen on their forehead.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

How did John describe the locust?

[9:7, 9:8, 9:9, 9:10]

John wrote that these locust did not look like a normal locusts. Instead, John used a metaphor. Scholars do not agree about what John wanted to say.

1. Some scholars think John spoke about a certain country. This country will come and defeat the people of Israel. They ruled in Israel for a period of time.
2. Other scholars think John spoke about demons. Satan sends these demons to punish anyone who does not have the seal of God (see: John 8:44, Revelation 2:9; 3:9).
3. Other scholars think John spoke about certain creatures that come in the future. They think John spoke about actual creatures he saw. These creatures punished people.

See: [Seal](#); [Demon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Seal](#)

Who was the king of the locusts?

[9:11]

Some scholars think the king of the locusts was a religious leader. More scholars think Satan is the king of these locusts. Satan has many different names.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is the first woe?

[9:12]

See: [Woe](#)

9:13-21

What are the horns in front of the golden altar?

[9:13]

John spoke about horns in front of the golden altar. Scholars do not agree about what John was saying.

1. Some scholars think John spoke about a priest in heaven. This priest told the sixth angel to release the destroying angels. These angels waited around the earth to kill people on the earth.
2. Some scholars think John spoke about different nations who conquered Israel.
3. Some scholars think John spoke about the Roman Empire. They defeated Israel shortly after Jesus died. At this time, they destroyed Jerusalem.
4. Some scholars think John spoke about demons. God allowed them to punish evil people on the earth.
5. Some scholars think John spoke about how God will allow the people of the world to be very evil. Until this time, God stops evil these evil people from completely controlling the earth.

See: [World](#); [Heaven](#); [Angel](#); [Demon](#); [World](#)

Who are the four angels at the Euphrates river?

[9:14]

It is not known who are the four angels at the Euphrates River. Some scholars think they were angels. Other scholars think they were demons. Scholars do not know why John spoke about the Euphrates River. Some scholars think he talked about the actual river. Other scholars think John used a metaphor. He did not speak about the actual river.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Demon](#); [Metaphor](#)

See Map: Euphrates river

Why did John talk about “that hour, that day, that month, and that year”?

[9:15]

John spoke about “that hour, that day, that month, and that year.” He wanted to say that God controlled everything. God knew before these thing happened when they would happen.

Why did John talk about horses and their riders?

[9:17]

John talked about horses and their riders. This was a symbol.

1. Some scholars think he talked about a nation in history and its leaders. This nation would conquer and control Israel for a long time. This nation did not exist until long after John lived.
2. Other scholars think John spoke about the Roman Empire near the time when John lived.
3. Other scholars think John spoke about demons. They think that these demons will attack Israel in the future.
4. Other scholars think John spoke about nations or armies. These nations will one day attack Israel.
5. Fewer scholars think that John used a metaphor. He wanted to say that people in the world were becoming more and more evil.
6. Some scholars think John was simply talking about what he saw when he talked about the rider and horses.
7. Other scholars think the things John saw were symbols of something else.

See: [Metaphor;Demon](#); [Metaphor](#)

Who was punished?

[9:20]

John said that specific people will be punished because they did not repent.

1. Some scholars think John spoke about certain groups of people. These people said that they were Christians, but they were very evil. These were people who lived between the time when John lived and today.
2. Other scholars think John talked about the Jews who did not believe in Jesus. God punished them.
3. Other scholars think John prophesied about people who do not believe in Jesus in the time just before Jesus returns to the earth.
4. Fewer scholars think John told all people who did not believe in Jesus to repent.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#), [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Chapter 10

¹ Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was clothed in a cloud, and there was a rainbow above his head. His face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire. ² He held a little scroll, which was opened in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. ³ Then he shouted in a loud voice like a roaring lion. When he shouted, the seven thunders spoke out with their sounds. ⁴ When the seven thunders spoke out, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders said. Do not write it down." ⁵ Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and the earth raised his right hand to heaven. ⁶ He swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and all that is in it, the earth and all that is on it, and the sea and all that is in it, and the angel said, "There will be no more delay. ⁷ But on the day when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, then the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he proclaimed the good news to his servants the prophets." ⁸ The voice I heard from heaven spoke to me again: "Go, take the open scroll that is in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land." ⁹ Then I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey." ¹⁰ I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but after I ate it, my stomach became bitter. ¹¹ Then someone said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

Revelation 10

10:1-4

What did John say about the angel?

[10:1]

John used metaphors to talk about the angel.

1. Some scholars think John spoke about Jesus when he talked about this angel. They think the book he had was the Bible (see: 5:3) They think that many years ago, the church had false teachers leading the church. They think translating the Bible into the languages people spoke changed things.
2. Other scholars think John spoke about Jesus and the book was the book of Revelation. In this book, Jesus judges the Jews and the Gentiles. In the Bible, the sea often symbolizes Gentiles.
3. Others scholars think John spoke about a powerful angel. John wanted to say that God was going to control of the earth. That is, God will begin his kingdom on the earth.

Scholars think the cloud John spoke about symbolized God. Clouds are often seen near God in the Bible.

Scholars think the rainbow John spoke about symbolized the promise God gave to Noah (see: Genesis 9). God promised never again to completely destroy the world with a flood.

John said that the angel put his feet on the sea and land. He wanted to say that God gave the angel permission to rule over the sea and land. Some scholars think the sea and land were symbols of Gentiles and Jews. Other scholars think this means the whole world.

See Daniel 10:6

See: [Sea](#); [Symbol](#); [Angel](#); [Gentile](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Sea](#)

Who were the seven thunders?

[10:3]

Scholars do not know why John wrote about the seven thunders. Some scholars think John spoke about creatures near God. Other scholars think John talked about God speaking. Other scholars think the angel spoke very loud, and the thunder came after the angel spoke. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. They think John wanted to say that the angel was given permission to speak the words of God.

See: [Metaphor;Metaphor](#)

Why was John told not write the things the angels said?

[10:4]

John was told not to write down the things the angel said. Scholars think this was because God did not want people to know what was done, that is, it was not the time for them to know. Through John, God told people what he was going to do. However, God did not tell people everything he was going to do.

See: Daniel 8:26, 12:4, 9

See: [Angel](#)

10:5-7

What is an oath?

[10:6]

See: [Swear \(Oath\)](#)

What is the day when the angel will sound the seventh trumpet?

[10:7]

The angel said that certain things were about to happen.

1. Some scholars think this day was a warning to false teachers in the church. The angel wanted the false teachers to repent.
2. Some scholars think the angel talked about the antichrist. The antichrist was given permission to rule on the earth for a period of time. The angel said that this time will end.
3. Some scholars think the angel talked about the time Jesus will punish those who persecuted Christians and did not obey God. **Advice to translators:** When John spoke about a day, he was speaking about a certain time.

See: Revelation 6:6

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Antichrist](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

What is the mystery of God?

[10:7]

See: [Mystery](#)

10:8-11

What is the little book?

[10:9]

John spoke about the little book. Some scholars think he spoke about the book of Revelation. Fewer scholars think John spoke about all of the Bible.

Why did the angel say to eat the little book?

[10:9, 10:10]

The angel told John to eat the little book.

1. Some scholars think John used a metaphor. That is, It was good for people to read the Bible. However, if someone does not do what the Bible says to do, then they will be punished.

2. Some scholars think John used a different metaphor. He prophesied that Jerusalem was going to be destroyed. Or perhaps another nation was going to be destroyed.
3. Some scholars think John spoke about the gospel. Some scholars think he spoke about how someone cannot have peace with God without Jesus dying for them. Other scholars think he spoke about the gospel being very good news for those who believe in Jesus but very bad news for those who do not believe in Jesus.

See: Ezekiel 3

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Metaphor,Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#) ; [Gospel](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

Chapter 11

¹ A reed was given to me to use like a measuring rod. I was told, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. ² But do not measure the courtyard outside the temple, for it has been given over to the Gentiles. They will trample the holy city for forty-two months. ³ I will give my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴ These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth. ⁵ If anyone chooses to harm them, fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies. Anyone who wishes to harm them must be killed in this way. ⁶ These witnesses have authority to close up the sky so that no rain will fall during the days that they prophesy. They have power to turn the waters to blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague whenever they wish. ⁷ When they will have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will wage war against them. He will conquer them and kill them. ⁸ Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city (which is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt) where their Lord was crucified. ⁹ For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language, and nation will look at their bodies. They will not permit them to be placed in a tomb. ¹⁰ Those who live on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate. They will even send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who lived on the earth. ¹¹ But after three and a half days a breath of life from God will enter them, and they will stand on their feet. Great fear will fall on those who see them. ¹² Then they will hear a loud voice from heaven say to them, "Come up here!" Then they will go up into heaven in a cloud, while their enemies look on. ¹³ At that hour there will be a major earthquake, and a tenth part of the city will collapse. Seven thousand people will be killed in the earthquake, and the survivors will be terrified and give glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe is past. Look! The third woe is coming quickly.

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and loud voices spoke in heaven and said,

"The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,
and he will reign forever and ever."

¹⁶ Then the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones in the presence of God, fell upon their faces and worshiped God. ¹⁷ They said,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
the one who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign. ^[1]

¹⁸ The nations were enraged,
but your wrath has come.
The time has come for the dead to be judged
and for you to reward your servants the prophets
and God's holy people, and those who feared your name,
both the unimportant and the mighty.
The time has come
for you to destroy those who are destroying the earth."

¹⁹ Then God's temple in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.

Footnotes

11:17 ^[1] The best copies of the ancient Greek text have the phrase

Revelation 11

11:1-2

What was John told to measure?

[11:1]

God told John to measure the temple of God. However, scholars do not know exactly what God was talking about.

1. Some scholars think God spoke about measuring the church. Those inside of the temple were Christians. That is, those who obeyed God and worshipped him in the right ways. Those outside of the temple were those who said they were Christians, but who did not believe in Jesus. Or perhaps they did believe in Jesus but did not worship God in the right way.
2. Some scholars think God spoke about the temple in Ezekiel 40-57. This temple was a symbol of all Christians. God wanted to say that the church will replace the temple in Jerusalem. That is because it was going to be destroyed. Christians will gather together instead of going to the temple to worship God. They will worship God in the right way anywhere in the world.
3. Some scholars think God spoke about a temple that will be built in the future. This temple will be built when the things the book of Revelation talks about happen. That is, it will be built during the seven years of suffering and punishment. Anyone who worships in this temple does not obey God. Therefore, God will judge them.

See: [Worship](#); [Church](#); [Symbol](#); [Worship](#)

Why did God talk about measuring the temple?

[11:1, 11:2]

God talked about judging certain people when God talked about measuring the temple.

See: [Temple](#)

Why was the outside of the temple given to the Gentiles for 42 months?

[11:2]

The Gentiles were all the people who were not Jews. However, in the Bible, people who do not believe in Jesus or do not obey God are also called Gentiles.

1. Some scholars think God spoke about how people who did not obey God will rule the church or rule Christians for a long time. They think that each day was a symbol for a year.
2. Some scholars think God spoke about when the Romans attacked Jerusalem. They attacked for 42 months.
3. Some scholars think God spoke about a time when Christians were persecuted shortly after Jesus died.
4. Some scholars think God spoke about punishing the Jews because they did not obey God. He will give the rebuilt temple to the Gentiles to control for 42 months to punish the Jews. The Gentiles will use the temple to get people to worship a false god.

See: [Worship](#); [Symbol](#); [Hebrew Calendar \(Seasons in Israel\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#) ; [Worship](#)

How long is 42 months?

[11:2]

42 months is 1260 days. In the Jewish calendar, a month is 30 days long. Some scholars think that a day is one day long. Fewer scholars think that a day in the book of Revelation is a symbol of one year. That is, it is 360 or 365 days.

See: [Symbol](#)

11:3-12

Who were the two witnesses?

[11:3]

The names of the two witnesses are not in the Bible.

1. Some scholars think they were Enoch and Elijah. This is because they were the only people in the Bible who never died (see: Hebrews 11:5; 2 Kings 2:11).
2. Some scholars think that these two men were symbols. They symbolized all the men who spoke against evil church leaders.
3. Other scholars think they were different symbols. They think that one man was a symbol of a church leader. The other man was a symbol of a leader in the government.
4. Some scholars think they were Moses and Elijah (see: Deuteronomy 18:15 and Malachi 4:5). They think they were symbols of all the prophets of the Old Testament. These prophets talked about the time when God will destroy the world. They think Moses symbolized the Law of Moses and Elijah symbolized the prophets.
5. Some scholars think that these men were a different symbol. They symbolized the people who will tell other people about Jesus. They will do this when the things in the book of Revelation about happen.
6. Other scholars think that these are two Christians. They become prophets when the things in the book of Revelation happen.

There are also many other thoughts about who were these two witness.

Advice to translators: A witness is someone who tells other people about what they saw. These witness told people the things God wanted them to say. Someone who tells people about Jesus is also a type of witness.

See: [Law of Moses](#) ;[Prophet](#); [Symbol](#); [Law of Moses](#)

Why did the prophets wear sackcloth?

[11:3]

These two prophets wore sackcloth. This was a cloth that was heavy and rough to touch. It was not comfortable. In the Bible, people wore this cloth so that other people will know they were sad or mourning something bad.

See: [Prophet](#)

Why did John talk about two olive trees and two lampstands?

[11:4]

John was thinking about Zechariah 4 when John wrote this. The olive trees and lampstands were symbols of something. Scholars think the two olive trees and the two lampstands are both metaphors for the two witnesses.

Advice to translators: A witness is someone who tells other people about what they saw. These witness told people the things God wanted them to say. Someone who tells people about Jesus is also a type of witness.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

When does fire come out of the mouths of these two men?

[11:5]

John said fire will come out of the mouth of the two witnesses. Some scholars think this will happen to kill anyone who attempt to hurt them. Other scholars think this is a metaphor. God will protect them. God will hurt anyone who attempts to hurt these two men.

Advice to translators: A witness is someone who tells other people about what they saw. These witness told people the things God wanted them to say. Someone who tells people about Jesus is also a type of witness.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Will it rain when the two men prophesy?

[11:6]

Scholars think that it will not rain when these two men prophesy. This might be in Jerusalem or all over the world.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

Who is the beast?

[11:7]

John said a beast will kill these two men after 1260 days. Some scholars think this beast is Satan or the antichrist. They think Satan or the antichrist will kill the two prophets. Other scholars think John talked about leaders who killed Christians.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Antichrist](#)

What was the bottomless pit?

[11:7]

In the Bible, hell is called a bottomless pit.

See: [Hell](#)

Why is the great city called Sodom and Egypt?

[11:8]

John called Jerusalem the great city. However, he also called Sodom and Egypt the great city. These two cities were very evil. Therefore, John wanted to say that in the same way the people in Sodom and Egypt were evil so were the people in Jerusalem evil. They were so evil that they did not allow God's prophets to be buried after they died. This dishonored the dead prophets.

See: [Prophet](#)

11:13-14

How did Jerusalem collapse?

[11:13]

When John said that Jerusalem collapsed, he wanted to say that part of the city of Jerusalem was destroyed.

What is a "woe"?

[11:14]

See: [Woe](#)

11:15-19

How did the kingdom of the world become the kingdom of Jesus?

[11:15]

The voice from heaven said that the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Jesus.

1. Some scholars think that he wanted to say that church leaders who honored God will defeat the evil church leaders.
2. Some scholars think that God rules on the earth in some way through Christians. God did not rule the world through Israel anymore. He rules through all Christians.
3. Some scholars think that this will happen in the future. Jesus will return to the earth and rule people during this time.

Who are the 24 elders?

[11:16]

See: Revelation 4:4

How are the dead judged?

[11:18]

The dead are judged by the things they did while they were alive. These things are written in God's books.

See: Revelation 20:11-12

What is the ark of the covenant?

[11:19]

See: [Ark of the Covenant](#)

Chapter 12

¹ A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ² She was pregnant, and she was crying out in birth pains, in the anguish of childbirth. ³ Then another sign was seen in heaven: Look! There was a huge red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and there were seven crowns on his heads. ⁴ His tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them down to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, he would devour her child. ⁵ She gave birth to a son, a male child, who would rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was snatched away to God and to his throne, ⁶ and the woman fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place for her, so she could be taken care of for 1,260 days.

⁷ Now there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But the dragon was not strong enough to win. So there was no longer any place in heaven for him and his angels. ⁹ The great dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan, who deceives the whole world—was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven:

"Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.
For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accused them before our God day and night.

¹¹ They conquered him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they did not love their lives
even to death.

¹² Therefore rejoice, you heavens
and all who reside in them!
But woe to the earth and to the sea,
because the devil has gone down to you!
He is filled with terrible anger
and knows that he has only a little time!

¹³ When the dragon realized he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so that she would flee to the place prepared for her in the wilderness. This was the place where she would be taken care of, for a time, times, and half a time—out of the serpent's presence. ¹⁵ The serpent poured water out of his mouth like a river so that he might make a flood to sweep her away. ¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon was pouring out of his mouth. ¹⁷ Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war with the rest of her descendants, those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony about Jesus. ¹⁸ Then the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

Revelation 12

12:1-2

John talked about a woman. Who was she?

[12:1]

John talked about a woman. However, this woman was a symbol of something.

1. Some scholars think this woman was a symbol of Christians who obey and honor God.
2. Some scholars think this woman was a symbol of the Jews who believed in Jesus.

See: [Symbol](#)

Why does John talk about the way the woman is dressed?

[12:1]

The way this woman was dressed was a symbol of something.

1. Some scholars think these things are symbols of different rulers.
2. Some scholars think these things are symbols representing Israel.

See: Genesis 37:9

See: [Symbol](#)

The woman gave birth to a child. Who is this child?

[12:2]

When John talked about this child, it was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think John was speaking about Christians.
2. Some scholars think John was speaking about Jesus.
3. Some scholars think John was speaking about Israel expecting the messiah to come.

See: [Messiah \(Christ\)](#); [Messiah \(Christ\)](#)

12:3-6

What is a sign?

[12:3]

See: [Sign](#)

Who was the dragon?

[12:3]

The dragon was a symbol of someone or something.

1. Some scholars think that John was talking about the Roman Empire. This is because they tried to harm Christians.
2. Some scholars think that John was talking about Satan.
3. Some scholars think that John was talking about another empire like the Roman Empire that would rule near the time when Jesus returns.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Dragon](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the dragon look the way it did?

[12:3]

The dragon appeared in a certain way. This was a symbol of something.

1. Some scholars think that John was talking about Satan getting a third of the angels to rebel against God. Those angels were removed from heaven and are now called demons.
2. Some scholars think that John was talking about the Roman Empire and that a third of the Roman Empire tried to harm Christians. The rest of the Roman Empire did not try to harm Christians
3. Some scholars think that John was thinking about Daniel 7. They think that John was speaking about different groups of people who would rule large parts of the world.

See: [Heaven](#); [Symbol](#); [Angel](#); [Demon](#); [Heaven](#)

The woman gave birth to a son. Who is he?

[12:5]

John talked about a woman who gave birth to a son. This was a metaphor. Because the son is described as being a leader who will “rule all the nations with an iron rod” many scholars think John was speaking about Jesus (see: 19:15; Psalm 2:6-9).

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why did the women go to the wilderness?

[12:6]

The woman went to the wilderness. This was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think the woman going to the wilderness was a metaphor about Christians who stopped honoring God after a certain leader ruled the Roman Empire. It was 1260 years before the church would honor God again.
2. Some scholars think the woman was a metaphor about Jews who left Jerusalem before it was destroyed.
3. Some scholars think John was talking about God helping Christians when people tried to harm them during the time John talks about in the book of Revelation.
4. Some scholars think John was talking about God helping Christians at any time.

See: [Metaphor](#)

12:7-17

Who fought in this war?

[12:7]

John talked about a war in heaven.

1. Some scholars think John was talking about a war that will happen in heaven while the events of the book of Revelation take place.
2. Some scholars think John was talking about a war on earth that happens while the events of the Book of Revelation take place.
3. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. John wanted to say that Jesus and other Christians were defeating people who opposed Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why is Satan called the old serpent?

[12:9]

In Genesis 3, a serpent tempts Adam and Eve. This serpent was Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Who accuses people?

[12:10]

Satan accuses Christians of sinning. Some scholars think that he accuses them before God. However, Christians do not need to worry about this because Jesus died and paid the penalty for their sins by dying for them. Other scholars think that Satan used to accuse people of sinning, but he stopped after Jesus died.

See: [Atone \(Atonement\)](#); [Atone \(Atonement\)](#)

How do Christians defeat Satan?

[12:11]

John says that Satan accuses Christians of sinning. He tells God. However, it does not matter. Christians have defeated Satan and when he accuses them, it does not matter. This is because Jesus, as the Lamb of God, already died so that they could be at peace with God. The testimony about which Christians spoke was testimony of the shed blood of the Lamb.

See: [Blood](#); [Lamb of God](#); [Testify \(Testimony\)](#); [Blood](#)

What is a “woe”?

[12:12]

See: [Woe](#)

Why does Satan have “only a little time”?

[12:12]

Most of the events of the book of Revelation occur over a short period of time. Because of this, Satan is only given a short period of time to do the things he wants to do that are written about in the book of Revelation.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the woman have wings?

[12:14]

John said that this woman had wings. This was a symbol. He wanted to say that God helped her when she needed to be helped. She was trying to get away from Satan’s attacks.

See: Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11-12

See: [Symbol](#)

What did Paul mean when he said a “time, times, and half a time”?

[12:14]

John wanted to say three and a half years. A time was a year. Times was two years. Half a time was half a year. This would make this time the same 1260 days he mentioned in 12:6. Some scholars think these are days, while other scholars think that each day represents a year. They think, therefore, that John was talking about 1260 years.

Why was water coming out of the serpent’s mouth?

[12:15]

Scholars think the water coming out of the serpent’s mouth meant different things.

1. Some scholars think John was speaking about God protecting the church during difficult times when Satan persecuted the church.
2. Other scholars think that the water was a symbol of something strong and powerful. They think John was talking about Satan invading Israel and harming the Israelites. Or that John was talking about Satan trying to harm Christians.
3. Other scholars think this was about a war that happened after Jesus died. This war was between the Jews and the Roman Empire.

See: [Symbol](#) ; [Symbol](#)

Chapter 13

¹ Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads. On its horns were ten crowns, and on each of its heads was a blasphemous name. ² This beast I saw was like a leopard. Its feet were like a bear's feet, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave it his power, his throne, and his great authority to rule. ³ One of the beast's heads seemed to have a fatal wound, but that fatal wound had been healed. The whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. ⁴ They also worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast. They worshiped the beast, too, and kept saying, "Who is like the beast?" and "Who can fight against it?" ⁵ The beast was given a mouth that could speak proud words and blasphemies. It was permitted to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶ So the beast opened its mouth to speak blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven. ⁷ The beast was permitted to wage war with God's holy people and to conquer them. Also, authority was given to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation. ⁸ All who live on the earth will worship it, everyone whose name was not written in the Book of Life, which belongs to the Lamb who had been slaughtered from the foundation of the world. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰ If anyone is to be taken into captivity,
 into captivity he will go.
 If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
 with the sword he will be killed.

Here is a call for the patient endurance and faith of God's holy people.

¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and it spoke like a dragon. ¹² He exercised all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and he made the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast—the one whose lethal wound had been healed. ¹³ He performed mighty miracles. He even made fire come down on the earth from heaven in front of people. ¹⁴ By the signs he was given power on behalf of the beast, he deceived those who live on the earth, telling them to set up an image for the beast—who was wounded by the sword, but he still lived. ¹⁵ He was permitted to give breath to the beast's image so that the image would even speak and cause all who refused to worship the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He also forced everyone, unimportant and mighty, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. ¹⁷ It was impossible for anyone to buy or sell unless he had the mark of the beast, that is, the number representing its name. ¹⁸ This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast. For it is the number of a human being. His number is 666.

Revelation 13

13:1-10

Who were the beast and the dragon?

[13:1, 13:2]

The beast and the dragon John wrote about were symbols of someone or something else.

1. Some scholars think the beast was the antichrist. They think the dragon was Satan. They think that beast's coming from the sea was a symbol that the antichrist will be a gentile.
2. Some scholars think the beast was the Roman Empire. They think the dragon was the leader of the Roman Empire.
3. Some scholars think the beast was a certain leader of the Roman Empire. They think the dragon was Satan.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Gentile](#); [Antichrist](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

Why did the beast look the way it did?

[13:2]

The beast looked like a leopard, a bear, and a lion. This beast was similar to the strong rulers that Daniel wrote about in the Old Testament (see: Daniel 7).

Some scholars think John wrote about the people who will help the antichrist rule the world. These are the scholars who think John was writing about the antichrist.

Other scholars think the seven heads of the beast were symbols of the seven mountains near Rome. These are the scholars who think John wrote about Rome. When John talked about other things, he wanted to talk about the Roman Empire in some way.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

Why did John write that the beast had a “fatal wound”?

[13:3]

John wrote that the beast had a “fatal wound.” Some scholars think John wrote about the antichrist dying and being made alive again. The antichrist wants to do the same types of things Jesus did so people will worship him. Other scholars think the antichrist will not die and be made alive again, but he will make everyone think he died and was made alive again.

Some scholars think John wrote about certain leaders of the Roman Empire. These leaders worshipped false gods for many years. Then they stopped worshipping false gods for many years. And then they began worshipping false gods again.

Other scholars think John wrote about the Roman Empire after a certain leader died. After he died, there was war. However, the Empire continued to rule even though war weakened them.

Some scholars think John wrote about how the Roman Empire ended. A new empire will arise that will be like the old Roman Empire in some way.

See: [Antichrist](#)

What was blasphemy?

[13:5]

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What is the book of life?

[13:8]

The book of life is a list of people’s names. These people will live together with God in heaven forever. This may be a metaphor or there may be an actual book in heaven.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Who is the lamb?

[13:8]

See: [Lamb of God](#)

What happened before the world was created?

[13:8]

God planned for Jesus to die so people could be at peace with God. He planned this before the world was created.

13:11-18

Who is this other beast?

[13:11]

John wrote about a second beast. This was a symbol. Some scholars think wrote about a false prophet. This false prophet would get people to worship the antichrist. Satan gave this false prophet power and permission to do miracles. He did this so that people would worship the antichrist.

Other scholars think this was a certain evil religious leader. This leader wanted people to not do the things God taught in the Bible.

Other scholars think the beast was another leader in the Roman Empire or a leader in Israel.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Prophet](#); [Miracle](#); [Antichrist](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is the image this beast created?

[13:14]

This beast created something for people to worship. This was evil. Scholars think this might be in the temple that the antichrist builds. Some scholars think John wanted to write that many began worshipping these false gods. They even worshipped the leader of the Roman Empire.

See: Daniel 3:1-7

See: [Worship](#)

What is the mark people have to have?

[13:16]

In ancient times, slaves often had a mark placed on their forehead. This made people know that the slave belonged to their certain master. Some scholars think John wrote about people who served a certain false teacher. People would somehow know who these people were by the things they said or did.

Other scholars think that John wanted to write that Roman leaders or Jewish leaders will persecute Christians.

Other scholars think that the antichrist will make people have some kind of mark for people to buy and sell things. This mark means that they worship the antichrist. Therefore, Christians will not be able to buy and sell things.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

What is the number of the beast?

[13:18]

In ancient times, sometimes letters of the alphabet were also used as numbers. Some scholars think this number was a symbol for a certain word. They think John wrote about a certain evil leader in the church. Other scholars think John wrote about the name of a certain leader of the Roman Empire.

See: [Symbol](#)

Chapter 14

¹ I looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. With him were 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ² I heard a voice from heaven sounding like a roar of many waters and loud thunder. The sound I heard was also like harpists playing their harps. ³ They sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except for the 144,000 who had been bought from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones that have not defiled themselves with women, for they have kept themselves sexually pure. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits for God and for the Lamb. ⁵ No lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

⁶ I saw another angel flying in midair, who had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. ⁷ He called out with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory. For the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him, the one who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water."

⁸ Another angel—a second angel—followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, who persuaded all the nations to drink the wine of her immoral passion."

⁹ Another angel—a third angel—followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he will also drink some of the wine of God's wrath, the wine that has been poured undiluted into the cup of his anger. The person who drinks it will be tormented with fire and sulfur before God's holy angels and before the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke from their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night—these worshipers of the beast and his image, and everyone who receives the mark of his name. ¹² Here is a call for the patient endurance of God's holy people, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus."

¹³ I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them."

¹⁴ I looked, and there was a white cloud. Seated on the cloud was one like a son of man. He had a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵ Then another angel came out of the temple and called with a loud voice to the one sitting on the cloud: "Take your sickle and start to reap. For the time to reap has come, since the harvest of the earth is ripe." ¹⁶ Then the one who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

¹⁷ Another angel came out from the temple in heaven; he also had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Still another angel came out from the incense altar, who had authority over the fire. He called out with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather in the clusters of grapes from the vines of the earth, for their grapes are now ripe." ¹⁹ The angel swung his sickle to the earth and harvested the grapevine of the earth. He threw it into the great winepress of God's wrath. ²⁰ The winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood poured out from it up to the height of a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

Revelation 14

14:1-5

What is Mount Zion?

[14:1]

See: [Zion](#)

Who were the 144,000?

[14:1]

John wrote about 144,000 people who were with Jesus. Some scholars think John wrote about Christians. Perhaps they were in heaven. Or perhaps they were on the earth. Some scholars think John wrote about the first Jews who believed in Jesus. Some scholars think that these are the Christians God will protect during the events written about in this book (see: Revelation 7)

See: [Heaven](#)

What was a harp?

[14:2]

A harp was a music instrument with strings.

What was the new song?

[14:3]

Some scholars think the new song was a metaphor. This metaphor was about Christians. These Christians came to believe the same things that Jesus taught after false teachers taught them the wrong things for a long period of time.

Other scholars think John wrote about Jews believing what Jesus said while he was on the earth.

Other scholars think a large group in heaven was singing about God's saving and redeeming people (see: Psalm 33:1-12; 40:1-3).

See: [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Redeem \(Redemption\)](#)

Who were the four living creatures and the elders?

[14:3]

See: Revelation 4:6-11

The 144,000 kept themselves sexually pure. What did this mean?

[14:4]

John wrote about these people being sexually pure. They think this was a metaphor. He wanted to write that they were completely committed to God. They did the right things and did not worship false gods. In the Old Testament, God spoke about worshipping false gods as adultery (see: Ezekiel 6:9).

See: [Adultery](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Adultery](#)

What was a first fruit?

[14:4]

See: [Fruit \(Metaphor\)](#)

Revelation 14:6-13

The angel said the time of judgment has come. When will God judge people?

[14:7]

The angel said that "the hour of his judgment has come." God will judge people. Some scholars think this will happen after the whole world hears the gospel.

Other scholars think the angel spoke about a certain day when God will judge people. This will be in the last days.

Other scholars think the angel spoke about the gospel. People will be judged if they do not believe in the gospel. He wanted to say that it is now time for people to believe in Jesus or to reject him.

See Matthew 24:14;

See: [Last Days](#); [Gospel](#); [Last Days](#)

What was Babylon?

[14:8]

Babylon was a city in a very evil empire in the ancient world. It was the most important city in this empire. In the Bible, there is another empire that will come. This empire will be more evil than Babylon. The angel also called this empire Babylon. This may be a metaphor.

Some scholars think the angel spoke about Jerusalem. God punished the people of Jerusalem after they did not believe in Jesus. Rome destroyed the city and destroyed the temple shortly after Jesus lived.

Other scholars think the angel spoke about Rome and the Roman Empire.

Other scholars think this was a future empire that the antichrist will lead. Perhaps this will be in the same place as ancient Babylon.

See: [Temple](#); [Metaphor](#); [Babylon](#), [Prostitute \(Prostitution\)](#); [Antichrist](#); [Temple](#)

See Map: Babylon

What have people done that is like things Babylon has done?

[14:8]

In the Babylonian Empire, people worshipped false gods. Therefore, Babylon tried to get people to worship false gods. God judged them because of this.

See: [Adultery](#); [Adultery](#)

What happens to those who are given the mark of the beast?

[14:9, 14:10, 14:11]

Some scholars think God will punish those who are given the mark of the beast or worship the beast. He will punish them forever. Once someone is given the mark, they will not be able to have peace with God and live with him forever. Instead, they will live forever separated from God in hell.

Other scholars think John used a metaphor. They think he spoke about the city John called Babylon being destroyed.

See: Revelation 13

See: [Hell](#)

What did it mean to drink the wine of God's wrath?

[14:10]

When someone was crucified, they were given a small taste of wine before they died (see: Mark 15:23).

Some scholars think John wanted to write that those who worshipped the beast were going to die.

Other scholars think this was a metaphor. He wanted to write that they would be punished completely. John wrote the wine was "undiluted." That is, it was not mixed with anything else. In the same way, God's punishment would not be mixed with grace.

See: [Grace](#); [Metaphor](#); [Grace](#)

How does someone die in the lord?

[14:13]

1. Brought into the kingdom of God. The second harvest is about those who reject Jesus. They will be punished.
2. Other scholars think John was speaking about Jesus judging evil people. Perhaps this is when he returns to the earth.
3. Other scholars think John was speaking about God punishing the city of Jerusalem when Roman destroyed the temple.

John said that people who believe in Jesus will die in the Lord. He wanted to say that they can die happy because they know they are at peace with God and will be with him forever. Scholars think God will give extra favor to those who die during the time John wrote about.

See: [Kingdom of God](#); [Kingdom of God](#)

See: Philippians 1:21

Revelation 14:14-20

Who is the son of man?

[14:14]

See: [Son of Man](#)

Why did the son of man look the way he did?

[14:14]

The son of man came sitting on a cloud. He wears a crown because he is a king and rules the world. He also is about to harvest people. This is a metaphor about how he will judge people.

Some scholars think John wrote about God helping people when they are persecuted.

Other scholars think that John wrote about God judging people when the Roman Empire destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.

See: Matthew 13:24-30

See: [Son of Man](#); [Metaphor](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Son of Man](#)

Why did John write, "the harvest of the earth is ripe"?

[14:15]

Some scholars think John wrote about two harvests. Other scholars think John wrote about one harvest in two different ways. This was a metaphor about something.

1. Some scholars think in the first harvest those who believe in Jesus will be brought into the kingdom of God. The second harvest is about those who do not believe in Jesus. They will be punished.
2. Other scholars think John wrote about Jesus judging evil people. They think this is when he returns to the earth.
3. Other scholars think John wrote about God punishing the city of Jerusalem when the Roman Empire destroyed the temple.

See: [Temple](#); [Son of Man](#); [Kingdom of God](#); [Temple](#)

Why did John write about a winepress?

[14:19]

John continued a metaphor he began earlier (see: Revelation 14:10). God will punish people. Instead of this winepress making wine, blood comes out of it. It will be about 1 meter deep and about 300 kilometers wide.

Because there is so much blood, some scholars think this is a metaphor. He wanted to say that God will completely punish evil and the people who do not believe in him.

Other scholars think that many people will actually die and there will be this much blood. Perhaps it will be in a river.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 15

¹ Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: There were seven angels with seven plagues, which are the final plagues, for with them the wrath of God will be completed.

² I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire. Standing beside the sea were those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number representing his name. They were holding harps given to them by God. ³ They were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

"Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God, the Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.

⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord,
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you
because your righteous deeds have been revealed."

⁵ After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of witness was open in heaven. ⁶ Out of the temple came the seven angels holding the seven plagues. They were clothed with pure, bright linen and had golden sashes around their chests. ⁷ One of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. ⁸ The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. No one could enter it until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

Revelation 15

15:1-8

Why did John wrote about seven final plagues?

[15:1]

John wrote about seven final plagues.

Some scholars think John wrote about something that will happen when the world is going to end.

Other scholars think John wrote about the end of the antichrist. That is, the time when God will judge him.

Other scholars think John wrote about the time when Jerusalem was destroyed.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

How is the wrath of God complete?

[15:1]

The wrath of God will be complete when God defeats Satan and the antichrist. Some scholars think John wanted to encourage Christians by promising them that God would defeat Satan. Although Satan defeated Christians for a period of time, they will ultimately defeat him.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Antichrist](#)

What is the sea of glass?

[15:2]

God rules from a throne. Near to this throne is something that looks like a lot of water made of glass. This is what John was writing about. Some scholars think it had fire coming out of it because God was about to judge someone. Because of this, scholars think John wrote about something that happened in heaven.

See: Revelation 4:6

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

What are the people doing?

[15:2, 15:3, 15:4]

John talked about certain people who were praising God. Scholars think John was speaking about Christians who were killed because they believed in Jesus.

See: Exodus 15

What is the temple having the tent of witness?

15:5]

John wrote about a temple in heaven. Scholars think the temple God told Moses to build in the Old Testament was based on the temple that is in heaven.

See: [Temple](#); [Temple](#)

Why were the angels dressed in this way?

[15:6]

The angels were perfectly holy. The clothes they wore showed they did not have any dirt on them.

See: [Clean and Unclean: Holy \(Holiness, Set Apart\)](#); [Clean and Unclean](#)

Why are there seven bowls of wrath?

[15:7]

The seven bowls John wrote about are symbols. John wrote about God judging someone or something. Perhaps John wrote about God judging the beast (see: Revelation 11:7)

See: [Symbol](#); [Symbol](#)

Why was no one able to enter into the temple?

[15:8]

The temple was filled with the glory of God. People were not able to enter the temple when this happened. If they did, they would die.

See: Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11

See: [Wrath](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Wrath](#)

Chapter 16

¹ I heard a loud voice call out of the temple and say to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of God's wrath."

² The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; ugly and painful sores came on the people who had the mark of the beast, those who worshiped his image.

³ The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. It became blood, like the blood of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died.

⁴ The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ I heard the angel of the waters say,

"You are righteous—the one who is and who was, the Holy One—
because you have judged these things.

⁶ Because they poured out the blood of God's holy people and prophets,
you have given them blood to drink;
it is what they deserve."

⁷ I heard the altar reply,

"Yes, Lord God Almighty,
your judgments are true and righteous."

⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch the people with fire. ⁹ They were scorched by the terrible heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has the authority over these plagues. They did not repent or give him glory.

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and darkness covered its kingdom. They chewed on their tongues because of the pain. ¹¹ They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and sores, and they still refused to repent of their deeds.

¹² The sixth angel poured out his bowl into the great river, the Euphrates. Its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings that would come from the east. ¹³ I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouths of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs. They were going out to the kings of the whole world in order to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. ¹⁵ ("Look! I am coming as a thief! Blessed is the one who keeps watching, keeping his garments on so that he does not walk around naked and so that they do not see his shameful condition.")

¹⁶ They brought them together at the place that is called Armageddon in Hebrew.

¹⁷ Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. Then a loud voice came out of the temple and from the throne, saying, "It is done!" ¹⁸ There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, and a terrible earthquake—an earthquake greater than any that has ever happened since human beings have been on the earth, so great was this earthquake. ¹⁹ The great city was split into three parts, and the nations' cities collapsed. Then God called to mind Babylon the great, and he gave that city the cup filled with the wine made from his furious wrath. ²⁰ Every island disappeared, and the mountains were no longer found. ²¹ Great hailstones, weighing about a talent, came down from the sky upon the people. They blasphemed God for the plague of hail because that plague was so terrible.

Revelation 16

16:1-2

Who are the seven angels?

[16:1]

These are the seven angels who are near the throne of God.

See: Revelation 8:2

See: [Throne](#); [Throne](#)

What is a bowl of the wrath of God?

[16:1]

John used the bowl as a metaphor. A bowl holds something. Here, it holds God's anger. When God wants to punish people, he pours it on them.

See: [Wrath](#); [Wrath](#)

How does God speak to the angels?

[16:1]

God commands all of the angels at the same time. Some scholars think this means that these things will happen in a very short period of time. Other scholars think these things will happen over a longer period of time.

See: [Angel](#)

What are the painful sores?

[16:2]

1. Some scholars think God will punish the people who do not believe in Jesus and worship the antichrist by giving them painful sores. 1. Other scholars think this is a metaphor. They think John wrote about people doing evil things.
2. Other scholars think he wrote about bad things that happened when the temple was destroyed and Jerusalem was conquered in ancient times. 1. Other scholars think that this meant that people will be punished in hell forever.

See: Exodus 9:8-12; Deuteronomy 28:27-35

See: [Hell](#); [Metaphor](#); [Temple](#); [Hell](#)

Who is the beast?

[16:2]

See: Revelation 11:7

16:3

What happens to the sea?

[16:3]

1. Some scholars think that the sea will turn red. Everything in it will die.
2. Other scholars think this is a metaphor. John wrote about a battle that happened between ships in the sea.
3. Other scholars think the metaphor was about Israel becoming unclean.

4. Other scholars think he wrote about the war between Israel and the Roman Empire. This happened after Jesus returned to heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Clean and Unclean](#); [Heaven](#)

16:4-7

To whom is the angel speaking?

[16:5]

The angel spoke to God the Father in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why were people being punished?

[16:6]

The angel turned the rivers into blood.

1. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. John was writing about battles or wars that would happen. Certain places were punished because many Christians were killed there.
2. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. John was writing about how God punished the Roman Empire after they killed many Christians and Jews.
3. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. John was writing about God punishing Israel for not believing in Jesus and what the prophets said.
4. Some scholars think God will one day turn rivers all over the world to blood. God will punish those who worship the antchrist.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Metaphor](#); [Prophet](#); [Antichrist](#)

16:8-9

Who was John writing about when he wrote about the sun?

[16:8]

1. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. They think John wrote about a certain leader.
2. Other scholars think he wrote about the actual sun.
3. Other scholars think that John wrote about the Roman Empire.
4. Other scholars think John wrote about God judging the world.

See: [Metaphor](#)

What is blasphemy?

[16:9]

See: [Blaspheme \(Blasphemy\)](#)

What is repenting?

[16:9]

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

What is a plague?

[16:9]

A plague is when large numbers of insects or animals come into an area and destroy things. In ancient times, people thought plagues were God's punishment. John was not writing about insects. Instead, he wrote about God punishing them.

16:10-11

Who is the beast?

[16:10]

See: Revelation 11:7

What is the kingdom of the beast?

[16:10]

God gave Satan permission to rule the earth. However, God rules Satan (see: Luke 4:6; John 14:30).

Some scholars think John wrote about ruling the world.

Other scholars think he wrote about the kingdom the antichrist rules.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Antichrist](#)

16:12-16

What is the Euphrates River?

[16:12]

Some scholars think John wrote about the actual Euphrates River. Other scholars think this was a metaphor about a certain country or kingdom.

See: [Metaphor](#);

See Map: Euphrates River

What is an unclean spirit?

[16:13]

See: [Demon](#); [Spirit \(Spiritual\)](#); [Demon](#)

Who is the dragon?

[16:13]

See: Revelation 12:3

Who is the false prophet?

[16:13]

A prophet is someone who says the things God tell him to say. A false prophet says they are saying the things God wants them to say, but God has not really said anything to them. John was talking about a certain false prophet. This false prophet said the things that Satan wanted him to say, but he said they were from God.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is a demon?

[16:14]

See: [Demon](#)

What is the battle of the great day?

[16:14]

Some scholars think John wrote about a physical war that will happen before Jesus returns to the earth (see: Joel 2:11; 3:2). Other scholars think John wrote about the spiritual war that would happen before Jesus returns to the earth.

See: [Spiritual Warfare](#)

How will Jesus return like a thief?

[16:15]

No one knows when a thief will enter into a home. John used this as a metaphor to talk about how no one will know when Jesus returns.

See: Revelation 3:3

See: [Metaphor](#)

Where is Armageddon?

[16:16]

See Map: Armageddon

16:17-21

What is the great city?

[16:19]

John does not name the great city. It may be Babylon or the capital of the nation of Babylon (see: 18:10, 21). However, scholars do not know what John was writing about when he wrote about Babylon. Babylon was an ancient city and the capital of a great empire. However, there was no city of Babylon when John wrote these words. Some scholars think the great city is Babylon. Other scholars think the great city and Babylon are two different places.

See Map: Babylon

What nation is Babylon?

[16:19]

When John wrote these words, the nation and city of Babylon had been destroyed for many years. Some scholars think John wrote about a nation that is evil in the same way that the ancient Babylonian Empire was evil.

1. However, scholars do not know the name of the nation. They think Babylon was a metaphor. It is a very evil nation which did not believe in God.
2. Scholars think it was a prophecy about a nation coming in the future.
3. Other scholars think it was the Roman Empire. Other scholars think he wrote about the city of Jerusalem.
4. Other scholars think that John wrote about a certain religious leader and the people who followed this religious leader.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophesy\)](#)

See Map: Babylon

Did the islands and mountains disappear?

[16:20]

Some scholars think John wrote using a hyperbole. He wanted to say that many things will be destroyed. Other scholars think these things will happen in the same way John saw them.

See: [Hyperbole](#)

How heavy is a talent?

[16:21]

A talent weighs about 60 kilograms.

What does it mean to curse God?

[16:21]

See: [Curse](#)

Chapter 17

¹ One of the seven angels who had been holding the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the condemnation of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, ² with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of her sexual immorality the inhabitants of the earth became drunk." ³ Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names. The beast had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and was adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She was holding in her hand a golden cup full of detestable things and the impurities of her sexual immorality. ⁵ On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth."

⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people and with the blood of the martyrs for Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. ⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that is carrying her, the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns. ⁸ The beast you saw existed, does not exist now, and is about to come up from the bottomless pit. Then he will go on to destruction. Those who live on the earth, those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life since the foundation of the world—they will be astounded when they see the beast, because he once was, and now is not, and yet will come. ⁹ This calls for a mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated. ¹⁰ They are also seven kings. Five kings have fallen, one exists, and the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain for a little while. ¹¹ The beast that once was, and now is not, yet he is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. ¹² The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings for one hour together with the beast. ¹³ These are of one mind, and they give over their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will wage war against the Lamb. But the Lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and those with him are the called, chosen, and faithful ones." ¹⁵ The angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. ¹⁶ The ten horns that you saw—they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, they will devour her flesh, and they will burn her completely with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their power to rule to the beast until God's words are fulfilled. ¹⁸ The woman you saw is the great city that has power to rule over the kings of the earth."

Revelation 17

17:1-6

Who was the great prostitute?

[17:1]

John wrote about a great prostitute. John often used a metaphor about Christians being the bride of Christ. Those who know God, but who commit idolatry are said to commit adultery. In the same way a wife is unfaithful to her husband if she commits adultery, so is a person unfaithful to God if they commit idolatry. In this passage, John wrote about a certain person.

1. Some scholars think John wrote about a certain false teacher in the church.
2. Other scholars think John wrote about an evil city.
3. Some scholars think John wrote about Rome and the Roman Empire.
4. Other scholars think John wrote about the new Babylon (see: Revelation 14:8).
5. Other scholars think John wrote about the people of Israel who did not believe in Jesus.

Advice to translators: In English, one cannot say "do idolatry" or "do adultery." Instead, one must say "commit idolatry" or "commit adultery."

See: Revelation 17:15-18

See: [Church](#); [Bride of Christ](#); [Adultery](#); [Prostitute \(Prostitution\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Church](#)

See Map: Babylon

Why is she “seated on many waters”?

[17:1]

See: Revelation 13

How did the kings commit sexual immorality?

[17:2]

John continues the metaphor of adultery when writing about the kings of the world. He wanted to write that the rulers in the world will do the things the false teachers say to do. That is, they will also commit idolatry.

Advice to translators: In English, one cannot say “do idolatry.” Instead, one must say “commit idolatry.

See: [Adultery](#); [Adultery](#)

How do the people get drunk?

[17:2]

People got drunk because they drank too much wine. John wrote about getting drunk. This was a metaphor. The people drank too much from the cup the woman was holding. He wanted to write that the people did the evil things the woman taught. They committed idolatry.

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

How did John get carried away in the Spirit?

[17:3]

John wrote he was carried away by the Spirit. This means God gave him a vision.

See: [Vision](#); [Vision](#)

What was the woman sitting on?

[17:3]

See: Revelation 13

Why was the woman dressed the way she was dressed?

[17:4]

Some scholars think John wrote about a woman who was a false teacher. They think her clothes were a symbol. Perhaps John was writing about the church where she taught. He may been writing about how the church building looked. Or perhaps John wrote about the clothes the false teacher wore.

See: [Symbol](#)

What was written on her forehead?

[17:5]

The woman had something written on her forehead. Some scholars think this was a metaphor. She knew she taught the wrong things. And even wanted people to know she taught the wrong things. She was not ashamed about the things she taught.

See: [Metaphor](#)

How was the woman drunk?

[17:6]

John wrote that the woman was drunk. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that she persecuted and killed many Christians.

See: [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#); [Persecute \(Persecution\)](#)

17:7-13

Who is the beast?

[17:7]

John wrote that the beast was not and is not. That is, he is not Jesus. Jesus is the only one who was, is, and is to come. The beast was not God. However, he will come to the earth before he is destroyed.

See: Revelation 1:8; 13:1

What is the bottomless pit?

[17:8]

Hell is often described as a bottomless pit. When John wrote about the bottomless pit, he wanted to say Satan gave these rulers power.

See: [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#)

What is the book of life?

[17:8]

See: Revelation 3:5

What is the foundation of the world?

[17:8]

John wrote about the foundation of the world. This is the time when the world was created.

What are the seven mountains?

[17:9]

John wrote about the seven heads being symbols. They were symbols of the seven mountains on which the woman spoke. Scholars think John wrote about the seven hills around the city of Rome. The woman rules. She sits in the same way someone would sit on a throne.

See: [Throne](#); [Throne](#)

Who are the seven kings?

[17:10]

John wrote about seven kings.

Some scholars think John used a metaphor. They think he wrote about seven different ways the Romans ruled people. He wrote that five fell from ruling because they did not rule in these ways anymore. John lived during the time when they ruled in the sixth way.

Other scholars think John wrote about seven different empires who ruled large parts of the world near Israel. When John wrote that five had fallen, he wanted to write that they did not rule anymore. The

Roman Empire was the sixth great kingdom ruling the world. The seventh kingdom had not yet begun to rule the world.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Who is the eighth king?

[17:11]

John wrote about an eighth king. This king will rule the seventh kingdom. John wrote about the antichrist. The antichrist will rule for a time. However, God promises that the antichrist is going to be destroyed.

See: [Antichrist](#)

What are the ten horns?

[17:12]

John wrote about ten horns. These were ten kings. This was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think John wrote about ten parts of the Roman Empire.
2. Other scholars think these were ten different rulers of parts of the Roman Empire.
3. Other scholars think these were other nations that helped the Roman Empire when they fought against Israel shortly after Jesus returned to heaven.
4. Other scholars think John wrote about what Daniel wrote about. He wrote about the ten toes of a statue (see: Daniel 2). They think these are ten rulers who will help the antichrist to rule.

See: [Heaven](#); [Antichrist](#); [Heaven](#)

How will the kings receive a kingdom?

[17:12]

John talked about the kings receiving a kingdom. He wanted to say that they will be given permission to rule something. Why are these kings given permission to rule for one hour?

When John wrote these kings were given permission to rule for one hour, he wanted to write they ruled for a short time. 17:14-18

Who will these kings serve?

[17:12, 17:13]

These king will serve the beast.

See: Revelation 1:8

Who is the lamb?

[17:14]

Jesus is the lamb. The kings will war against Jesus and the people who serve him.

See: [Lamb of God](#)

Who are “the called ones, the chosen ones, and the faithful ones”?

[17:14]

Christians are the called ones, the chosen ones, and the faithful ones.

See: [Elect \(Election\)](#); [Elect \(Election\)](#)

Why will the beast and the ten kings hate the prostitute?

[17:16]

The ten kings and the beast (see: Revelation 1:8) will hate the prostitute. These were symbols.

1. Some scholars think John wrote about ten rulers who defeated the Roman Empire.
2. Other scholars think these kings were kings of other nations who served the Roman Empire. They had to serve the Roman Empire, but they hated it.
3. Other scholars think these kings were rulers of parts of the Roman Empire who hated the leader of the Roman Empire.
4. Other scholars think that John wrote about the antichrist becoming the ruler of the whole world.

See: Revelation 17:1

See: [Antichrist](#) ; [Symbol](#); [Antichrist](#)

What will the kings and beast do to the prostitute?

[17:16]

The kings and beast do horrible things to the prostitute. This was a metaphor.

1. Some scholars think John wanted to write that the ten rulers who defeated the Roman Empire would do horrible things to the Romans. These things did not happen when John wrote, but they happened after the time John wrote.
2. Other scholars think John wrote about false leaders in the church being punished.
3. Other scholars think John wrote about certain false religious leaders. They were being punished because the antichrist wants everyone to worship him.

See: Revelation 1:8; 17:1; 1 Kings 21:23; 2 Kings 9:33-37

See: [Antichrist](#) ; [Metaphor](#); [Antichrist](#)

Chapter 18

¹ After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illumined by his glory. ² He cried out with a mighty voice, saying,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
 She has become a dwelling place for demons,
 a prison for every unclean spirit,
 a prison for every unclean bird,
 a prison for every unclean and detestable animal.

³ For all the nations have drunk
 the wine of her immoral passion.
 The kings of the earth have committed immorality with her.
 The merchants of the earth have become rich from the power of her sensual way of living."

⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven say,

"Come out from her, my people,
 so that you will not share in her sins,
 and so that you will not receive any of her plagues.

⁵ Her sins have piled up as high as heaven,
 and God has remembered her evil actions.

⁶ Pay her back as she has paid others back,
 and repay her double for her deeds;
 in the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her.

⁷ As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
 give her just as much torture and grief.

For she says in her heart,
 'I am seated as a queen;
 I am not a widow,
 and I will never see mourning.'

⁸ Therefore in one day her plagues will come:
 death, mourning, and famine.
 She will be consumed by fire,
 for the Lord God is mighty, and he is her judge."

⁹ The kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality and went out of control with her will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. ¹⁰ They will stand off at a distance, afraid of her torment, saying,

"Woe, woe to the great city,
 Babylon, the powerful city!
 For in a single hour your punishment has come."

¹¹ The merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her since no one buys their merchandise anymore— ¹² merchandise of gold, silver, precious stone, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, every vessel of ivory, every vessel made of most precious wood, bronze, iron, marble, ¹³ cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots and bodies and souls of people. ¹⁴ The fruit that you desired with all your might is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be found again. ¹⁵ The merchants of these goods who became rich by her will stand away from her at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning loudly.

¹⁶ They will say,

"Woe, woe to the great city
 that was dressed in fine linen, in purple, and in scarlet,
 and was adorned with gold, precious jewels, and pearls!

17 In a single hour all that wealth has been laid waste."

Every ship's captain, every seafaring man, sailors, and all who make their living from the sea stood off at a distance.

18 They cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning. They said, "What city is like the great city?" **19** They threw dust on their heads, and cried out, weeping and mourning,

"Woe, woe to the great city
where all who had their ships
at sea became rich from her wealth.
For in a single hour she has been laid waste."

20 "Rejoice over her, heaven,
you holy people and apostles and prophets,
for God has brought your judgment on her!"

21 A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

"In this way, Babylon, the great city,
will be thrown down with violence
and will not be seen anymore.

22 The sound made by harpists, musicians,
flute players, and trumpeters
will not be heard anymore in you.

No craftsman of any kind
will be found in you.

No sound of a mill
will be heard anymore in you.

23 The light of a lamp
will not shine in you anymore.
The voices of the bridegroom and the bride
will not be heard in you anymore,
for your merchants were the princes of the earth,
and the nations were deceived by your sorcery.

24 In her the blood of prophets and of God's holy people was found,
and the blood of all who have been killed on the earth."

Revelation 18

18:1-8

How was the earth illuminated with the angel's glory?

[18:1]

The angel came from heaven with glory. This means that God gave the angel great power to do what God wanted the angel to do. When this happened, it meant that someone or something was going to be punished.

See: [Glory \(Glorify\)](#); [Heaven](#); [Glory \(Glorify\)](#)

Who was Babylon?

[18:2]

Some scholars think the Babylon John wrote about in this chapter was different than the Babylon he wrote about in chapter 17. Before, John wrote about the religious part of Babylon. Here, John wrote about the government of Babylon. Other scholars think these chapter talk about the same Babylon.

See: Revelation 14:8

See Map: Babylon

Was Babylon destroyed?

[18:2]

The angel said that Babylon was destroyed. When he said this, Babylon was not destroyed. Instead, the angel prophesied that Babylon would be destroyed. Therefore, the angel warned people that God was about to judge people.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

See Map: Babylon

Why did John talk about birds?

[18:2]

When a city was destroyed, certain birds would come to the city. They eat dead things. These birds were not clean.

See: Isaiah 13:21

See: [Clean and Unclean](#)

What did the nations do?

[18:3]

The leaders of many nations did the same things Babylon did. They did evil things. They did not honor God. John used the metaphor of sexual immorality to write about this. He wanted to write that the rulers in the world will do the things the false teacher says to do. That is, they will also commit idolatry.

Advice to translators: In English, one cannot say “do idolatry.” Instead, one must say “commit idolatry.

See: [Sexual Immorality](#); [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#); [Sexual Immorality](#)

Who is talking in heaven?

[18:4]

Someone else spoke in heaven. John did not say who spoke. Scholars think God spoke.

See: [Heaven](#)

The voice talked about “my people.” Who were they?

[18:4]

See: Jeremiah 51:6, 44-45

See: [People of God](#)

How do sins pile up?

[18:5]

John wrote about sins piling up to heaven. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that the people sinned a lot. Perhaps he was also thinking about what was written in Genesis 18:21.

See: Ezra 9:6

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

How does the voice talk about paying back Babylon?

[18:6]

This passage says that Babylon will be paid back for their sins. This is a metaphor. Babylon will be punished for sinning. It will get what it deserves.

See: Jeremiah 16:18; 17:18

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why is Babylon thought to be seated as a queen?

[18:7]

A queen can be a woman who rules a nation. A queen can also be the wife of a king. Kings and Queens rule many times while seated on their thrones.

See: Revelation 14:8

See: [Throne](#)

Why will Babylon be burned with fire?

[18:8]

See: [Fire](#); [Fire](#)

18:9-24

What is a woe?

[18:10]

See: [Woe](#)

Why did John write about the clothes Babylon wore?

[18:16, 18:7]

In this passage, John wrote about Babylon as if it were a person. He wrote about the clothes it wore.

Some scholars think it wore the clothes of a king. People honored Babylon. However, they were going to be punished for it.

Other scholars think that John wrote about certain things only rich people bought. John wanted to write that the wealth of Babylon would be lost.

See Revelation 14:8

Why did the sailors put dust on their heads?

[18:19]

In ancient Israel, when someone was very sad, they put ashes on their head. Sometimes they put ashes on their head as a way to repent of the evil things they did.

See: [Repent \(Repentance\)](#)

Why did the angel throw the stone into the sea?

[18:21]

When a stone entered into the sea, it sank immediately to the bottom. John wanted to say that Babylon would be punished, and it would quickly be destroyed.

See: Jeremiah 51:63-64

Why did John write about Babylon in the way that he did?

[18:21]

John wrote about Babylon in a certain way. He wanted to write that it was destroyed. Nothing remained after it was destroyed

Did Babylon practice sorcery?

[18:23]

When someone practiced sorcery, they did a certain type of magic that dishonored God. This was a metaphor. They did things that made people want to not believe in God.

See: Revelation 2:20

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did John write that blood was found in Babylon?

[18:24]

John wrote that blood was found in Babylon. He wanted to say that Babylon killed certain people. They were punished for killing people who honored God.

Chapter 19

¹ After these things I heard what sounded like a loud voice of a large number of people in heaven calling out,

"Hallelujah!
Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God.

² His judgments are true and just,
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality.
He has avenged the blood of his servants
from her hand."

³ They spoke a second time:

"Hallelujah!
The smoke rises from her forever and ever."

⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. They were saying,

"Amen. Hallelujah!"

⁵ Then a voice came out from the throne, saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
both the unimportant and the powerful."

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great number of people, like the roar of many waters, and like mighty crashes of thunder, saying,

"Hallelujah!
For the Lord reigns, our God, the Almighty.

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him the glory!
For the wedding celebration of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.

⁸ She was permitted to be dressed
in bright and clean fine linen"

fine linen is the righteous acts of God's holy people).

⁹ The angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." He also said to me, "These are true words of God." ¹⁰ I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Do not do this! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold the testimony about Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

¹¹ Then I saw heaven open, and I looked and there was a white horse. The one riding it is called faithful and true. It is with justice that he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like a fiery flame, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed with a robe that was dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven

were following him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword with which he strikes down the nations, and he will rule them with an iron rod. He tramples in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: "King of kings and Lord of lords."

¹⁷ I saw an angel standing in the sun. He called out in a loud voice to all the birds flying overhead, "Come, gather together for the great feast of God. ¹⁸ Come eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, the unimportant and the powerful."

¹⁹ I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies. They were assembling in order to wage war with the one who rode the horse and with his army. ²⁰ The beast was captured and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence. With these signs he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. ²¹ The rest of them were killed by the sword that came out of the mouth of the one who rode on the horse. All the birds ate their dead flesh.

Revelation 19

19:1-10

Who is in heaven praising God?

[19:1]

There are many people in heaven praising God. Some scholars think John wrote about angels (see: 5:11). Other scholars think John wrote about the Jews in heaven. Other scholars think John wrote about everyone who died and is in heaven.

See: [Angel](#); [Praise](#); [Angel](#)

Who is the great prostitute?

[19:2]

See: Revelation 17:1

Why does God punish the people who harm those who serve him?

[19:2]

John wrote about God punishing certain people. He used the metaphor of blood. He wanted to write that certain people died. The people God punished killed Christians because Christians believed in Jesus.

See: [Metaphor](#)

Why does the smoke rise forever?

[19:3]

John used a metaphor of smoke rising forever. He wanted to say that God would people and they would be completely destroyed. This is the last time he judged them.

Who are the twenty-four elders?

[19:4]

See: Revelation 4:4

Why is God seated on a throne?

[19:4]

See: Revelation 1:4

What is the wedding of the lamb?

[19:7]

See: [Lamb of God](#); [Lamb of God](#)

Who is Jesus' bride?

[19:7]

See: [Bride of Christ](#)

Why is the bride wearing certain clothes?

[19:8]

John wrote about all Christians when he wrote about the bride. The bride wore certain clothes. This was a metaphor. John wanted to say that she did good things to serve God. Before a wedding, the bride needed to make herself ready for the wedding ceremony.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Why did John try to worship the angel?

[19:10]

John tried to worship the angel. Scholars think this was because seeing the angel overwhelmed him. This is because the angel was greater than any person. Scholars think John also wanted to warn people not to worship anyone or anything except God.

See: [Angel](#)

What is the spirit of prophecy?

[19:10]

Scholars do not know what John meant when he wrote that Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. They think this might mean that prophecy talks about Jesus and helps people to know that Jesus is who he said he is. In this chapter, there are many prophecies that were fulfilled.

See: [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#); [Prophecy \(Prophecy\)](#)

19:11-21

Why did John write about a white horse from heaven?

[19:11]

John wrote about Jesus when he wrote about the white horse from heaven. Some scholars think John wanted to write that Jesus would come to earth to defeat his enemies. Other scholars think this was a symbol. John wanted to say that Jesus would use Christians to defeat his enemies. Other scholars think John wrote about a certain type of war on the earth between Christians and Satan.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Symbol](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

Why did the rider of the horse wear many crowns?

[19:12]

The rider on the horse wore many crowns. A ruler wore a crown. The rider wore many crowns because he ruled over many people. These people ruled over other people. This is why John wrote that Jesus is the king of kings.

See: [Crown](#)

Why is the rider's robe dipped in blood?

[19:13]

The rider was going to punish people. This is why his robe was dipped in blood. Scholars think people were going to die. Some scholars think John wrote about a real warrior. This warrior's robe was stained with the blood of his enemies.

Advice to translators: A warrior is like a soldier, but he does not have to be in the army. Instead, he is someone who fights other people. He fights for a reason.

See: Isaiah 63:1-3

What does the rider do when he comes to the earth?

[19:15]

Some scholars think the rider comes to the earth to punish people for not believing in God. Other scholars think the rider is a metaphor. John wrote about a war between Christians and Satan.

See: [Spiritual Warfare](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Spiritual Warfare](#)

What does the angel standing in the sun say?

[19:17]

The angel in the sun told the birds to eat different things. John wrote about certain birds who eat dead things. God punished these people and they died. This is why John wrote about these birds. People were punished and they died.

See: [Angel](#)

Who is the beast?

[19:19]

See: Revelation 11:7

Who is the false prophet?

[19:20]

See: Revelation 16:13

What is the mark of the beast?

[19:20]

See: Revelation 13:16

What is the lake of fire?

[19:20]

Those who reject God are punished. They are sent to hell. In the Bible, hell is made of fire which never goes out. People are punished by being burned forever. Some scholars think this is a metaphor. Other scholars think there is fire in hell.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Hell](#); [Metaphor](#)

Chapter 20

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had the key to the bottomless pit, and he had a great chain in his hand. ² He took hold of the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the bottomless pit. He shut it and sealed it over him. This was so that he would not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were over. After that, he must be set free for a short amount of time.

⁴ Then I saw thrones. Seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony about Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, and they had refused to receive the mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is anyone who takes part in the first resurrection! Over these the second death has no power. They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

⁷ When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be released from his prison. ⁸ He will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to bring them together for the battle. They will be as many as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's holy people—the beloved city. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and the one who is seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled away from his presence, but there was no place for them to go. ¹² I saw the dead—the mighty and the unimportant—standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Then another book was opened—the Book of Life. The dead were judged by what was recorded in the books, according to their deeds. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and the dead were judged according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. ¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20

20:1-6

What does the angel do to Satan?

[20:2]

John wrote about an angel putting Satan into a type of prison. That is, Satan will be separated from people. Before this time, Satan tries to get people to serve him and do things that do not honor God. He also tries to get the rulers of different nations to serve him and do things that do not honor God. Satan will be in this prison for 1000 years. He will not be in this prison forever.

Some scholars think this has not happened yet. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. By dying, Jesus defeated Satan in some way. Other scholars think that John spoke about many people believing in Jesus. When this happens, people stop following Satan.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Metaphor](#)

Who sat on the thrones?

[20:4]

Scholars do not know who sat on the thrones judging people. Some scholars think these were angels. Other scholars think these were the 24 elders John wrote about before (see: Revelation 4:4). Other scholars think these were all the people in heaven with God (see: Matthew 19:28). Other scholars think these were Christians the antichrist killed.

Advice to translators: A throne is a place where a leader sat when he rule. When he sat on the throne, he made rules for people to follow.

See: [Antichrist](#); [Angel](#); [Antichrist](#)

Who will rule with Jesus?

[20:4]

John talked about certain people ruling with Jesus. There were people killed because they believed in Jesus. They were people who did not worship the antichrist.

See: Revelation 13:16

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

When will Jesus rule the kingdom of God?

[20:4]

Scholars think the things John wrote about in these verses will happen at different times.

1. Some scholars think Jesus will return before he rules on the earth for 1000 years. Jesus will return to the earth and begin his kingdom. He will rule from Jerusalem. This will last for a thousand years. During this time, Satan will be in prison. There will be perfect peace and justice. This change will happen quickly.
2. Some scholars think Jesus will not return to the earth to rule for 1000 years. They think he will rule through people that believe in Jesus. They think Jesus will not rule on the earth in person. Instead, he will rule from heaven through his people. The kingdom of God on earth has already begun. It is a metaphor for Jesus helping or guiding Christians to do the things that honor God. However, the time of peace and justice only will only come after he returns to earth. This means that the kingdom has already started, but not yet ruling over the earth completely.
3. Other scholars think Jesus will return to the earth after 1000 years of peace. Christ will return after he rules the earth for 1000 years. Jesus will rule the earth through Christians. Gradually, the world will see how Jesus brings about justice and peace in this world. Jesus' kingdom may last for a thousand years. However, the time period may also be a symbol for a long period of time. At the end of this time of peace, Jesus will return.

See: [Symbol](#); [Satan \(The Devil\)](#); [Heaven](#); [People of God](#); [Metaphor](#); [Symbol](#)

Who are the rest of the dead?

[20:5]

Some scholars think John wrote about Christians being resurrected. However, they think that at this time, the Christians who were killed for believing in Jesus are resurrected before other Christians and rule with Jesus first.

Other scholars think John wrote about all people being resurrected, except for those who are already alive and ruling with Jesus.

Still other scholars think John wrote about the resurrection of those people who did not believe in Jesus.

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is the first resurrection?

[20:5]

See: [Resurrect \(Resurrection\)](#)

What is the second death?

[20:6]

In the Bible, death is a type of separation. When someone dies, they are separated from their body. However, some people die a second time. Those who do not believe in Jesus die a second time. This means they will be separated from God forever. They will live forever apart from God in hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

How will people be priests?

[20:6]

See: [Priest \(Priesthood\)](#)

20:7-10

When will Satan be released from prison?

[20:7]

Scholars think different things about Satan being released from prison.

1. Some scholars think that Satan will be released from prison after Jesus rules on the earth for 1000 years. There will be peace on the earth for 1000 years. After this time, Satan will be released. He will fight against God. Many people will fight with Satan against God when this happens. John wanted to write that people will still reject God, even without Satan trying to get them to reject God.
2. Other scholars think Christians were allowed to fight against Satan and defeat him. This happens when people believe in Jesus and obey God. Here, John wanted to write that there will be a time when Satan will fight against Christians. Some people will reject God. However, God will ultimately defeat Satan.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

Where is Gog and Magog?

[20:8]

See: Ezekiel 38-39

See Map: Gog; Magog

Does John write about a battle between Satan and God?

[20:9]

In these verses, John writes about a final battle between God and Satan.

1. Some scholars think that Satan will be imprisoned for 1000 years. After this time, he will be released and fight against God one more time. When this happens, God will defeat Satan. Satan then will live forever in the lake of fire.
2. Other scholars think this is a battle that will take place between God and Satan. In this battle, Satan will try to get people to reject God. John wrote about a time when many people will reject God. It will seem as if the whole world is fighting against God and Christians. However, God will win this battle. Satan will be punished.
3. Other scholars think there is not really a battle between God and Satan. What John wanted to write was that Satan fights against God. When he does this, God immediately stops him.

See: [Hell](#); [Fire](#); [Hell](#)

What is the lake of burning sulfur?

[20:10]

John talked about a lake of burning sulfur and a lake of fire. He was talking about a place where people are punished forever.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

Who is the beast?

[20:10]

See: Revelation 11:7

Who is the false prophet?

[20:10]

See: Revelation 16:13

20:11-15

What is the great white throne?

[20:11]

John wrote about a time when God will judge people. This is what he wrote about when he wrote about the great white throne. At this time, God separates some people that will live together with him in heaven forever. Everyone else will live separated from God in hell forever. That is, those who did not believe in Jesus will be in hell forever. God does this when he sits on the great white throne.

Advice to translators: A throne is a place where a leader sat when he rule. When he sat on the throne, he made rules for people to follow.

See: [White \(symbol\)](#); [Fire](#); [Hell](#); [White \(symbol\)](#)

What is the book of life?

[20:12]

See: Revelation 3:5

How are the dead judged?

[20:12]

John wrote about dead people being judged for the things they did. Some scholars think everyone will be judged because of the things they did while they were alive. Other scholars think John only wrote about those who do not believe in Jesus. This is because they do not think Christians will be judged in this way.

See: [Judge \(Judgment\)](#)

What are death and Hades?

[20:13]

God talked about death and Hades being punished. This was a metaphor. People died because God punished people (see: Genesis 3). After this judgment, God would not punish people in this way anymore. After this time, no one would ever die or be sent to hell.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:26

See: [Hell](#); [Fire](#); [Hell](#)

Who are the dead people in the sea?

[20:13]

John wrote about dead people in the sea. In ancient times, people who died at sea were never found. John wanted to say that no one could hide from God. God will judge everyone.

What is the lake of fire?

[20:14]

John wrote about a lake of fire. He was writing about a place where people will be punished forever.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

What is the second death?

[20:14]

In the Bible, when someone dies, they are separated from something. All people die once. When they die, they are separated from their body. Some people also die a second time. When this happens, they are separated from God forever. This is because they do not believe in Jesus. They will be separated from God forever in hell.

See: [Hell](#); [Hell](#)

Chapter 21

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, that came down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. ³ I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Look! The dwelling place of God is with human beings, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and he will be their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or grieving, or crying, or pain. The former things have passed away. ⁵ The one who was seated on the throne said, "Look! I make all things new." He said, "Write this down because these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ He said to me, "These things are done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who thirsts I will give drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowards, the faithless, the detestable, the murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. That is the second death."

⁹ One of the seven angels came to me, the one who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and he said, "Come here. I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰ Then he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ Jerusalem had the glory of God, and its brightness was like a very precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. ¹³ On the east were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ The one who spoke with me had a measuring rod made of gold to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶ The city was laid out in a square; its length was the same as its width. He measured the city with the measuring rod, twelve thousand stadia in length (its length, width, and height were the same). ¹⁷ He also measured its wall, 144 cubits thick by human measurement (which is also the angel's measure). ¹⁸ The wall was built of jasper and the city of pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first was jasper, the second was sapphire, the third was agate, the fourth was emerald, ²⁰ the fifth was onyx, the sixth was carnelian, the seventh was chrysolite, the eighth was beryl, the ninth was topaz, the tenth was chrysoprase, the eleventh was jacinth, and the twelfth was amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each of the gates was made from a single pearl. The streets of the city were pure gold, like transparent glass. ²² I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city had no need of the sun or the moon in order to shine on it because the glory of God shone on it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ The nations will walk by the light of that city. The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵ Its gates will not be shut during the day, and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it, ²⁷ but nothing unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 21

21:1-8

What is the new heaven and the new earth?

[21:1]

John wrote about a new heaven and a new earth.

1. Some scholars think God will make a new heaven and a new earth. When he wrote about heaven here, he wrote about everything in the sky. This is the universe. This will happen after Jesus rules on the earth for 1000 years.
2. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. John wrote about something that will happen in heaven.
3. Other scholars think John wrote about the world changing after people become Christians.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What is the new Jerusalem?

[21:2]

John wrote about God making a new Jerusalem.

1. Some scholars think John wrote about the place where people go when they die. This was the place where people go if they are at peace with God.
2. Other scholars think John wrote about all Christians. Christians worship God in a new way.
3. Other scholars think John wrote about a new place where people will go to worship God.

See: [Worship](#)

What does the voice promise?

[21:3]

God talked about making everything new. He promised there was not going to be sin anymore. Because of this, the world will be perfect. Everyone will be at peace with one another and at peace with God. Also, nothing will ever die again.

See: [Sin](#)

Who is seated on the throne?

[21:5]

God is seated on the throne.

See: Revelation 1:4

How is God the alpha and the omega?

[21:6]

See: Revelation 1:8

How does someone inherit these things?

[21:7]

John wrote about the people who will inherit the promises God made. That is, Christians will inherit these things. Those who do not believe in Jesus will be cursed forever.

See: [Inherit \(Inheritance, Heir\)](#)

What is the lake of burning sulfur?

[21:8]

See: Revelation 20:10

21:9-27

Who are the seven angels?

[21:9]

John wrote about seven angels. These are the seven angels near the throne of God.

See: Revelation 1:4

What are the seven bowls?

[21:9]

See: Revelation 16:1

Who is the bride of the lamb?

[21:9]

When John wrote about the bride of the lamb, he wrote about all Christians and Jesus.

See: [Lamb of God](#); [Lamb of God](#)

How did John get carried away in the spirit?

[21:10]

See: Revelation 1:10

How is the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven?

[21:10]

John wrote about the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven. This is a metaphor. He wanted to say that God made this new Jerusalem.

See: [Metaphor](#); [Metaphor](#)

What are the twelve tribes of Israel?

[21:12]

See: [Tribes of Israel](#)

Why did they measure the city?

[21:15]

Scholars do not know why he measured the city. Perhaps this was a symbol of something.

See: [Symbol](#)

How long is a stadia?

[21:16]

John wrote about 12,000 stadia. That is about 2200 kilometers.

How long is a cubit?

[21:17]

A cubit is about 46 centimeters. John spoke about 144 cubits. This is about 66 meters.

See: [Cubit](#)

Why was the city made the way it was made?

[21:18, 21:19, 21:20, 21:21]

In ancient times, a bride wore jewelry. The high priest also wore jewelry. This city also looked like jewelry. Scholars think many of the things John spoke about were symbols. However, they do not know what were symbols. They also do not know what these symbols mean.

See: [High Priest](#); [High Priest](#)

Why was there no temple in the city?

[21:22]

John wrote that there was no temple in this city. This is because a temple was a place where one went to worship God. However, in this city, God is everywhere. He can be worshipped anywhere. They do not need to go somewhere to worship God.

See: [Worship](#); [Worship](#)

Why did the city not need the sun?

[21:23]

The city did not need a sun because it did not need light. This is because God is the light (see: John 8:12; 1 John 1:5).

See: [Light and Darkness \(Metaphor\)](#)

Who lives in this city?

[21:24]

Christians from all over the world will live in this city. Everyone will worship God. People will be able to worship God at any time and nothing will stop them from worshipping God.

See: [Holy Ones](#)

Chapter 22

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal. It was flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the city's street. On each side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, and it bears its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ There will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night; they will have no need for the light of a lamp or sunlight because the Lord God will shine on them. They will reign forever and ever.

⁶ The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon." ⁷ "Look! I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who obeys the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing me these things. ⁹ He said to me, "Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you, with your brothers the prophets, and with those who obey the words of this book. Worship God!"

¹⁰ Then he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹ The one who is unrighteous, let him continue to do unrighteousness. The one who is morally filthy, let him continue to be morally filthy. The one who is righteous, let him continue to do what is righteous. The one who is holy, let him continue to be holy."

¹² "Look! I am coming soon. My reward is with me, to pay back each one according to his deeds. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. ¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they will have the right to eat from the tree of life and to enter the city through the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶ I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever desires it, let him freely have the water of life.

¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written about in this book. ¹⁹ If anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are written about in this book. ²⁰

²⁰ The one who testifies to these things says, "Yes! I am coming soon." Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. ²²

Footnotes

22:14 ^[1] Instead of,

22:19 ^[2] Some older copies read

22:21 ^[3] Some ancient copies of the Greek text or ancient translations of the Greek text add the phrase:

Revelation 22

22:1-5

What is the river of the water of life?

[22:1]

John continued to write about the new things God made. He wrote about a river coming from God. Scholars think this was a symbol. He wanted to say that God makes things alive.

See: Ezekiel 47; John 7:37-39

See: [Symbol](#)

What is the throne of God?

[22:1]

See: Revelation 1:4

What was the city about which John wrote?

[22:2]

See: Revelation 21:2

What is the tree of life?

[22:2]

See: Genesis 1:9; Revelation 2:7

Why did the tree make fruit every month?

[22:2]

John wrote about the tree making fruit every month. That is, it made fruit about every thirty days. Some scholars think people will eat from this tree when they are in heaven with God. Other scholars think this is a metaphor. However, they do not know what John wanted to say.

See: [Heaven](#)

Why will God's name be on people's foreheads?

[22:4]

See: Revelation 7:3

22:6-7

Why did John write, "the God of the spirits of the prophets"?

[22:6]

John wrote, "the God of the spirits of the prophets." He wanted people to know that God gave the prophets the words they needed to say. He also did this for the prophets from the Old Testament.

See: [Prophet](#); [Prophet](#)

When do these things happen?

[22:6, 22:7]

In these verses, John wrote about something he saw and heard. However, the angel spoke things to John about which John was to tell other people. The angel told him to say these things to people who lived when John lived. The angels, the prophets, and people serve God and worship him.

See: [Worship](#); [Prophet:Worship](#)

22:8-9

What changes in these verses?

[22:8]

Before these verses, John only wrote about the things he saw. John then began to write about what he did because of the things he saw.

Why did the angel tell John not to worship him?

[22:9]

The things he saw amazed John. He wanted to worship the angel. However, people need to worship God alone. Therefore, the angel did not want John to worship him.

See: [Angel](#)

22:10-15

How is the time near?

[22:10]

John wrote that the things he talked about were about to happen.

1. Some scholars think these things happened shortly after John saw them.
2. Other scholars think these things are always about to happen, but they have not happened yet.

John wrote that people who reject God need to continue to dishonor God. He also wrote that Christians need to keep honoring God. Why did he write this?

[22:11]

John wrote that people who reject God need to continue to dishonor God. He also wrote that Christians need to keep honoring God. When he wrote these things, he wanted people to know that the things he wrote about were close to happening. When these things happen, there will not be any time for people to change the things they did.

Who is coming soon?

[22:12]

Someone said that he is coming soon. The person who spoke was Jesus.

What is the alpha and omega?

[22:13]

See: Revelation 1:8

Who are the people who wash their robes?

[22:14]

People who wash their robes are clean. This was a metaphor. Christians are made clean when they believe in Jesus. They will live together with God in heaven forever. They will also live in the new Jerusalem.

See: Revelation 21

See: [Heaven;Metaphor; Heaven](#)

Who is outside of the city?

[22:15]

Those who do not believe in Jesus will not live together with him forever. Instead, they will live forever in hell. The words they will live outside of the city were a metaphor. They will not live in the new Jerusalem.

See: Revelation 21

See: [Hell; Fire; Hell](#)

Who are dogs?

[22:15]

In the Bible, certain people are called dogs. This was a metaphor used for people who are evil. Dogs are not themselves evil, but they eat in a way that is unclean. In the same way people who do evil things, making them unclean, are considered "dogs" (see: Proverbs 26:11).

See: Philippians 3:2

What is a sorcerer?

[22:15]

See: [Sorcery](#)

What is an idolater?

[22:15]

See: [Idolatry \(Idol\)](#)

22:16-21

How is Jesus the root of David?

[22:16]

Jesus is the root of David. This was a metaphor. He is the descendant of David whom God promised to rule Israel (see: 2 Samuel 7:8-17)

See: [Covenant with David](#)

How is Jesus the bright morning star?

[22:16]

In the Bible, Jesus is said to be light (see: John 8:12). Scholars think John wanted people to know that Jesus was the king promised to come after David.

See: Numbers 24:17; 2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 2:28

See: [Covenant with David; Covenant with David](#)

Who is the bride?

[22:17]

When John wrote about the bride of Christ, he wrote about the church. That is, he wrote about all Christians.

See: [Church](#); [Church](#)

Why is someone thirsty?

[22:17]

John wanted people who were thirsty to go to Jesus. This was a metaphor. He wanted to write that people who were “thirsty” were people who wanted to know true things about God. Therefore, they needed to believe in Jesus. They will be given the “water of life.” This is also a metaphor. They will live forever with God in heaven.

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Why did John warn people about adding or removing words from his book?

[22:18, 22:19]

1. John warned people about adding or removing words from his book. Some scholars think that people added or removed words in books about the last days.
2. Other scholars think that John did not think people would add words to this book. He wanted people to be careful when they studied this book and tried to know what it meant. This is because the book is not easy to understand.
3. Other scholars think John wanted to write that no book of the bible was written after this book. The bible was finished.

See: [Last Days](#)

How does someone share in the tree of life?

[22:19]

John wrote about someone sharing in the tree of life. This was a metaphor. Someone who shares in the tree of life lives together with God in forever. They will also live in the new Jerusalem (see: Revelation 21).

See: [Heaven](#); [Heaven](#)

Who “testifies to these things”?

[22:20]

John wrote about someone who “testifies to these things.” This is Jesus.
